

# GATE Support Service

Donaldson's School  
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**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
6 December 2024

**Service provided by:**  
The Governors of the Donaldson Trust

**Service provider number:**  
SP2003002649

**Service no:**  
CS2016348904

## About the service

Gate and Treehouse adult services are registered with the Care Inspectorate, under one registration (GATE) to provide daytime support to up to 80 neurodivergent people aged sixteen and over. Provided by Donaldson's Trust, the services are separately located at the Donaldson's Linlithgow campus and have their own staff teams. Treehouse supports people on a 2:1 basis, in independent studios which each have their own individualised, kitchen, social and outdoor space. GATE supports people through group programmes offering skills development and wellbeing opportunities.

GATE is located in a modern, well resourced, spacious building and both services have access to the large campus facilities that include extensive outdoor space and a swimming pool.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 26, 27 and 28 November 2024 and 4 December 2024. The inspection was carried out by one inspector 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 people using the service, and their family and representatives;
- spoke with staff and management;
- observed practice and daily life;
- reviewed documents;
- spoke with visiting professionals.

## Key messages

People were supported safely with warmth, nurture and compassion.

People were respected as individuals, felt included and support had a positive impact on their wellbeing.

People had access to a wide range of experiences.

The service needed to more clearly define how it aimed to support different people using different parts of the service.

Staff were committed and caring.

Leaders needed to have a method of assessing staffing needs across all parts of the service.

## 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?	4 - Good
How good is our staff team?	4 - Good

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

## How well do we support people's wellbeing?

4 - Good

We evaluated the key question as good where a number of important strengths which, taken together, clearly outweigh areas for improvement. The strengths had a significant positive impact on people's experiences and outcomes. However, improvements are required to maximise wellbeing and ensure that supported people consistently have experiences and outcomes which are as positive as possible

People who were accessing both Gate and Treehouse were supported with compassion, nurture and respect. Support had a positive impact on individuals' health and wellbeing as the attuned relationships with staff meant any early indicators of change were noticed and acted upon. The teams understood their role in addressing health inequalities and they advocated on behalf of people who were not accessing the services they needed.

Supported people felt involved in shaping the day-to-day structure of their support and where possible, were encouraged to make decisions about their wellbeing. Staff were creative in supporting choice and used the strength of their relationship and understanding of supported people to take an individualised approach to inclusive day to day decision making.

Where supported people communicated their needs or distress in ways that presented risk to self or others, staff offered a therapeutic response. We were confident leaders themselves had addressed the need to improve how incidents were recorded and analysed, but we identified that they should also inform the Care Inspectorate in line with current guidance.

**(See area for improvement 1).**

Support was driven by a good understanding of wellbeing, and the safe and nurturing environment had general benefits for most people much of the time. Whilst each supported person had identified goals, for some these lacked aspiration and meaningful links to the aims and design of the service. Across both parts of the service people had fun and many opportunities to engage in activities they enjoyed. To maximise people's potential and ensure people are getting what they need and expect from their support, the service should review the aims and objectives for both Treehouse and Gate. **(See area for improvement 2).**

### Areas for improvement

1. To support people's development and help them fulfil their potential, the provider should clearly define and evaluate the support that Gate and Treehouse offers.

This should include but is not limited to;

- (a) reviewing and updating the aims and objectives for each part of the service and ensuring these are reflected in conditions of registration under which the service operates;
- (b) ensure that personal goals reflect people's potential;
- (c) ensure the service is resourced to deliver and evaluate the support defined in the revised aims and objectives.

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

'I get the most out of life because the people and the organisation who support and care for me have an enabling attitude and believe in my potential'. (HSCS 1.6)

2. To support people's safety the provider should ensure that it executes its responsibility to notify the Care Inspectorate of all relevant incidents

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

'I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice'. (HSCS 4.11).

## How good is our staff team?

4 - Good

We evaluated the key question as good where a number of important strengths which, taken together, clearly outweigh areas for improvement. The strengths had a significant positive impact on people's experiences and outcomes. However, improvements are required to maximise wellbeing and ensure that supported people consistently have experiences and outcomes which are as positive as possible

Staff in Treehouse and Gate were highly committed and supported people with diverse needs, strengths and levels of dependency. Staffing arrangements differed across each part of the service. Where need, risk and dependency were robustly assessed and intended outcomes of support clearly defined, the staffing arrangements were effective in delivering safe, outcome focussed care and support that reflected the needs and preferences of individuals.

People using Gate had access to a wide range of positive experiences that were collectively delivered by both wellbeing practitioners and specialist tutors. Timetabled sessions were predominately group based and well planned and resourced and whilst there was a plan for each day, sessions were responsively altered to meet people's changing choices and preferences. When people needed a higher level of individual support, we did not see how this was factored into staffing levels or plans, and whilst leaders had a good understanding of people's needs and the collective impact of different people using the service at different times, staffing arrangements were fixed thus limited opportunity for practitioners to plan for and invest their time proportionately to meet people's outcomes.

**(See area for improvement 1).**

The organisation was committed to ensuring staff had the specialist skills to deliver the best support possible and promoted a culture of value and respect. Whilst most staff acknowledged they had good opportunities for professional development, support and supervision, some people had felt the collective impact of several changes in leadership and service delivery, impacted on morale. Leaders were keen to understand and address this and we were confident they were taking time to understand how staff were feeling.

## Areas for improvement

1. To support people's development and promote positive outcomes, the provider should ensure a mechanism for assessing staffing arrangements, based on the needs of supported people, is in place.

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

'My needs are met by the right number of people'. (HSCS 3.15).

'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).

And to comply with section 7 of the Health and Care (Staffing)(Scotland) Act 2019.

## 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 people's wellbeing?	4 - Good
1.3 People's health and wellbeing benefits from their care and support	4 - Good
How good is our staff team?	4 - Good
3.3 Staffing arrangements are right and staff work well together	4 - Good

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