

Ochil Tower School

School Care Accommodation Service

140 High Street
Auchterarder
PH3 1AD

Telephone: 01764 662416

Type of inspection:

Unannounced

Completed on:

15 January 2019

Service provided by:

Ochil Tower School

Service provider number:

SP2003002133

Service no:

CS2003009785

About the service

The service was registered with the Care Inspectorate on 1 April 2011.

The conditions of registration are:

1. Belvidere will provide accommodation to a maximum of 7 pupils.
2. Elmtree will provide accommodation to a maximum of 4 pupils.
3. Priory will provide accommodation to a maximum of 5 pupils.
4. Rowan will provide accommodation to a maximum of 6 pupils.
5. Sycamore will provide accommodation to a maximum of 7 pupils.
6. Coach House will provide accommodation to a maximum of one pupil.
7. To comply with the current staffing schedules attached dated 12 November 2010, which must be displayed together with the certificate.

At the time of the inspection Elmtree House and Coach House were not being used.

Ochil Tower School is an independent, non-denominational school for children and young people with additional support needs, aged between 5 and 18 years. It provides care and education for both residential and day pupils through the curative education approach which combines social care, education and therapy and is based on the philosophy of Rudolf Steiner, adapted by Karl Konig, the founder of the world-wide Camphill movement. The Care Inspectorate does not regulate the education service and solely focused on the quality of service provided to resident pupils.

The five houses and three school buildings are set in grounds located unobtrusively off the main street of Auchterarder, enabling the school to be part of the local community. The grounds offer facilities for gardening, rearing animals and play activities as part of the curriculum.

Day-to-day management is the responsibility of Head of Care and CEO. House coordinators work alongside permanent staff. The House coordinators live onsite at the school. Other voluntary co-workers, many from overseas, spend a year or more at Ochil Tower assisting with care and education.

What people told us

During the inspection we spoke with some of the children and young people who were resident at the school; all indicated that they enjoyed their time there. Some spoke about the things they enjoyed most, doing jigsaws, going out walking. We observed the staff with the children and young people and saw that they were responsive to their needs. They understood the children and young people in their care very well and were very good at interpreting actions and sounds to ensure that the children and young people were able to communicate their needs.

Self assessment

The service had not been asked to complete a self assessment in advance of the inspection. We discussed their own improvement plans and quality assurance systems which identified their priorities for development and how they were monitoring of the quality of the provision within the service.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	4 - Good
Quality of environment	5 - Very Good
Quality of staffing	5 - Very Good
Quality of management and leadership	5 - Very Good

Quality of care and support

Findings from the inspection

At the last inspection we made a requirement in relation to medication. At this inspection we found that there had been improvements to administration and recording of medication. Children and adults were receiving the correct medication at the correct times. However, we also found that there were areas which still needed to be improved on. We discussed these areas for improvement with the manager of the service who committed to making immediate changes. Managers need to ensure that they have an overview of the medication audit.

At the last inspection we made a requirement in relation to care plans, risk assessments and behaviour management plans. At this inspection we found that there had been significant work carried out in relation to care planning. There were further improvements to be made. In order that all staff can be fully aware of the plans for individual children and young people, a working plan should be available within each of the houses. Some aspects of the care plan need to be expanded on and more specific in relation to strategies to use when engaging with pupils. Although outcomes were identified, it would be helpful to state barriers which could impede progress. Some care plans identified areas of progress. We would like to see this extended across all care plans.

At the last inspection we made a requirement in relation to recording of incidents. At this inspection we saw significant progress in relation to the development of a new incident form. Incidents were being recorded and notified to the Care Inspectorate when necessary. However, we noted that the information in relation to incident debrief was limited and needed to be expanded upon.

At the last inspection we made a recommendation in relation to the adult protection policy. At this inspection we found that the service had produced an adult protection procedure which was detailed and informative. Staff we spoke with understood their responsibilities in relation to child and adult protection.

At the last inspection we made a recommendation in relation to transition plans. At this inspection we found that the development of the life skills centre had added significant value to the pupils' experiences in school. This was echoed by comments from transitional social workers who said that the school had worked intensively with commissioning teams to ensure that contracts were in place well in advance of the transitions.

At this inspection we noted that interaction between staff and children and young people was nurturing and supportive. Staff really knew the young people well and they responded to them in a very positive and caring way. There were a number of animals and pets on campus which offered children and young people a different care dimension.

The education and care team worked well together to provide a holistic experience for the children.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

At the last inspection we made a requirement in relation to environmental risk assessment. At this inspection we found that the school had taken action to address the environmental issues identified at the last inspection. They had developed processes to ensure that risk was continuously monitored and were moving towards more detailed risk assessments which would further enhance this and keep children and young people safe.

