

Care service inspection report

Springfield House

Care Home Service Children and Young People

Ladeddie Farmhouse
Drumcarrow
Cupar
KY15 5TY

Type of inspection: Unannounced

Inspection completed on: 16 October 2014



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Service provided by:

Applied Care & Development Limited

Service provider number:

SP2003003432

Care service number:

CS2013317845

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Summary

This report and grades represent our assessment of the quality of the areas of performance which were examined during this inspection.

Grades for this care service may change after this inspection following other regulatory activity. For example, if we have to take enforcement action to make the service improve, or if we investigate and agree with a complaint someone makes about the service.

We gave the service these grades

Quality of Care and Support	5	Very Good
Quality of Environment	5	Very Good
Quality of Staffing	5	Very Good
Quality of Management and Leadership	5	Very Good

What the service does well

We identified the following strengths in the areas inspected:

- a very comfortable, safe, homely and spacious environment;
- a clear commitment to listening to young people and engaging them in the life of the home, as well as creating positive memories;
- a consistent and caring team of staff, who develop very good relationships with young people and support them to make changes and achieve;
- confident and effective management;
- a commitment to continuous improvement.

What the service could do better

The provider does not need to make any significant adjustments given the service's already high standards. However, we have included some suggestions for development in the relevant quality themes in this report: these should support the process of continuous improvement.

What the service has done since the last inspection

This was the service's first inspection.

Conclusion

This new service is already providing high standards of care and support to young people. Despite a number of staffing changes since the home registered, the team has successfully established consistent but flexible routines and a clear vision and ethos. This is a well-led, welcoming and nurturing home with child-centred practices.

1 About the service we inspected

The Care Inspectorate regulates care services in Scotland. Information about all care services is available on our website at www.careinspectorate.com

This service registered with the Care Inspectorate on 30 October 2013.

Requirements and recommendations

If we are concerned about some aspect of a service, or think it could do more to improve, we may make a recommendation or requirement.

- A recommendation is a statement that sets out actions the care service provider should take to improve or develop the quality of the service, but where failure to do so will not directly result in enforcement. Recommendations are based on the National Care Standards, relevant codes of practice and recognised good practice.
- A requirement is a statement which sets out what is required of a care service to comply with the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010 and Regulations or Orders made under the Act or a condition of registration. Where there are breaches of Regulations, Orders or Conditions, a requirement must be made. Requirements are legally enforceable at the discretion of the Care Inspectorate.

Springfield House is a care home for up to four children and young people between the ages of 12 and 17. It is situated in a rural location near Cupar in Fife. The premises consist of a detached, two-storey former farmhouse with a large garden overlooking open countryside. There are four single bedrooms for young people, one of which has an en-suite shower. There is also a communal bathroom. Young people also have use of a living room, open-plan dining room, kitchen, conservatory and cloakroom, all on the ground floor. The house also has a self-contained family room which is used for meetings and contact between children and their families.

The staff group consists of a manager, three seniors and six care staff.

The provider of the service is Applied Care and Development Limited, a private limited company with its registered office in Dumfries. This provider has a total of seven care services in Scotland, five care homes and two support services, five of which are in Dumfries and Galloway, one in Fife and one in the Highlands.

Based on the findings of this inspection this service has been awarded the following grades:

Quality of Care and Support - Grade 5 - Very Good

Quality of Environment - Grade 5 - Very Good

Quality of Staffing - Grade 5 - Very Good

Quality of Management and Leadership - Grade 5 - Very Good

This report and grades represent our assessment of the quality of the areas of performance which were examined during this inspection.

Grades for this care service may change following other regulatory activity. You can find the most up-to-date grades for this service by visiting our website www.careinspectorate.com or by calling us on 0845 600 9527 or visiting one of our offices.

2 How we inspected this service

The level of inspection we carried out

In this service we carried out a low intensity inspection. We carry out these inspections when we are satisfied that services are working hard to provide consistently high standards of care.

What we did during the inspection

We wrote this report following an unannounced inspection by one inspector. This was the service's first inspection. Visits took place on:

- Thursday 9 October 2014 between 11.40am and 5.55pm;
- Sunday 12 October 2014 between 12.05 and 2.25pm;
- Wednesday 15 October 2014 between 10.25am and 5.20pm.

We gave feedback to the external manager, manager and two senior staff at the end of the last visit.

As part of the inspection, we took account of the self-assessment form that we asked the provider to complete and submit to us.

During this inspection process, we gathered evidence from various sources, including the following:

We spoke with:

- two residents in private and two others briefly during mealtimes;
- the external manager;
- the manager;
- two senior care workers;
- three care staff;
- three visiting professionals.

