

The Bungalow Care Home Service

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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
27 September 2023

Service provided by:
Starley Hall School Ltd

Service provider number:
SP2004006683

Service no:
CS2012310747

About the service

The Bungalow is a care home service for up to three children and young people. It is situated in a residential area about two miles from the centre of Kirkcaldy in Fife, and has a range of shops, schools and other community facilities, including public transport. The house is detached and has accommodation on one floor. There are three bedrooms for young people, who share bathroom facilities and a living room, kitchen and garden.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 12 and 19 September 2023 between 12:25 and 20:15 and 10:20 and 16:50 respectively. The inspection was carried out by one inspector from the Care Inspectorate. To prepare for the inspection, we reviewed information about the service. This included previous inspection findings, registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection. In making our evaluations of the service, we:

- reviewed surveys completed by two young people, three staff and one external professional
- spoke with two young people using the service and one family member
- spoke with five staff and managers
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Carers knew young people well and keeping them safe was a high priority. They provided boundaries but respected their legal rights and choices.
- Young people's relationships with caregivers were usually warm and nurturing and had provided stability and continuity. When young people showed distressed behaviour, carers used these relationships to prevent the need for restrictive practices.
- The house provided a comfortable and homely environment for young people, who had been involved in choosing décor and personalising their own rooms to suit their tastes.
- Carers supported and enabled young people to stay connected with their families
- The quality of the assessment of young people's needs and whether they could be met by the team was in the process of being improved. Managers should also ensure the assessment of staffing levels is informed by individual needs and is clearly documented.
- Most carers felt well-supported and confident in their practice though should have more regular planned supervision and opportunities to discuss how they are supporting young people.
- Quality assurance and assessment and planning processes supported improvement and should continue to be developed to maximise positive outcomes.

From this inspection we evaluated this service as:

In evaluating quality, we use a six point scale where 1 is unsatisfactory and 6 is excellent

How well do we support children and young people's rights and wellbeing?	4 - Good
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Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

How well do we support children and young people's rights and wellbeing?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as **good**. This means the service had a number of important strengths which taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement and had a significant positive impact on young people's outcomes and experiences.

Caregivers' awareness of individual needs contributed to keeping young people as safe as possible. Where there were safety concerns, they supported young people to develop an awareness of how to protect themselves as they progressed towards adulthood and greater independence. Adults were clear about their safeguarding responsibilities and almost all had had relevant training. Arrangements for responding to protection concerns and working with other agencies were effective. They also took appropriate action when young people experienced bullying. Relevant protection policies and procedures would benefit from being reviewed so they reflect up to date guidance and legislation. We also suggested consideration be given to mandatory adult protection training given the age of young people being cared for.

Recurring distressed behaviour by some young people earlier in the year, including damage being caused in the house, had been unsettling for all concerned, though the situation appeared to be improving. Nevertheless, restrictive practices such as physical restraint had been used very infrequently by carers. They focussed instead on using their relationships with young people to restore calm. This meant that the potential for compromising young people's safety and dignity was reduced. However, the manager should ensure that all significant incidents are more consistently notified to the Care Inspectorate in accordance with guidance, to support effective scrutiny. Any learning from reflection after incidents should also be recorded and shared as appropriate with the team so that risk assessments and plans can be adjusted if necessary.

The relationships that young people had with adults caring for them were usually positive and meaningful. This meant they experienced nurturing care that provided a foundation for them to thrive and reach their potential. We observed warmth and good humour and were told by a young person that he liked it there. When tensions sometimes arose as young adults asserted their autonomy, adults continued to offer support and advice whilst respecting their rights and choices. The well-maintained, comfortable and homely environment and pleasant outdoor space gave a message of respect for young people. However, door alarms for alerting adults to young people's movements should take account of their views and involve multi-agency risk-assessment.

Young people had support to share their views so they could influence decisions affecting their lives and experience care that reflected their preferences. They also had access to independent advocacy. They had lots of choice in most aspects of daily life and had been involved in how the house, and in particular their own rooms, were furnished and decorated. This showed they were being listened to and respected. The service also ensured young people were aware of their right to 'continuing care', meaning they had the option to stay at The Bungalow until they turned 21, so they could benefit from the additional stability this can provide.

Carers managed young people's medication safely and ensured they had the care they needed to maximise their physical and emotional health. Support to stay connected with family members helped foster a sense of belonging and worth. School attendance provided opportunities to learn and they were encouraged to do things they enjoyed. Regular walks meant one young person spent meaningful time with staff and was a great way to keep active. An organised activity group was aimed at one young person gaining confidence, meeting new people and learning new skills. Young people had the food they enjoyed but were also encouraged to have a varied, balanced diet to support a healthier lifestyle and meet their personal goals.

External management provided oversight and direction. Monitoring of service performance had identified where improvements were needed to improve young people's outcomes and experiences. The impressive admissions policy was informed by good practice and the service obtained detailed information from local authorities requesting a service for young people. An improved process for assessing the service's capacity to meet their needs (and those of young people already there) had just been developed by the provider, though had not yet been implemented. Similarly, there was a plan to improve the process for assessing staffing levels to meet young people's needs. In light of this, we will not include areas for improvement about these in this report. There was no indication that staffing levels needed significant adjustment, though there is an expectation that managers will routinely be supernumerary.

Turnover was below the national average, though some experienced carers had recently left. The service was actively recruiting to fill a remaining post so they could continue to provide stable, trusting relationships for young people. Most carers described supportive leadership and positive working relationships to help them deliver high quality care to young people. However, formal supports such as planned supervision and team meetings had not been taking place regularly until very recently (**see area for improvement 1**). Most carers had taken part in relevant mandatory training, though other training had been completed inconsistently across the team. Further planned training in the near future will continue to support carers to implement the vision for a fully trauma-informed, therapeutic approach.

Quality assurance processes were having a positive impact on service delivery. A new service improvement plan was being developed and will include action to achieve the 'Promise' (which was made to young people following the Scottish independent care review). Starley Hall services were considering ways of obtaining the views of parents and external professionals, so that these can inform the improvement process. More effective incident analysis should also allow carers to implement learning on an ongoing basis (**see area for improvement 2**).

Assessment and care planning processes had some strengths but would benefit from further development to maximise positive outcomes, including more effective evaluation of progress. Young people's views should be explicitly stated in plans, and support with managing their finances included where appropriate.

Areas for improvement

1. In order that carers are able to deliver high-quality, therapeutic support to young people, the provider should ensure they have regular supervision and opportunities to discuss and reflect on their work.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS), which state that: 'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes' (HSCS 3.14), and with the Scottish Social Services Council's Code of Practice for Employers of Social Service Workers, which state that the employer will 'provide effective, regular supervision to social service workers to support them to develop and improve through reflective practice.' (3.5).

2. In order to identify and implement learning and respond to young people's needs, the provider should further develop the process for regular analysis of incidents.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS), which state that: 'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes' (HSCS 4.19).

Complaints

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

Detailed evaluations

How well do we support children and young people's rights and wellbeing?	4 - Good
7.1 Children and young people are safe, feel loved and get the most out of life	4 - Good
7.2 Leaders and staff have the capacity and resources to meet and champion children and young people's needs and rights	4 - Good

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