

ACAD Close Support Service Care Home Service

Torrs Complex
Torrs Farm
Castle Douglas
Dumfries
DG7 1NF

Telephone: 01387 269 435

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
21 March 2024

Service provided by:
Applied Care & Development Limited

Service provider number:
SP2003003432

Service no:
CS2003015103

About the service

ACAD Close Support Service is a care home service for up to nine children and young people. The service, also known as Torrs, comprises of a cluster of four houses around a former farm steading, and a pair of semi-detached cottages a short distance away. The service is situated close to the town of Castle Douglas, and there are local amenities close by, or within driving distance.

Each house provides comfortable and homely accommodation for up to two young people. Accommodation includes kitchen, living room, dining area, bathroom, an office and bedrooms for the young people, some of which are ensuite. The houses each have outdoor space and parking, and one young person has a games and music shed.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection carried out by two inspectors from Care Inspectorate. The inspectors visited on 12 March 2024 between 11:45 to 19:15, and 13 March 2024 between 10:00 to 14:15 and 15:15 to 18:30.

To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about the service. This included previous inspection findings, complaints and registration information. We also reviewed information submitted by the service and information gathered throughout the inspection year.

To inform our evaluation we:

- spoke with seven young people using the service and family members
- spoke with staff and management
- spoke to representatives from social services, education services and advocacy services
- reviewed survey responses received from young people, staff and external professionals
- observed practice and daily life in the house
- reviewed key documents.

Key messages

- The atmosphere within the houses were homely, with lots of photographs around the house, and young people's bedrooms were personalised.
- Young people were supported to access their individual hobbies and interests, as well as trips and holidays.
- Young people were supported to keep in touch with and spend meaningful time with people important to them.
- Staff knew young people well, and communication tools and strategies to support the young people were individualised.
- The service used different therapeutic approaches to support staff and young people, and were continuing to source additional alternative therapies.
- The service were continuing to develop staff's understanding of trauma through debriefs, supervision and training.
- The service attempted to mitigate the impact of staffing issues by using core teams for young people to promote consistency.

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?	5 - Very 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?

5 - Very Good

We evaluated this quality indicator and key question as very good, where major strengths were identified in supporting positive outcomes for children and young people, and there were few areas for improvement.

Staff had a clear understanding of child protection and demonstrated their knowledge of keeping children safe physically. It was pleasing to see the service plans to develop safeguarding training by including adult protection and guardianship training. Some staff had a good understanding of keeping young people safe emotionally. It was pleasing to hear that the service continues to develop a trauma-informed approach by facilitating staff training, reflection, debriefs and supervision. We saw that the service had sourced therapeutic supports for staff and young people, including Tension/Trauma Release Exercises and animal therapies. It was pleasing to hear the service plans to continue to source specialist therapeutic supports.

Risk assessments and care plans were in place for all young people. They were up-to-date and there were quality assurance processes in place to review these documents. Strategies in place to support young people reflected their individual needs and were SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timebound). The service had undertaken work to ensure language was in line with 'The Promise' to ensure young people experienced therapeutic care which followed best practice. Stakeholders and family commented that partnership working was positive and communication with the service was very good.

There were detailed admission and matching assessments in place, and these were completed prior to young people moving to 'Torrs'. The service had met with the young person, family, key stakeholders, and had made preparations for the young person before they arrived. This included having their bedroom ready, producing communication tools, and sourcing local resources which supported the young person's transition.

All of the houses were well-furnished and homely. Young people personalised their bedrooms, and there were photographs of young people with people important to them in all houses. Some staff commented that their relationships with young people were family like and some young people commented that staff were kind. Staff demonstrated their commitment to young people and mitigated staffing issues by covering extra shifts. The service also attempted to mitigate the impact of staffing issues by using core teams for young people to promote consistency. It was pleasing to see that the service continues to review staffing arrangements.

Young people were supported with their rights and views. The service had introduced 'mind of my own' application which young people could use independently, as well as encouraging young people to access advocacy. Young people's identity was supported, and this included photographs and the importance of creating memories. Staff spoke about the importance of young people having connections with people important to them. Support included young people having family to stay overnight, taking young people to see their family, having days out together, or using other methods such as telephone or facetime. Staff, stakeholders and family commented that this was something that worked very well and was flexible around the young person's needs.

Young people were supported with their learning, including school, college, ACAD's school, training programmes or employment. Young people were also supported to go on holiday with staff, and in other aspects of life such as promoting their independence or moving on from the service. Interests were also encouraged, including horse riding, ice skating, ice hockey, games, music, air cadets, train trips and youth clubs. We also saw that the service held special events throughout the year, sometimes inviting the local community, family and other important people to the young people.

What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection

Areas for improvement

Previous area for improvement 1

The management should ensure that identified risk assessments are updated to accurately reflect current needs and risks posed to the young people.

This is to ensure that quality of care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state:

'My needs, as agreed in my personal plan, are fully met, and my wishes taken into account' (HSCS 1.23).

This area for improvement was made on 28 September 2021.

Action taken since then

We found that the service had ensured that risk assessments were individualised and regularly reviewed.

This area for improvement has been met.

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?	5 - Very Good
7.1 Children and young people are safe, feel loved and get the most out of life	5 - Very Good

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