

SuperTroop Support Service

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Unannounced

Completed on:
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Service provided by:
SuperTroop Scotland (SCIO)

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Service no:
CS2023000198

About the service

SuperTroop is a support service for up to 16 children and young people with learning disabilities, additional physical health needs or other complex needs. The service provides an annual summer holiday for a maximum of seven days at Fettes College, Edinburgh. Holidaymakers have exclusive use of one of the boarding houses on the site and use facilities including sports fields, indoor gym, swimming pool and dining hall.

SuperTroop previously operated as a care home service. Following discussion with the provider, the Care Inspectorate advised that the service met the definition of a support service. This involved the provider applying to register SuperTroop as a new service. The application was granted in 2023.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place between 09:10 and 18:15 on 2 July 2024. 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 other intelligence.

In making our evaluations of the service, we:

- reviewed responses to surveys from 12 volunteer helpers
- spoke with three children and young people using the service and three family members
- spoke with seven volunteer helpers and members of the senior team
- observed practice
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Holidaymakers had a highly enjoyable holiday which offered fun, excitement, variety and new experiences.
- The service was committed to reflection and learning, including taking account of feedback, so they could make improvements to the holiday year on year.
- Holidaymakers had the support of a highly motivated team of senior leaders and volunteers who worked very hard to meet all their needs and make the holiday as successful as possible.
- The experience of holidaymakers was enhanced by the high quality accommodation and pleasant setting, with a wide range of facilities.

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 people's wellbeing?	5 - Very Good
How good is our leadership?	4 - Good
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good
How good is our setting?	5 - Very Good
How well is our care and support planned?	5 - Very Good

Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

How well do we support people's wellbeing?

5 - Very Good

We evaluated this key question as **very good**. This means that the service demonstrated major strengths in supporting positive outcomes for children and young people (known as holidaymakers). There were very few areas for improvement and these had minimal adverse impact.

Holidaymakers very much enjoyed their holiday with SuperTroop, and there was lots of fun, excitement and laughter. They experienced very high quality, individualised support and health care from helpers (volunteers) who had taken part in relevant induction and training. A small team of designated volunteers had also received specialist training and implemented a 24-hour programme of monitoring and support to allow them to meet additional health needs. This was an inclusive approach that meant as many young people as possible could take part in and make the most of the holiday experience. Parents' feedback to us was extremely positive: they told us their child had had an 'amazing time' and that the holiday had 'exceeded their expectations'; another said it was 'wonderful'; one described the holiday as 'fantastic'. They all felt their children had been safe.

Children received the medication they needed at the right time so their health outcomes could be maximised. Medication processes had some scope for improvement to reflect good practice, including making a record of medication received and returned at the start and end of the holiday.

The service's approach was based on the positive and effective use of relationships when holidaymakers experienced distress. When more significant intervention was required to prevent serious harm, senior team members reviewed incidents and implemented learning to prevent recurrence. We offered suggestions for some changes to recording practices to meet good practice.

Regular communication with families provided the reassurance they needed, as well as information about how holidaymakers were getting on and how they had spent their time. This was much appreciated, especially because some children had never experienced an extended separation. Individual scrapbooks to take home at the end of the week were a great reminder of happy times to look back on.

Holidaymakers had enjoyable mealtime experiences. The service had made every effort to cater for their individual preferences as well as meet their health and dietary needs, all of which contributed to the holiday's success.

How good is our leadership?**4 - Good**

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

Quality assurance processes ensured effective monitoring of performance and had a positive impact on the quality of service delivery and the experiences of holidaymakers. This included high-level strategic oversight and planning by the board of trustees, including active involvement in the development and review of policies and procedures, which set the direction for the service and established expectations. An annual management report, including an overview of significant events, enabled trustees to fulfil their legal responsibilities. This was supplemented by feedback from a designated trustee tasked with visiting the camp during the holiday week and making direct contact with children and volunteers, though we recommended this be provided in writing.

Throughout the holiday, volunteers were encouraged to make a note of suggestions so their ideas could be captured and put to good use for future holidays. Senior leaders completed a full review of each annual holiday, including interim debriefing and reflection immediately afterwards, and identified areas where improvements could be made. These were implemented on an ongoing basis. Prior to the latest holiday, a comprehensive, stand-alone self-evaluation of the service had also been completed by a senior member of the volunteer team, the conclusions of which had taken into account the views of all those with an interest in the holiday, including family members. This gave due weight to the impact and experiences of children and families and made recommendations to the charity for future development. More recently, senior team members had taken part in training in the use of a visual communication tool. They had used this to increase the focus on the views of holidaymakers with additional communication needs, feedback from whom had added to the overall picture of how well the service was experienced by them.