At the last inspection we made a recommendation in relation to cleaning processes. The school had made changes to the infection control policy and as a result hygiene standards were much better. We saw that the houses were clean and tidy and staff worked alongside children and young people to keep them in a homely manner.

The school had made significant improvement in relation to many areas of the environment. The life skills centre had provided added value and experiential impact for pupils. Thought had gone into the provision of new pathways to make access easier whilst continuing to enhance the natural environment. Further improvements were planned which, when completed, will provide additional opportunities for pupils.

We asked the school to consider some aspects of the environment within Belvidere House, particularly in relation to the banister drop in the hallway and fire evacuation from upper floors. Managers committed to carrying this forward.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of staffing

Findings from the inspection

At the last inspection we made a recommendation in relation to staff training. At this inspection we found that the school had started to have an overview of staff training needs and had recently developed a training matrix to assist with this. A new eLearning system for mandatory training will further enhance this overview.

At the last inspection we made a recommendation in relation to staff supervision. At this inspection we saw evidence that supervision took place regularly, helped staff to reflect on practice and supported professional development.

At the last inspection we made a recommendation in relation to recruitment of staff and volunteers. At this inspection we found that the school human resources consultants were in the process of reviewing the safe recruitment policy. We found that the school were able to evidence fitness checks for staff better. Skype interviews were being carried out and evidenced within personnel files. In addition, evidence to work in UK was available in those who required this. New safer recruitment documentation to be introduced will further assist with the task of safe recruitment.

Significant changes had taken place in relation to work patterns to improve staff work life balance. Whilst there had been initial anxiety about this in relation to impact on young people, we found that they had responded well to these changes. The changes to the work patterns meant that the school required more staff. This had proved challenging, however they were confident that they could achieve increased staffing in the near future. We suggested that managers should closely monitor staffing levels to ensure these were appropriate and meet the needs of the young people.

We observed staff to be welcoming, open, transparent and accommodating. They were kind and caring towards the young people they worked with and were clearly committed and dedicated to their work.

The quality of staffing has been further enhanced by the work of additional staff including administrative, health and safety, maintenance, human resources and other support staff. All staff who needed to be, were registered with the Scottish Social Services Council and had opportunities to pursue training to meet conditions of registration.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of management and leadership

Findings from the inspection

The changes in management and leadership over the past year had had a positive impact on the overall quality of service provision.

The management team had retained the very positive aspects of the nurturing ethos of the school whilst following through on the necessary improvements needed to care, environment and staffing.

Staff told us that the management team were approachable and supportive. Although the management team were faced with many challenges relating to the changes, this had been carried out in a sensitive and diplomatic way.

Quality assurance systems were in place and further work was being carried out to improve these, to monitor and evaluate all of these changes, to ensure that they are embedded in practice and have positive impact on care.

Whilst we did not speak to any members of the board during the inspection, we saw that there were processes in place for board overview of the service. We saw minutes and reports to the board which provided reassurance and governance.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

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

Previous requirements

Requirement 1

In order to ensure the effective administration of medication, the provider must ensure that there are robust procedures in place to audit medication processes and records for audit of medication are available at inspection. This is in order to comply with:

SSI 210 (2011) 4(1)(a) - a regulation that a provider must make proper provision for the health, welfare and safety of service users

Timescale for implementation: By 1 July 2018

This requirement was made on 28 March 2018.

Action taken on previous requirement

We have commented on this requirement within the body of this report.

Met - within timescales

Requirement 2

In order for staff to work effectively with children, the provider must ensure that care plans, behaviour management plans and risk assessments are produced as a result of multiagency discussion including parents. The plans must be reviewed in line with current legislation.

This is in order to comply with:

The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011, SSI 2011/110 Regulation 4(1)(a) - a regulation that a provider must make proper provision for the health, welfare and safety of service users.

Timescale: By 1 July 2018

This requirement was made on 28 March 2018.

Action taken on previous requirement

We have commented on this requirement within the body of this report.

Met - within timescales

Requirement 3

The provider must ensure that robust procedures are in place to audit incidents. Records must identify why the restraint was needed, strategies to be used to reduce restraint and measurement of progress for each individual young person.

This is in order to comply with:

The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011, SSI 2011/110 Regulation 4(1)(a) - a regulation that a provider must make proper provision for the health, welfare and

safety of service users.
Timescale: By 1 July 2018

This requirement was made on 28 March 2018.

Action taken on previous requirement

We have commented on this requirement within the body of this report.

