

Sunderland House School Care Accommodation Service

75 Argyll Road
Dunoon
PA23 8EE

Telephone: 01369 703601

Type of inspection: Unannounced
Inspection completed on: 1 November 2017

Service provided by:
Spark of Genius (Training) Ltd

Service provider number:
SP2006008009

Care service number:
CS2008178883

About the service

This service registered with the Care Inspectorate on 1 April 2011.

Sunderland House is a school care accommodation service run by the organisation Spark of Genius (Training) Ltd. It provides care and support for up to five young people in a large detached house with a garden in Dunoon. The house is close to public transport links, shops and other amenities.

Young people's educational needs are met through attendance at learning centres provided by the organisation, or at other educational provision, whichever is identified as being in the best interests of each young person.

The service operates a 24 hour service 52 weeks of the year.

At the time of the inspection four young people were living in Sunderland House.

What people told us

We spoke with two young people who told us they liked living in Sunderland House. Staff were described as "really nice " and "fair". One young person expressed the view that the service handbook did not reflect the house as it seemed "full of rules and not like Sunderland House which was a good place to live". Both told us they had been helped return to education and were very pleased to have achieved this. We were told the food was nice and the cook always asked their views about the meals and there was always two choices of meals. We were told there was enough to do and staff took you out and about. The only exception to this is when there was a shortage of staff. Both young people stated it felt different when it was agency staff and although they were nice it wasn't the same as being cared for by people who you knew well.

Both young people were happy with their bedrooms and communal accommodation and confirmed being provided money to personalise their own room. Young people thought rules were fair and that staff listened to their views. Both expressed a wish to remain living in Sunderland House as they were happy and considered they were doing well. Both spoke positively about the support staff provided to help them see family members.

Self assessment

This was not requested for this inspection year, however, the manager provided us with the service development plan and service audits which we considered as part of the inspection.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	4 - Good
Quality of environment	not assessed
Quality of staffing	not assessed
Quality of management and leadership	3 - Adequate

What the service does well

All young people had support plans which were structured to take account of GIRFEC (Getting It Right For Every Child) well-being indicators. We found that formal review meetings were held for children within statutory timescales and this gave the opportunity to review the progress and needs of young people. We found that staff had a good understanding of young people's needs and preferences and observed warm interactions between staff and young people.

The supervision of young people was observed to be good on the day of inspection. We were told by management that this had been an area identified to help change some challenging behaviours exhibited by young people in the preceding months. Staff members responded appropriately to child protection concerns and took immediate action when a child failed to return at agreed times. Young people were encouraged to carry mobile phones when out in the community. We could see that staff made good use of this, contacting young people to ensure they were well and also in responding quickly to requests for assistance. Risk assessments were in place for young people and included directions for staff intervention.

The staff team in Sunderland House continued to assist young people maintain contact with family and friends and this was of great reassurance to young people, some of whom lived considerable distances from home and family.

Regular group meetings with young people took place and we could see that suggestions, requests and ideas were taken forward such as decoration, activity planning and amendments to house rules. Young people were happy with the level of recreational opportunities and we were told this was something which had improved. This particular group of young people got on well with each other and during the day of inspection enjoyed an evening outing together. The staff and management team were keen to maintain the harmony between young people and were achieving this by providing positive opportunities for engagement and socialising.

There had been a marked improvement in school attendance since our last inspection visit, with all young people now attending school. The team worked hard to bring about this change and it was evident there was a culture of promoting school attendance. Young people were supported to get to and from school and within school when needed. Effort and attendance was praised and acknowledged and young people told us they were happy and proud to be receiving formal education. Good routines were in place which supported young people maintaining school attendance.

Regular team meetings were taking place and were used as a forum to discuss standards and new operational procedures. Sunderland House had been very unsettled for a period of time with crisis behaviour of young people and staff shortage. The provider had increased levels of management support and implemented a range of practice audits to establish where additional support and training was required. We could see that some improvements had come about following this such as, improved opportunities for recreational outings for children, improved school attendance and improvements to the environment. We also found that staff training needs were being addressed and staff members were receiving formal supervision. Most staff who spoke with us told us they were tired due to staff shortages, but that overall, they felt supported and this alongside young people being more settled had improved team morale.

What the service could do better

We reviewed the support plans for two young people and considered that they did not fully reflect the agreed goals set at LAAC (Looked After And Accommodated Child) reviews and were not outcome focused. Consequently some issues identified to be taken forward had not been progressed (see recommendation 1).

Only one of the four young people had received a LAAC health check since admission. We were told this would be addressed. We highlighted a delay in seeking a dental appointment. We have included this as part of our concerns about management overview regarding day-to-day care needs.

We found a lack of overview by the day-to-day management in regards to monitoring weaker areas identified in audits and in maintaining improvements made. Examples of this included the effective use of in-house communication systems, progressing LAAC decisions, ensuring a house record of maintenance needs, frequency of case team meetings and key time.

There did not appear to be dedicated time allocated which involved management to look at the progress of young people's care plans. We considered this may have contributed to the lack of progression in some areas. On a day-to-day basis we observed that management did not take part in shift handovers where updates were exchanged about young people.

We acknowledge the considerable ongoing support from the provider to Sunderland House and of the efforts made to recruit staff. We also welcomed the provider reducing the occupancy of the house to four in recognition of staffing shortages and in providing sleepover staff to support night workers. We will review progress at a follow-up inspection.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 1

1. Support plans should be outcomes focused and reflect goals and targets of assessed needs.

National Care Standards, school care accommodation - Standard 6: Support arrangements.

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
7 Nov 2016	Unannounced	Care and support 4 - Good Environment 4 - Good Staffing 5 - Very good Management and leadership 4 - Good
24 Feb 2016	Unannounced	Care and support 4 - Good Environment 4 - Good Staffing 4 - Good Management and leadership 3 - Adequate

Date	Type	Gradings	
19 Mar 2015	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good 5 - Very good 5 - Very good 5 - Very good
2 Dec 2014	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good 5 - Very good 5 - Very good 5 - Very good
28 Mar 2014	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good 5 - Very good 5 - Very good 5 - Very good
12 Nov 2013	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good 5 - Very good 5 - Very good 5 - Very good
15 Mar 2013	Announced (short notice)	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good Not assessed Not assessed 5 - Very good
26 Oct 2012	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good 5 - Very good 5 - Very good Not assessed
5 Mar 2012	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good 5 - Very good Not assessed Not assessed
20 Sep 2011	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good 5 - Very good Not assessed Not assessed

Date	Type	Gradings	
19 Jan 2011	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good Not assessed Not assessed 5 - Very good
24 Sep 2010	Announced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good Not assessed Not assessed 5 - Very good
12 Mar 2010	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good Not assessed 5 - Very good Not assessed

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