We inspected most parts of the environment inside and out. We also shared lunch, brunch and an evening meal with staff and young people.

We looked at:

- the service's improvement plan;
- the service's handbook;
- some photographic evidence of events and activities;
- a small number of policies and procedures including child protection, participation and medication;
- young people's records, including assessments, personal plans and review records;
- records of young people's meetings;
- records of accidents and incidents;
- staff training records;
- staff meeting records;
- the Scottish Social Service's register;
- supervision records and dates.

Grading the service against quality themes and statements

We inspect and grade elements of care that we call 'quality themes'. For example, one of the quality themes we might look at is 'Quality of care and support'. Under each quality theme are 'quality statements' which describe what a service should be doing well for that theme. We grade how the service performs against the quality themes and statements.

Details of what we found are in Section 3: The inspection

Inspection Focus Areas (IFAs)

In any year we may decide on specific aspects of care to focus on during our inspections. These are extra checks we make on top of all the normal ones we make during inspection. We do this to gather information about the quality of these aspects of care on a national basis. Where we have examined an inspection focus area we will clearly identify it under the relevant quality statement.

Fire safety issues

We do not regulate fire safety. Local fire and rescue services are responsible for checking services. However, where significant fire safety issues become apparent, we will alert the relevant fire and rescue services so they may consider what action to take. You can find out more about care services' responsibilities for fire safety at www.firelawscotland.org

What the service has done to meet any recommendations we made at our last inspection

There were no outstanding recommendations.

The annual return

Every year all care services must complete an 'annual return' form to make sure the information we hold is up to date. We also use annual returns to decide how we will inspect the service.

Annual Return Received: No

Comments on Self Assessment

Every year all care services must complete a 'self assessment' form telling us how their service is performing. We check to make sure this assessment is accurate.

We received a fully completed self-assessment document from the manager. We were satisfied with the way this was completed and with the relevant information included for each heading that we grade services under. The manager identified what the service thought they did well, some areas for development and any planned changes. We think the document could be improved by adding more information about how the work the service does has contributed to good outcomes for young people.

Taking the views of people using the care service into account

We spoke to two young people in private and to both of the others in groups at mealtimes. The comments they made suggested they were very satisfied with the quality of care they received. One rated it 9/10 and the other 10/10 (it was 'brilliant'). They liked the food; thought staff were good; and that rules and boundaries were fair. Both felt safe inside the house. They both felt they had made progress, for example with school attendance and behaviour. The house's main disadvantage for one was its isolation.

Taking carers' views into account

We did not have the opportunity to speak to any parents or carers during our visit.

We received two e-mailed questionnaires from social workers. We also spoke to a third and to two other professional visitors. The comments we received from them were very positive:

- "The service is fully meeting the needs of the young person and managing his behaviour appropriately";
- '(My expectations of the service have been) fully met';
- '(I have) very positive impressions of the service'.

We have incorporated more detailed comments into the relevant quality themes.

3 The inspection

We looked at how the service performs against the following quality themes and statements. Here are the details of what we found.

Quality Theme 1: Quality of Care and Support

Grade awarded for this theme: 5 - Very Good

Statement 1

We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of the care and support provided by the service.

Service strengths

The service met all aspects of this statement and reached a very good standard. They routinely involved young people in service development and evaluation, using a variety of methods. There was evidence that the service had responded positively to service users' views and that this had resulted in an improvement to the quality of care.

These are examples of involvement and participation:

- young people had access to a range of information, telling them what they should expect of their time there, the ways they could get involved and who they could talk to to express their views. These included a booklet with photos and a newsletter, which they had begun to contribute to. They also usually had opportunities to visit the home and meet other young people and staff before they moved in, except in an emergency;
- it was clear that young people were fully involved in home life. They helped to arrange special events (including the recent open day, which was very memorable and a great success).
- young people had a major say in how they spent their spare time. They chose activities, days out and holidays. They also influenced the menu to a large extent and did some cooking;
- at their meetings they had a chance to discuss home life and express their views. They had also created the 'Bubble Talk' noticeboard, which was used to display photos and useful information;

- there was a complaints procedure for young people to use if they felt unhappy about any aspect of the service;
- young people were actively involved in the recruitment and selection of staff;
- crucially, young people influenced their assessments and personal plans. They developed their 'This is me, this is my life' section in which they provided lots of essential background information and details of their likes and dislikes to help staff cater the service to their needs. They also attended their reviews;
- the manager had obtained young people's views as part of completing the service's self-assessment before this inspection.

A social worker told us 'The young person's views are sought and considered'.

Areas for improvement

We signposted the manager to the 'ladder of participation' (Hart, 1992). He may also wish to consider using the self-evaluation model in 'Practice Guide: involving children and young people in improving children's services' (Care Inspectorate, 2012) to consider whether further innovations can be introduced to the service's already very good practice.

