

# Glencruitten Hostel School Care Accommodation Service

Dalintart Drive  
Oban  
PA34 4EF

Telephone: 01631 562 895

**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
25 October 2024

**Service provided by:**  
Argyll and Bute Council

**Service provider number:**  
SP2003003373

**Service no:**  
CS2006130205

## About the service

Glencruitten Hostel is managed by Argyll and Bute Council. The hostel provides accommodation for up to 73 children and young people attending Oban High School, who live too far away to travel daily to school. Young people from the islands of Colonsay, Iona, Mull, Coll and Easdale, may stay at the hostel.

The hostel is located in Oban and is within easy reach of local shops and transport links. The accommodation comprises ample communal space, which offers young people the opportunity to share space with others. Facilities include a large open plan lounge, dining room, study room, and a number of smaller areas for relaxation. Sleeping arrangements are restricted to separate boy and girl accommodation. Bedrooms are located on upper floors and bathing and toileting facilities are available.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 24 and 25 September 2024. The inspection was carried out by two inspectors from the Care Inspectorate. To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this 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:

- . spoke with 16 young people living in the hostel and received 46 responses from young people to our survey
- . spoke with five parents and received 19 responses from parents to our survey
- . spoke with 12 members of staff and management
- . observed practice and daily life
- . reviewed documents
- . spoke with key partners.

## Key messages

- The vast majority of young people told us that they felt safe and well supported.
- The provider did not follow child protection procedures, with regard to risk management.
- Some young people felt they were not always listened to by staff.
- Parents felt that their children had opportunities to build friendships and self confidence.
- Access to wifi was inconsistent.
- The appointment of the new manager had been positive.
- The provider did not consistently follow safer recruitment practices.
- The provider continued to improve the quality and choice of foods.
- Although inconsistent, the presence of external leaders had been supportive of improvement.
- Personal planning could be SMARTer (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timebound).

## 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?	3 - Adequate
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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?

### 3 - Adequate

We evaluated this key question as adequate, where strengths only just outweighed weaknesses.

The vast majority of young people told us that they felt safe and that their key worker regularly checked in on them and most that we spoke with indicated that they liked living in the hostel. A few young people commented that they felt the rules were not always applied consistently by staff and this was also a view expressed by a few parents. Some young people said that they were not always listened to and some commented that they didn't feel staff spent enough time with them.

Several parents identified that opportunities for their children to build friendships, develop independent skills and increased self confidence, was a strength of life in the hostel. Others highlighted that the food could be better and that they would like to feel more assured of nurturing practices for their children.

A few parents advised of their concern about inconsistent access to wifi and the impact of this on their child's learning and attainment. The hostel had secured access to chrome books and this was a supportive resource, which seemed to be appreciated by young people. We have raised the issue of access to wifi at previous inspections. The impact of this on young people, also included the ability to communicate with their family, in private, in a relaxed space. A solution to this problem should be prioritised in support of improving young people's experiences of living away from home (Area for improvement 1).

In light of some of the comments from young people and their families, we believed that by gathering the views of young people and parents/carers more routinely, the hostel would gain a better understanding of their views, to help support improvement. We have identified this as an area for improvement (Area for improvement 2).

We found that there was, for a considerable period of time, and in specific circumstances, ineffective leadership, communication and collaboration between partner agencies with regard to child protection practices. In these circumstances, risk was not reviewed regularly. This increased the likelihood of risk, as the provider had not fully implemented child protection procedures, which protect and safeguard not only those young people involved, but all young people living at the hostel. As a result, we have repeated the requirement made at the last inspection (Requirement 1).

The Care Inspectorate received a complaint relating to staff working in the hostel who had not been subject to the appropriate recruitment checks. We made the provider aware of this and we were satisfied that immediate action was taken to ensure the safety of young people and to address concerns regarding the provider's processes.

We found an improved sense of clarity in terms of the roles and responsibilities of individual staff members since the last inspection. Changes brought about by the appointment of a new manager, was supportive of their work with young people. We observed warm interactions between young people and staff. Some were playing games and taking part in craft activities. Activity planners, contributed to by young people, offered a more consistent approach to promoting health and wellbeing, fun and involvement. We were encouraged to hear from young people that they 'felt better', knowing that activities were planned and that these would take place.

At the last inspection, young people's views about the food, identified that improvement was needed. Although several young people and parents continued to comment on the choice and quality of food, we were encouraged to hear of progress more recently, with regard to informing balanced menus. We spoke with the operational delivery manager for Argyll & Bute Council, who advised that the catering team had implemented new ideas and were working alongside colleagues in other services, to optimise food choices.

We were aware that, for a time, there had been increased external management oversight to support improvement. Evidence demonstrated that this had been informative and supportive of improving staff knowledge and expectation of their roles. Although there was less physical presence of senior leadership over the past several months, targeted developments had positively influenced staff practice and confidence. We identified the need for closer monitoring of training for members of staff on nightshift, a few of whom appeared not to be up to date with mandatory training. More recently, a new external manager had been appointed and the expectation that external leaders play an important active role in safeguarding young people and monitoring their experiences and outcomes, will continue in the future.

We were aware that work on personal planning had been undertaken as a priority. Managers were closely monitoring progress. We were satisfied that young people, for whom there was a need for additional support, had a personal plan. Some personal plans were detailed and contained identified outcomes, but others we believed could be SMARTer. We have identified this as an area for improvement (Area for improvement 3).

## Requirements

1. By 31 December 2024, the provider must ensure the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people.

To do this, the provider must, at a minimum:

a) ensure that child protection procedures are implemented effectively, including that multi agency risk assessment informs the care and support of all young people.

This is to comply with Regulation 4(1)(b) (Welfare of Users) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210).

