

## Aspire - Balgray Cottage School Care Accommodation Service

Balgray Cottage  
Balgray Road  
Kilbirnie  
KA25 6LU

Telephone: 01505 682895

Type of inspection: Unannounced  
Inspection completed on: 29 May 2018

**Service provided by:**  
Aspire Scotland Ltd

**Service provider number:**  
SP2010011131

**Care service number:**  
CS2015340457

## About the service

The Care Inspectorate regulates care services in Scotland. Information about all care services is available on our website at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com)

This service registered with the Care Inspectorate on 8 October 2015.

Balgray Cottage is a five bedded school care accommodation resource just outside the town of Kilbirnie in Ayrshire. The service is run by The Priory Group, who at the time of inspection ran a further five services in the Ayrshire area. An associated educational resource, Radio City, is based in Kilbirnie, and young people of school age either attend this resource or a mainstream school, dependent on their needs. All these services were previously run by Aspire, before they were bought over by The Priory Group earlier this year.

The accommodation comprises:

- Five bedrooms, one of which is en suite;
- Shower room shared by two bedrooms;
- Bathroom shared by two bedrooms;
- Additional downstairs toilet / bathroom;
- Two large lounges;
- A large kitchen;
- A dining room;
- A laundry room;
- An office;
- Large gardens;
- An outhouse in the garden.

The accommodation is maintained to a high standard. The large grounds which the service has access to is ideal in supporting young people to engage in positive outdoor activities.

At the time of inspection, the service was fully occupied.

## What people told us

We spoke with three young people during this inspection. All of them spoke very positively about the support they received and, in particular, commented on positive relationships which they had with staff members.

Comments included:

"It's quite chilled."

"It's peaceful".

"This is the first place that really cared for me".

We spoke with two relatives of young people. They both spoke positively about the service. One relative advised they had noticed a massive positive change in their young person's behaviour, and that he had formed really

good relationships with staff. They also said that communication from the service was very good, and they were very supportive of facilitating family contact. They commented:

"Moving there is the best thing that's happened to him".

## Self assessment

The service had not been asked to complete a self-assessment prior to the inspection. We looked at their own improvement plan and quality assurance paperwork in order to assess how they monitored service provision.

## From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	5 - Very Good
Quality of environment	not assessed
Quality of staffing	not assessed
Quality of management and leadership	5 - Very Good

## What the service does well

We found that the service had very good referral processes in place which enabled young people to move into the process in a planned way and at their pace. Information received from other agencies prior to admission was good, and this helped the service to plan support well in the early stages of a placement.

We observed very positive relationships between young people and staff. There was a high number of staff within the service and this allowed them to provide the time which young people required. Positive activities for young people were at the core of the service, with interests such as running, cycling and football being actively supported and encouraged.

All staff whom we spoke with had an excellent knowledge of young people in their care. There were very regular meetings of "key teams", which young people attended and which helped to review their progress. This helped young people develop ownership of their care plan, and there was a real sense that they were involved in deciding what support they needed.

Care plans were comprehensive and linked to the wellbeing indicators (safe, healthy, active, nurtured, achieving, respected, responsible and included) identified in the Scottish Government policy Getting It Right For Every Child. There was again very good evidence of young people being involved in developing their care plan.

Risk assessments and management plans were very comprehensive. These had helped staff to develop individualised plans for young people with the aim of reducing risk, and for a number of young people this had reduced concerning behaviour. While there has been a relatively high level of occasions where young people have been safely held over the last year, the service had analysed these in order to identify any patterns behind these. From this, it was identified that negative incidents sometimes occurred because young people were seeking physical contact, so staff have worked with young people to create a culture where they can ask for a hug from staff without difficult behaviour preceding this. Early evidence suggests this has worked well and the number of safe holds within the service has reduced.

Young people were fully involved in developing the service, with regular young people's meetings taking place and views sought around issues like menu planning, activities and their environment. We noted that, on a number of occasions, points raised by young people were quickly and appropriately discussed at team meetings; this meant that young people received a speedy response to any suggestions. An example of young people's views being listened to was the development of a sensory room within the service, which was agreed as beneficial following discussion between staff and young people.

There was excellent evidence of innovative practice by the service. For instance, staff had bought one young person household pets and supported him to develop a care plan for the animals, which helped him to understand about the importance of nurture but also about responsibility.

We found that staff had very good knowledge of the impact of trauma; they worked with young people dependent on their emotional rather than chronological age. There was a strong learning culture within the service. Team meetings were very regular and had a developmental focus, a team development day had been held and there were a series of team development events planned for the near future, with the aim of developing the staff's knowledge and understanding.

Supervision of staff was fairly regular and those with supervisory responsibilities had attended management and leadership training events, which they advised they had found very beneficial.

The service had sought feedback from young people, relatives and other agencies and responses received had been very positive.

An improvement plan was in place and this was detailed, with a focus of building on the work that the service was currently doing.

## What the service could do better

We found that, while in most paperwork staff used strengths based language, this was not the case across the board, and gave examples of occasions where we felt events could be described more positively and with more analysis. The manager of the service acknowledged this and advised she would scrutinise documents to ensure they were written as positively as possible.

While the service is very good at notifying the Care Inspectorate of significant incidents, we felt that sometimes there was limited analysis of events. We gave the manager advice about information which is required in future notifications.

## Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

## Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com).

Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings								
9 May 2017	Unannounced	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Care and support</td> <td>5 - Very good</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Environment</td> <td>Not assessed</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Staffing</td> <td>Not assessed</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Management and leadership</td> <td>5 - Very good</td> </tr> </table>	Care and support	5 - Very good	Environment	Not assessed	Staffing	Not assessed	Management and leadership	5 - Very good
Care and support	5 - Very good									
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5 Jun 2016	Unannounced	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Care and support</td> <td>5 - Very good</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Environment</td> <td>5 - Very good</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Staffing</td> <td>5 - Very good</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Management and leadership</td> <td>4 - Good</td> </tr> </table>	Care and support	5 - Very good	Environment	5 - Very good	Staffing	5 - Very good	Management and leadership	4 - Good
Care and support	5 - Very good									
Environment	5 - Very good									
Staffing	5 - Very good									
Management and leadership	4 - Good									

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