Grade awarded for this statement: 5 - Very Good

Number of requirements: 0

Number of recommendations: 0

Statement 3

We ensure that service users' health and wellbeing needs are met.

Service strengths

The service's performance had major strengths and met all aspects of this statement.

We found the following examples:

- the atmosphere in the home throughout our visits was relaxed, friendly and welcoming. It provided the kind of nurturing environment that is essential to lowering stress levels. The staff team had a shared ethos which was reflected in their interactions with young people. This gave the strong message that this was 'their' home and should adapt to them rather than the other way round;
- staff had developed nurturing and predictable routines, though built in sufficient flexibility to allow them to meet individual needs. There had been a particularly successful focus on mealtimes, which were very enjoyable social occasions, and night-time routines to aid restful sleep;
- young people had very good opportunities for regular fresh air and energetic exercise. They took part in a wide range of activities including fishing,

badminton, ball games, arts and crafts, board games, beach parties and trampolining. There were also special events in school holidays which they clearly appreciated;

- staff managed and recorded incidents and accidents appropriately;
- food was varied, tasty and well-presented and included plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables;
- relevant training to ensure that staff could meet young people's needs included child protection, medication and self-harm;
- staff managed young people's medication safely and effectively. They registered them with the local minor ailments scheme where they could obtain suitable over-the-counter medications when necessary;
- young people had in most instances been able to continue attending their local authority school. The service also provided staff to support young people in school where necessary;
- we came across a number of examples of the service supporting young people to make progress and achieve positive outcomes. These included a reduction in challenging behaviour, improved school attendance, using public transport successfully and reducing the level of self-harm.

A social worker told us:

- 'They have ensured that all staff are working with the social work plan in order to keep the young person safe. They ensure that all appointments are kept. The young person is offered the opportunity to access activities in the community';
- 'The service supports the young person with his career choices and facilitates weekly contact with his family and making sure that his basic needs are met'.

Areas for improvement

We recommended that the service provide a wider range of relevant resources to encourage young people to read more.

The service could introduce minor improvements to medicines management. For example, the use of a risk assessment to help determine whether young people can take charge of all or some aspects of their medication is good practice. The written procedure should also include guidance on disposal of medication.

The service needs a more effective way of recording and monitoring young people's immunisations.

Grade awarded for this statement: 5 - Very Good

Number of requirements: 0

Number of recommendations: 0

Quality Theme 2: Quality of Environment

Grade awarded for this theme: 5 - Very Good

Statement 1

We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of the environment within the service.

Service strengths

The strengths recorded under Quality Theme 1.1 are also relevant strengths in this area. In addition, young people had opportunities to influence the service by playing a part in maintenance and upkeep such as gardening. During our visits they were decorating for a forthcoming Halloween party. They also personalised their bedrooms.

Areas for improvement

See Quality Theme 1.1.

Grade awarded for this statement: 5 - Very Good

Number of requirements: 0

Number of recommendations: 0

Statement 2

We make sure that the environment is safe and service users are protected.

Service strengths

The home provided a very safe environment for young people. We identified these strengths:

- staff kept the house clean, warm and in a very good state of repair and decoration. The garden was also well-tended;
- there was an effective risk management system for identifying potential hazards and making use of appropriate strategies. There was a good awareness of the particular risks posed by the house's rural location and proximity to farm animals for example;
- storage for food, medicines, confidential records and hazardous materials was safe and effective;

- the provider had fitted a suitable alarm system and staff were well-positioned to respond to changing levels of risk;
- IT equipment had suitable safety measures to reduce well-recognised dangers;
- staff checked that visitors had suitable identification before allowing access to the home;
- young people had lockable storage in their rooms.

Areas for improvement

We suggested that the manager consider developing a risk assessment for the premises as a working document. However, we did not identify any cause for concern in relation to health and safety practices.

Completion of an internet safety audit may help the service to identify the need for any additional measures to keep young people as safe as possible.

Grade awarded for this statement: 5 - Very Good

Number of requirements: 0

Number of recommendations: 0

Quality Theme 3: Quality of Staffing

Grade awarded for this theme: 5 - Very Good

Statement 1

We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of staffing in the service.

Service strengths

The strengths recorded under Quality Theme 1.1 are also relevant strengths in this area. In addition, young people had opportunities to influence the service by contributing to the process of staff recruitment.

Areas for improvement

See Quality Theme 1.1.

Grade awarded for this statement: 5 - Very Good

Number of requirements: 0

Number of recommendations: 0

Statement 3

We have a professional, trained and motivated workforce which operates to National Care Standards, legislation and best practice.