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

'I benefit from different organisations working together and sharing information about me promptly where appropriate, and I understand how my privacy and confidentiality are respected' (HSCS 4.18) and

'I am protected from harm, neglect, abuse, bullying, and exploitation by people who have a clear understanding of their responsibilities' (HSCS 3.20)..

## Areas for improvement

1. To ensure young people are not disadvantaged in relation to their learning, or in their social and family connections, the provider should fully address the challenges associated with connectivity to wifi technology in the hostel.

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

'If I experience 24 hour care, I am connected, including access to a telephone, radio, tv and the internet' (HSCS, 5.10).

2. To ensure that the views of young people and their families inform improvement, the provider should routinely consult them on their experiences.

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

'I am actively encouraged to be involved in improving the service I use, in a spirit of genuine partnership' (HSCS 4.7).

3. To ensure that personal plans for young people are SMART, the provider should continue to develop plans which meet young people's needs.

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

'My personal plan (sometimes referred to as a care plan) is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices' (HSCS 1.15).

## What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at or since the last inspection

### Requirements

#### Requirement 1

By 1 November 2023, the provider must ensure the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people.

To do this, the provider must, at a minimum:

a) ensure that child protection procedures are implemented effectively, including that multi agency risk assessment informs the care and support of all young people.

This is to comply with Regulation 4(1)(b) (Welfare of Users) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210).

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

'I benefit from different organisations working together and sharing information about me promptly where appropriate, and I understand how my privacy and confidentiality are respected' (HSCS 4.18).

and

'I am protected from harm, neglect, abuse, bullying, and exploitation by people who have a clear understanding of their responsibilities' (HSCS 3.20).

**This requirement was made on 6 December 2023.**

#### Action taken on previous requirement

The provider had notified the Care Inspectorate of a child protection concern, but it had not fully implemented child protection procedures. A requirement was made at the last inspection with regard to implementing child protection procedures and we have repeated that requirement, at this inspection.

**Not met**

## 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

To ensure that young people experience new and stimulating activities which promote their social, emotional, and physical wellbeing, the provider should secure driver training for care staff, to optimise these opportunities.

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

'I can choose to have an active life and participate in a range of recreational, social, creative, physical learning activities every day, both indoors and out' (HSCS 1.25).

and

'I can maintain and develop my interests, activities, and what matters to me in the way that I like' (HSCS 2.22).

**This area for improvement was made on 6 December 2023.**

#### Action taken since then

The provider had explored ways in which to optimise activities for young people. We were satisfied that current arrangements were sufficient.

This area for improvement has been met.

#### Previous area for improvement 2

To ensure that young people have a good understanding of the benefits of healthy eating, the provider should:

a) explore ways to educate young people that support and improved understanding of regulations governing food preparations. This will help young people to understand the reasons for reduced salt, saturated fat, and sugar in their diets.

and

b) formally consult with young people in ways that help to clearly and consistently respond to their food preferences. Young people who are supported to inform menus, will feel more involved and better educated about healthy diets.

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



'I can choose suitably presented and healthy meals and snacks, including fresh fruit and vegetables, and participate in menu planning' (HSCS 1.33).

**This area for improvement was made on 6 December 2023.**

### Action taken since then

The provider had supported an improved understanding of regulations governing food preparations. Young people had been encouraged to contribute their views about food preferences and the formation of menus.

This area for improvement has been met.

### Previous area for improvement 3

To ensure that where there is a risk that young people will choose and consume foods that will not as fully support and sustain a healthy diet, the provider should:

a) support young people to make positive choices and monitor food intake, where risk management plans determine this need. Care staff should sit with young people to assess progress and encourage good outcomes

and

b) closely monitor and analyse patterns of behaviour, where young people choose not to eat their meals in the hostel. Young people should be supported to develop an improved understanding of the benefits of healthy food choices, specific to their needs.

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

'If I need help with with eating and drinking, this is carried out in a dignified way and my personal preferences are respected' (HSCS 1.34).

**This area for improvement was made on 6 December 2023.**

### Action taken since then

The provider had more closely monitored all young people's food intake, whilst eating in the hostel. They had consulted young people about seating arrangements and had responded in line with their views. More robust practices helped to identify and respond to young people's choice to dine elsewhere. Clear communications with parents/carers provided assurance of their awareness of their child's eating patterns.

This area for improvement has been met.

### Previous area for improvement 4

To ensure that young people receive the highest standards of care and support, the provider should:

a) allocate and implement external management responsibilities; and

b) provide high quality training relating to child protection.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with 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).

**This area for improvement was made on 6 December 2023.**

## Action taken since then

There had been a more consistent presence of senior leaders in the hostel following on from the last inspection. Unfortunately, the availability of those leaders had ceased and over the past several months, senior leadership was provided at a distance. In more recent weeks, the hostel experienced a change in line management and we provided clarity with regard to the expectation of the external manager, in terms of safeguarding and promoting outcomes for young people. Following on from the last inspection, there had been a focus on child protection training. The provider had ensured almost all staff had attended this training and/or had completed on line safeguarding training. Where staff had yet to complete in person training, there was a plan in place to ensure this occurred.

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](http://www.careinspectorate.com).

## Detailed evaluations

How well do we support children and young people's rights and wellbeing?	3 - Adequate
7.1 Children and young people are safe, feel loved and get the most out of life	3 - Adequate
7.2 Leaders and staff have the capacity and resources to meet and champion children and young people's needs and rights	3 - Adequate

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Care Inspectorate  
Compass House  
11 Riverside Drive  
Dundee  
DD1 4NY

[enquiries@careinspectorate.com](mailto:enquiries@careinspectorate.com)

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