We concluded that senior leaders were accessible and responsive to feedback, and with the help of more experienced group leaders, provided high quality and effective support to the holiday team. Moving forward, we suggested consideration be given to proportionate audits of medication as an additional quality assurance measure.

We were unable to make a full evaluation of the provider's recruitment practices as some of the relevant records had not been retained for inspection. We clarified expectations, gave some advice on specific issues, and will review this area at the next inspection.

We also reminded the service about the need to notify the Care Inspectorate of significant events. We use these to evaluate providers' ongoing management of incidents and how well they are meeting the needs of children and young people.

How good is our staff team?

5 - Very Good

We evaluated this key question as **very good**. This means that the service demonstrated major strengths in supporting positive outcomes for holidaymakers. Areas for improvement were few and had minimal adverse impact.

In making arrangements for the support of holidaymakers throughout the week, senior leaders took account of a range of relevant factors. This included their individual needs and preferences and the experience, skills and interests of volunteer helpers to ensure the best match possible. Each holiday maker had at least one volunteer with them during the day: this ensured high quality support, familiarity and individual attention that helped them make the most of the week. Additional helpers provided flexibility and allowed a prompt response to changing needs.

Holidaymakers benefited from the extensive experience and skills of senior leaders, some of whom were healthcare professionals. These were put to very good use to enhance the holiday experience. The deployment of volunteers into small teams, each led by a group leader with previous experience of the holiday, worked well and aided effective communication and team building. Highly motivated and energetic helpers felt well supported to provide very good standards of care for children and young people. They had access to a duty rota of senior helpers for advice and backup and were reminded about the importance of regular breaks. This maximised their contribution to what was a very busy, active and successful week.

How good is our setting?

5 - Very Good

We evaluated this key question as **very good**. This means that the service demonstrated major strengths in supporting positive outcomes for holidaymakers. Areas for improvement had minimal adverse impact.

The service made very good use of the impressive and very well maintained facilities and accommodation, with the added bonus of a swimming pool and extensive grounds. These were very well suited to creating a holiday atmosphere and enhanced young people's experiences.

The boarding house accommodation, of which holidaymakers had exclusive use, provided a suitable, safe and secure environment for rest and relaxation, including outdoor space. Senior leaders had taken individual needs and preferences into account in allocating bedrooms and ensuring availability of support overnight. We recommended that the service maintains a record of the relevant risk assessment supporting these decisions, and discussions with family members and relevant professionals.

How well is our care and support planned?**5 - Very Good**

We evaluated this key question as **very good**. The service demonstrated major strengths in supporting positive outcomes for holidaymakers.

There was a very thorough process for obtaining information about individual young people so that the service could cater for their preferences, strengths and social, health, communication and dietary needs. The information gathering process involved discussion with parents, meeting children where possible and consulting relevant professionals. Information was detailed in an accessible, child-centred and sensitive way. We felt that the information provided a very good summary of the key information the volunteer helpers needed to make the holiday experience as positive and stress-free as possible. We recommended the use of individual risk assessments where additional risks are identified during this initial stage, or as the holiday progresses. These should be shared with and accessible to helpers as appropriate, along with other relevant information. This ensures they are well-informed and can take appropriate action to minimise harm.

This year, the service had introduced a new initiative, which involved agreeing with the family a goal or focus for the holiday for the individual holidaymaker, in addition to the service's general aims and objectives. This was specific, achievable and proportionate. As a next step, we suggested providing some brief feedback to families about the extent to which this had been achieved.

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 people's wellbeing?	5 - Very Good
1.3 People's health and wellbeing benefits from their care and support	5 - Very Good
How good is our leadership?	4 - Good
2.2 Quality assurance and improvement is led well	4 - Good
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good
3.3 Staffing arrangements are right and staff work well together	5 - Very Good
How good is our setting?	5 - Very Good
4.1 People experience high quality facilities	5 - Very Good
How well is our care and support planned?	5 - Very Good
5.1 Assessment and personal planning reflects people's outcomes and wishes	5 - Very Good

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