



Report Title: Midlothian Residential Service for Young People

Report by: Joan Tranent, Head of Children's Services

1 Purpose of Report

This report outlines the outcome of the above unannounced Inspection carried out by the Care Inspectorate in June 2019

2 Background

2.1 Midlothian Residential Services consists of two houses in Dalkeith and Gorebridge. The service is currently registered to provide care to nine young people aged from 10 years to 21 years.

2.2 The Care Inspectorate is the independent scrutiny and improvement body for care services in Scotland. They inspect all registered care services and local authority social work departments on a regular basis to ensure that providers are meeting standards required and are working to improve the quality of care for everyone. Every time they inspect these services they produce an inspection report.

2.3 Based on the findings of this Inspection the Care Inspectorate awarded the following grades on the two areas it inspected:

Quality of Care and Support –	Grade 3 - Adequate
Quality of staffing -	Grade 4 - Good

2.4 The Inspection Team noted the following strengths with regard to the quality of Care and Support:

- For some young people who used the service over the past year we could see improvements in their wellbeing related to physical health, being active, feeling nurtured and employment opportunities.
- Positive experience of care and support was reflected in most of the feedback. They particularly reflected on the relationships they have with key staff, the opportunities they have to be active and quite specific support to 'feel safe'.
- There was good evidence of efforts to involve and include young people in day-to-day and bigger decision from individual care issues and recruitment of staff to moving house.
- What we observed during the inspection was genuine warmth and respect between staff and young people. We also observed and read about patience and respect in more challenging encounters.

2.5 The Inspection Team reported that the authority could do better in the following area with regard to the quality of Care and Support:

- There is a need to improve knowledge and practice in relation to risk and vulnerability in young people and how this is managed in group living environments.
- There is a specific issue around the implementation of 'continuing care' in the service. The emphasis of a procedural, skills development approach is having an impact on both the experience of young people and the understanding of staff.
- The Inspection Team advised that there was an over emphasis on timetables, education and independence with less reflection on the importance of relationships and understanding stages of development.

2.6 The Inspection Team reported the following strengths in relation to Quality of Staffing:

- A key improvement over the past year is the consistency in clear teams of staff employed within each house, this has improved the sense of working together and improve the support experienced by staff.
- Supervision and team meetings re working well and provide formal support for staff. There was good evidence of debriefing following incidents.

2.7 The Inspection Team reported that the authority could do better in relation to Quality of Staffing:

- There were limited opportunities for practitioners and managers to improve their knowledge around residential care and learn from research.
- There has been loss of key staff which impacts on relationships with the young people as well as a loss of experience.

3 Summary

The grading for Quality of Care and Support is very disappointing and was challenged as it was felt that the narrative was contradictory at times. This is a very challenging and complex area of work where we have reduced the number of beds to nine, (as a result of our early intervention work) resulting in the staff group having to manage risk, whilst also trying to meet the needs of young people aged from 10 to 21years of age.

The continuing care agenda is one we are fully committed to however ensuring we can offer young people the opportunity to 'stay put' post 16 years of age is an ongoing issue that requires robust planning and a

clear understanding of acceptable behaviours that does not place our younger people at an increased level of risk. At the time of this inspection there were 3 young people who were over 16 (= 33%). This said there are many positives within the report that should be acknowledged and built on.

The Inspectors noted no requirements.

The Inspectors noted two recommendations:

To ensure young people are protected from harm the service must improve its assessment and management of risks.

To ensure young people experience consistent care and support as they get older the provider should review their approach to continuing care, promoting a shared understanding.

Report Implications

4.1 Resource

There are no resource issues arising from this report.

4.2 Risk

The Care Inspectorate regulate all care services in Scotland using the [National Care Standards](#), set out by the Scottish Government, as a benchmark for how each type of service should perform. These standards are the minimum that children and young people should expect when using care services.

If the standards are not being fully met, the Care Inspectorate would note this in the inspection report and require the service manager to address these. The Care Inspectorate could impose an additional condition on the service's registration if the provider persistently, substantially or seriously fails to meet the standards or breaches a regulation. They also have the power to issue an improvement notice detailing the required improvement to be made and the timescale for this.

Monitoring, review and evaluation of progress by officers in Children's Services is the control measure in place to reduce the risk of failure of the care services and to demonstrate their capacity to improve.

4.3 Single Midlothian Plan and Business Transformation

Themes addressed in this report:

- ☐ Community safety
- ☐ Adult health, care and housing
- ☒ Getting it right for every Midlothian child
- ☐ Improving opportunities in Midlothian
- ☐ Sustainable growth
- ☐ Business transformation and Best Value
- ☐ None of the above

4.4 Impact on Performance and Outcomes

Performance and outcomes will continue to be measured through the quarterly reporting, review and evaluation process.

4.5 Adopting a Preventative Approach

The Service will continue to improve its work in line with its improvement plan. The Education, Communities and Economy Directorate will continue to challenge and support the Service in relation to developing and implementing a range of quality improvement strategies.

4.6 Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders

As part of their inspection process the Care Inspectorate spoke with four young people.

4.7 Ensuring Equalities

The recommendations have been added to the existing improvement plan.

4.8 IT Issues

There are no IT issues.

5 Recommendations

Cabinet are requested to:

1. Note the content of the report.
2. Forward the report to Performance, Review & Scrutiny

Date: 12th August 2019

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Background Papers: Care Inspectorate Report June 2019