

## **Inspection of Midlothian Residential Service for Young People**

Report by Mary Smith, Director, Education, Communities and Economy

### **1 Purpose of Report**

This report outlines the outcome of the above unannounced inspection as carried out by the Care Inspectorate in March 2014.

### **2 Background**

2.1 Midlothian Residential Services consists of three small residential homes in Penicuik, Dalkeith and Gorebridge. Each home cares for a maximum of four young people who are aged between 10 and 18 years who cannot safely stay with their own family, or in any substitute family, and whose needs would best be met in a residential setting. At the time of the inspection only the homes in Penicuik and Gorebridge had young people staying there.

2.2 The Care Inspectorate is the independent scrutiny and improvement body for care and children's services and they inspect every registered care service, local authority social work departments and child protection teams on a regular basis to make sure 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:

Quality of care and support	Grade 4 – Good
Quality of Environment	Grade 4 - Good
Quality of staffing	Grade 4 – Good
Quality of Management and Leadership	Grade 3 – Adequate

The Inspectors noted that significant progress had been made in a number of areas and awarded a grade of 'Very Good' for:

- Service users' health and wellbeing needs being met.
- Ensuring that the environment is safe and service users are protected.
- Having a professional, trained and motivated workforce.

The report and grades represent the Care Inspectorate assessment of the quality of the areas of performance which were examined during the inspection.

2.4 The Inspection Team noted the following strengths:

- Midlothian Council has established a number of strategies to include young people in the development of services in the local authority.
- The staff are committed to working positively with the young people.
- Young people benefit from attractive and well maintained environments.

2.5 The Inspection Team reported that the authority could do better in the following areas:

- The management team should develop systems to demonstrate through quality assurance and self assessment, how they identify areas for improvement and progress.
- The service need to fully roll out the new care plan process.

2.6 The Care Inspectorate concluded that Midlothian Council continues to demonstrate that they are committed to improvement of the services for accommodated children and had aspirations to providing an excellent service. They also noted that the prospective change of manager may have an impact on the service in the coming months.

### **3 Summary**

Midlothian Council have invested heavily in the Residential Service with the opening of two new residential provision in Penicuik and Dalkeith. However, by using Dalkeith House as an outreach service we have been able to support more young people within their own communities thus preventing residential placements. The inspection team acknowledged the improvements in the service and are confident that the needs of vulnerable young people are being met.

## **4 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 and Families 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 monitoring, review and evaluation process.

#### **4.5 Adopting a Preventative Approach**

The Service will continue to improve its work in line with its improvement plan and 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 3 young people during the inspection and met with staff and had discussion with the external manager during feedback.

The inspectors noted as one of the strengths the inclusion of young people in the development of services in the local authority. Staff assist young people to plan for their future and help them to move things forward.

Copies of the report have been made available to Elected Members, staff and other interested parties.

#### **4.7 Ensuring Equalities**

An action plan has been prepared to address the areas for improvement recommended in the report. The action plan will be screened for equalities implications.

#### **4.8 Supporting Sustainable Development**

The Service Improvement Plan allows for sustainable development and improvement.

#### **4.9 IT Issues**

There are no IT issues arising from this report.

### **5 Recommendations**

Cabinet is asked to:

- (i) note the content of the inspection report;
- (ii) pass this report to the Performance, Review and Scrutiny Committee for its consideration;
- (iii) acknowledge the positive and ongoing work by management and staff connected with the Midlothian Residential Service for Young People;
- (iv) note that the Council will continue to challenge, support and monitor the service in relation to achieving excellence through further improving performance.

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**Background Papers:**

Care Services Inspection Report dated 7 March 2014