Met - within timescales

Requirement 4

In order to protect the safety of children and staff, the provider must ensure that robust procedures are in place to audit environmental risk. From this, they must produce an action plan to identify how they will minimise environmental risk and ensure that this is regularly reviewed and updated to reflect progress and /or effective maintenance.

This is in order to comply with:

The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011, SSI 2011/110 Regulation 4(1)(a) - a regulation that a provider must make proper provision for the health, welfare and safety of service users

Timescale: By 1 July 2018

This requirement was made on 28 March 2018.

Action taken on previous requirement

We have commented on this requirement within the body of this report.

Met - within timescales

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

Previous recommendations

Recommendation 1

We recommend that managers further develop the adult protection policy and procedure and ensure that it is fully understood by staff.

National Care Standards, School Care Accommodation - Standard 3: Care and protection

This recommendation was made on 28 March 2018.

Action taken on previous recommendation

We have commented on this recommendation within the body of this report.

Recommendation 2

Systematic plans for transition including timescales and identified tasks should identify how staff can plan for day to day experiences to support young people into adulthood.

National Care Standards, School Care Accommodation - Standard 16: Leaving school

This recommendation was made on 28 March 2018.

Action taken on previous recommendation

We have commented on this recommendation within the body of this report.

Recommendation 3

Managers should review cleaning processes within houses to ensure that all cleaning tasks are effectively completed. In addition all staff should undertake food hygiene training.

National Care Standards, School Care Accommodation - Standard 5: Comfort, safety and security.

This recommendation was made on 28 March 2018.

Action taken on previous recommendation

We have commented on this recommendation within the body of this report.

Recommendation 4

Managers should develop a cross service training plan based on monitoring of learning need and from this provide a training programme for all staff.

National Care Standards, School Care Accommodation - Standard 7: Management and staffing

This recommendation was made on 28 March 2018.

Action taken on previous recommendation

We have commented on this recommendation within the body of this report.

Recommendation 5

Managers should review the staff supervision policy and procedure to ensure that timescales for supervision are realistic, recording is consistent and provides evidence of reflective practice planning and professional development.

National Care Standards, School Care Accommodation - Standard 7: Management and staffing

This recommendation was made on 28 March 2018.

Action taken on previous recommendation

We have commented on this recommendation within the body of this report.

Recommendation 6

Managers should review the safe recruitment policy and procedure to reflect better emphasis on fitness checks for permanent staff, consistency in use of Skype interviewing for volunteers and evidence of right to work in the UK.

National Care Standards, School Care Accommodation - Standard 7: Management and staffing

This recommendation was made on 28 March 2018.

Action taken on previous recommendation

We have commented on this recommendation within the body of this report.

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at www.careinspectorate.com.

Enforcement

No enforcement action has been taken against this care service since the last inspection.

Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings
28 Mar 2018	Unannounced	Care and support 4 - Good Environment 4 - Good Staffing 4 - Good Management and leadership 4 - Good
19 Jan 2017	Announced	Care and support 6 - Excellent Environment 5 - Very good Staffing 5 - Very good Management and leadership 5 - Very good
4 Mar 2016	Unannounced	Care and support 6 - Excellent Environment 6 - Excellent Staffing 5 - Very good Management and leadership 5 - Very good
4 Mar 2015	Unannounced	Care and support 6 - Excellent Environment 6 - Excellent Staffing 5 - Very good Management and leadership 6 - Excellent
5 Sep 2014	Unannounced	Care and support 6 - Excellent

Date	Type	Gradings	
		Environment Staffing Management and leadership	6 - Excellent 5 - Very good 6 - Excellent
18 Nov 2013	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good 5 - Very good 5 - Very good 5 - Very good
30 May 2013	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good 5 - Very good 5 - Very good 5 - Very good
20 Nov 2012	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	6 - Excellent 5 - Very good 6 - Excellent 5 - Very good
9 Mar 2012	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	6 - Excellent Not assessed Not assessed 5 - Very good
17 Nov 2011	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	6 - Excellent Not assessed Not assessed 5 - Very good
12 Jan 2011	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	6 - Excellent Not assessed Not assessed Not assessed
13 Oct 2010	Announced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	6 - Excellent Not assessed 5 - Very good Not assessed
19 Mar 2010	Unannounced	Care and support	6 - Excellent

Date	Type	Gradings	
		Environment Staffing Management and leadership	Not assessed 5 - Very good Not assessed
2 Oct 2009	Announced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	6 - Excellent 6 - Excellent 5 - Very good 5 - Very good
4 Sep 2008		Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good 5 - Very good 5 - Very good 4 - Good

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