Service strengths

The service met all aspects of this statement and reached a very good standard. We identified the following strengths:

- staff were registered with the Scottish Social Services Council. This is a legal requirement and obliges them to obtain minimum qualifications, keep their training up to date and to comply with a code of practice;
- staff were friendly and approachable in their dealings with young people. They made good use of humour and had positive relationships with them. Such relationships provide the basis for change and progress and help to mitigate the impact of stressful and traumatic events;
- there was an effective system for supporting staff in providing good care and meeting the challenges of residential childcare. Supports included regular,

planned supervision, informal discussions, regular staff meetings and relevant learning and development opportunities;

- the manager had an effective system for dealing with staff practice and conduct issues;
- the staff rota provided a very good element of continuity and predictability for young people. For example, the same staff providing care at bedtimes were on duty again the following morning to support young people in getting ready and making the transition to school.

Social workers told us:

- 'The young person has noted that he has a good working relationship with staff';
- 'From discussions with staff they appear knowledgeable'.

Areas for improvement

The provider planned to provide senior staff with appropriate recognised qualifications, in this case SVQ 4.

We would like to see the staff group make more use of the National Care Standards and other best practice in evaluation and development, for example as discussion points in staff meetings.

Grade awarded for this statement: 5 - Very Good

Number of requirements: 0

Number of recommendations: 0

Quality Theme 4: Quality of Management and Leadership

Grade awarded for this theme: 5 - Very Good

Statement 1

We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of the management and leadership of the service.

Service strengths

The strengths recorded under Quality Theme 1.1 are also relevant strengths in this area. In addition, young people had opportunities to influence the service by using the complaints procedures and contributing to the service's self-assessment.

Areas for improvement

The service could involve young people in reviewing key policies and procedures and the statement of aims and objectives when they fall due for review.

Grade awarded for this statement: 5 - Very Good

Number of requirements: 0

Number of recommendations: 0

Statement 4

We use quality assurance systems and processes which involve service users, carers, staff and stakeholders to assess the quality of service we provide

Service strengths

The service achieved a very good standard in this area. Its performance had major strengths, including the following:

- the service's development plan was a dynamic document using a traffic light system to identify priorities. It highlighted staff responsible for planned improvements. Crucially, it was clear that the service was making progress and achieving desired changes;
- the manager had made all relevant notifications of significant events to the Care Inspectorate. These help us to evaluate service performance on an ongoing basis;
- the external manager visited the home regularly (including making unannounced visits) to maintain contact with the manager, staff and young

people and oversee service performance and quality. Such oversight is recognised as an important element of creating safety in residential childcare services;

- the manager was very visible and accessible to both staff and young people. He could therefore directly observe practice and influence change. There was overall a very strong sense of effective leadership and direction;
- staff had taken part in the development of the self-assessment completed by the manager before this inspection.

Areas for improvement

We signposted the manager and external manager to guidance on external management of residential services (Scottish Government, 2013).

We would suggest that the service make clearer reference to how they evaluate their service in order to arrive at the improvement plan. This would include for example reference to specific national guidance or best practice, such as the National Care Standards or relevant quality indicators, as well as identifying desired outcomes (as well as actions). Feedback from stakeholders, including young people, should also be used to inform the analysis of performance. Now that the service is becoming established, the next step could be to identify medium-and longer-term goals.

The manager intended to ask young people to contribute to staff appraisal.

Records of working group meetings, which involved staff, could be improved to allow easier tracking of action and progress.

Grade awarded for this statement: 5 - Very Good

Number of requirements: 0

Number of recommendations: 0

4 Other information

Complaints

No complaints have been upheld since the service registered.

Enforcements

We have taken no enforcement action against this care service.

Additional Information

Not applicable.

Action Plan

Failure to submit an appropriate action plan within the required timescale, including any agreed extension, where requirements and recommendations have been made, will result in the Care Inspectorate re-grading a Quality Statement within the Quality of Management and Leadership Theme (or for childminders, Quality of Staffing Theme) as unsatisfactory (1). This will result in the Quality Theme being re-graded as unsatisfactory (1).

5 Summary of grades

Quality of Care and Support - 5 - Very Good	
Statement 1	5 - Very Good
Statement 3	5 - Very Good
Quality of Environment - 5 - Very Good	
Statement 1	5 - Very Good
Statement 2	5 - Very Good
Quality of Staffing - 5 - Very Good	
Statement 1	5 - Very Good
Statement 3	5 - Very Good
Quality of Management and Leadership - 5 - Very Good	
Statement 1	5 - Very Good
Statement 4	5 - Very Good

6 Inspection and grading history

All inspections and grades before 1 April 2011 are those reported by the former regulator of care services, the Care Commission.

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