

Aspire - Dovecote Hall Cottage School Care Accommodation Service

Doura (Lochlibo Road)
Irvine
KA11 2AS

Telephone: 01294 850147

Type of inspection: Unannounced
Inspection completed on: 3 August 2017

Service provided by:
Aspire Scotland Ltd

Service provider number:
SP2010011131

Care service number:
CS2013318904

About the service

Dovecote Hall Cottage forms part of the service provided by Aspire Scotland Limited.

Dovecote is a school care accommodation service providing high levels of support to children and young people, aged 8 - 18 years of age, within a semi rural setting in the Ayrshire countryside. The service offers accommodation for up to four children and young people, with three sharing a living environment and one living in a self-contained flat in an annexe.

The service has a large garden to the rear of the house with a fish pond and allotment area.

The service aims to provide a safe environment in which children and young people can be supported to achieve positive outcomes.

What people told us

We spoke with two of the young people experiencing care in the service. We heard initially of some difficulties with some staff from young people however on further discussion and observation we noted warm interaction between staff and young people.

The initial difficulties related to a recent incident and young people had been challenged appropriately; however staff should also consider the circumstances and timing of discussions with young people.

Young people told us of the achievements they had made and the activities they enjoyed. We also noted very good relations between particular staff members and young people.

We spoke with social workers to the young people and their comments were generally positive. The service staff were described as good at nurturing and building positive relationships with the young people. The staff team were also praised for being responsive, caring and of being very good at communication.

One social worker described the positive outcomes being achieved for the young person they worked with as being '...a major improvement, they are doing really well'.

Staff we spoke to were positive about the support and training on offer to them. Staff emphasised the importance of building and maintaining very good relationships with young people to work toward achieving good outcomes.

Self assessment

The Care Inspectorate did not request a self assessment for this inspection year.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

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

What the service does well

We found the service to be providing a very good level of care to the young people living at Dovecote Hall Cottage; and the staffing to be of a very good quality

Young people's comprehensive care plans were linked to the well-being indicators of safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, responsible, respected and included with well thought out aims and targets. The service had introduced outcomes trackers that were used in regular reviews to monitor the progress of plans. These trackers were also developed in accordance with the specific needs of young people.

We found that young people benefitted from regular dedicated time from key staff in progressing through their plans. Young people were achieving well in education and some were being supported to progress to further education or employment.

Young people's sporting and activity interests were being supported and promoted. These included health promoting activities like basketball and football; with some young people excelling at these. Those with particular skills were encouraged to pursue opportunities and gained confidence from participating in national competitions.

We observed responsive staff supporting young people through listening and acting appropriately to their needs and concerns. Minutes from young people's meetings provided a very good sense of young people feeling confident and able to raise any issues with staff.

Review meetings were held regularly to evaluate and amend young people's plans and the service communications tool 'Gateway' was used to very good effect at keeping the team around the child / young people informed. This effective sharing of information was particularly evident in the partnership working with external services such as health and education.

The service also evidenced a commitment to supporting young people until they are ready for transition to home or independent living. One young person was being cared for through extended support arrangements, for example.

The staff were trained in a particular model of managing challenging behaviour. Where safe holds were used we found evidence of learning from the reflective records of these incidents. The service had also sought and gathered the young people's views on such incidents and an analysis of this data is to be completed. We look forward to reviewing this at the next inspection.

Staff were recruited through safer recruitment practices and background checks and registrations completed. We found that training records evidenced very good, and prompt, access for appropriate training for staff. Some staff training in terms of refresher sessions were close to renewal dates however training was included in the agenda for supervision and this matter was being addressed. We have made a further comment on supervision in the following section.

We spoke with some of the key staff for the young people and were very impressed with the knowledge, skills and approach / attitude of some of these staff. These staff showed a person centred commitment to the young people receiving care in the service and to developing their own skills and knowledge.

What the service could do better

During the inspection we were aware of a complaint a young person had made regarding how they considered staff to be acting inconsistently in applying the house rules. On discussing this with management and staff we understood the staff's person centred approach to all young people had led to this young person's view. However, we suggested that the staff team review the rules and boundaries of the service with the young people to clarify this issue.

Further to the above we found that the young people's care plans outcomes tracker were in some cases generic and would be more effective if written from the perspective of the young person; and with their involvement. See Recommendation 1.

Risk assessments for the young people were, in the majority of cases, comprehensive; however we found that for some young people information additional to that available on admission had not been fully recorded in updated assessments.

We are aware that this gap in the assessment may have arisen from the introduction of a new assessment template; and that staff were aware of the risk factors, however the manager and staff should ensure that all risk assessments are fully updated on review. See recommendation 2.

We noted that the frequency of supervision of staff was not consistent with the service policy. Whilst recognising that the manager and external manager are considering a Care Inspectorate suggestion for team supervision sessions in addition to individual supervision - and that there are regular team meetings - we would recommend that supervision occurs at a frequency that best meets the needs of the staff. See recommendation 3.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 3

1. Young people's care plans should be completed with the involvement of the young people and reflect person centred discussions.

National Care Standards; school care accommodation services; 6, Support arrangements

2. The manager should ensure that all risk assessments are completed and updated with all available relevant information at each review.

National Care Standards; school care accommodation services; 6, Support arrangements

3. The service manager should evaluate the frequency of supervision of staff to ensure that supervision occurs at maximum effectiveness.

National Care Standards; school care accommodation services ; 7, Management and Staffing.

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at www.careinspectorate.com.

Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings	
19 Jul 2016	Unannounced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	5 - Very good
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	5 - Very good
25 Mar 2015	Unannounced	Care and support	3 - Adequate
		Environment	3 - Adequate
		Staffing	3 - Adequate
		Management and leadership	3 - Adequate
10 Jul 2014	Unannounced	Care and support	3 - Adequate
		Environment	3 - Adequate
		Staffing	3 - Adequate
		Management and leadership	3 - Adequate

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