

Closeburn Centre Care Home Service

Closeburn
Thornhill
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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
7 July 2023

Service provided by:
High Trees Ltd

Service provider number:
SP2003002567

Service no:
CS2003010884

About the service

Closeburn is registered as a care home service for children and young people. It is situated on the outskirts of Dumfries and is located within a large older styled building with modern extensions and set in extensive grounds.

The service has been registered since 2002. It is an independent resource that provides care to a maximum of 11 young people who require, for a variety of reasons, to be looked after and accommodated away from home. Referrals are made from local authorities throughout the UK.

Within the building the provider also operate a small school offering education for day pupils and for the young people who live at Closeburn Centre. The attached school is regulated by Education Scotland.

At the time of inspection there were seven young people living in the service, some of whom had been placed from Local Authorities from outwith Scotland.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced which took place on fourth of July. 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 five people using the service and three family members.
- We read written feedback from another family member and from seven professionals external to the service.
- Spoke with four staff and two members of management
- Observed practice and daily life
- Reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Young people reported feeling safe and having staff members they could trust.
- Young people were doing very well in education.
- Young people were engaging with the local community and participating in local music events and gala days.
- The service was reconfiguring some rooms to make the service more homely and comfortable for young people.
- The service provider had a very robust detailed and effective quality assurance system in operation.
- Although overall positive the service staff could work to improve communications with some families.

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 key question as very good. This was because we found major strengths in supporting positive outcomes for people. There were very few areas for improvement. Those that did exist we considered would have minimal adverse impact on people's experiences and outcomes.

Young people felt safe and had confidence in the staff team supporting them. Staff had developed very positive relationships with the young people. All young people who spoke with us stated they felt safe in the service knowing they could trust the staff who were there to care for them. The young people acknowledged that group living involved occasional challenges in respect of relationships with peers but that they knew staff would intervene if appropriate. We observed young people's confident interactions with staff who they were also clearly comfortable with. We also observed staff ensuring young people were in agreement with the level of support being offered and respectful of the young people's rights to privacy and independence. From discussions with the staff it was clear that they knew the young people well and had a good knowledge of their needs, preferences and vulnerabilities.

Young people were empowered and encouraged to engage in their care plan and to voice their opinions. Young people's access to independent advocacy was clearly evident. They had access to external advocacy services but also to responsible adults outwith the service such as social workers, health professionals and their family. This assured young people that their views would always be represented.

Staff were very clear that restrictive practices were used only as a last resort; and then only to ensure everyone's safety. Those that had been involved in restrictive practices were very clear about the reasons why and had empathy for the young people. All staff we spoke with expressed the aim to reduce restrictive practices as much as possible but were also alert to being aware it may be necessary, depending on the levels of risk. We found the staff group engaged in very good reflective discussions around any incidents that occurred and took time to ensure they gathered the young people's views.

It was clear from our observations and interaction with staff that they respected the young people's rights and privacy. Before sharing personal information they sought young people's consent or supported the young people to discuss as much as they felt comfortable with.

The service was developing a staff group aware of trauma informed practice and establishing such knowledge in their approach to young people's care. Staff provided varying levels of understanding of trauma informed practice; in proportion to their levels of experience. All staff we spoke with had a good basic understanding of how trauma could impact on people's responses and therefore on young people's behaviours. The staff group benefitted from the service psychotherapist who both supported young people individually and also consulted with the staff group to further their understanding of young people's needs.

Connections between young people and family and those important to them were being maintained. The young people were supported by staff to meet with family both in the home and in the community. This support was very important in reassuring young people that these relationships would be protected and also reassuring to the parents that their children were thriving and being cared for. However, in a small minority of cases there was some work required on maintaining positive communications with some family members.

In discussing the recording of some incidents, it was acknowledged that some detail was not accurate. Whilst this had potential to impact on working relationships it was agreed by service managers and family members that clearer communications would address this issue. We will look further at the quality of communications during the next inspection.

Children and young people's aspirations, interests and skills were consistently supported and developed. Activities they had prior interests in, such as being involved in producing music and caring for animals, was encouraged, and community resources sought for activities such as keep fit and dance. The young people were also provided new and exciting experiences, which broadened their horizons. Attending local community events such as music festivals and gala days gave the young people the opportunity to further develop social interests and connections with the local community

Education is a central part of the service's aims and the young people were achieving well in school. Young people were proud to discuss how well they were doing in their education, particularly as, for some, this was greater than expectations prior to arriving at the service.

Management and leadership of the service was a strength. The staff group commented on the high standard of care and support that was modelled by the manager and external manager. Staff were clear that they could approach management with any issues, and they would be appropriately guided and advised. This provided consistency and clear vision for the staff of the approach of the service to care and support and the aims and objectives.

Staff reported good morale among the staff and a very supportive culture. This provided a stable base from which to develop a consistent staff group.

The external management of the service was also consistent and supportive. Young people knew the external manager well and could approach them if needed. Matching documents completed by the external manager and manager contained assessments that considered the impact on one another of the resident group of young people. This assessment contributed to providing a stable environment for current and new residents.

Young people and staff did not indicate any issue with staffing levels and there were sufficient staff to support all the activities. There had been occasion when staff turnover had temporarily affected some young people due to the ending of relationships. This also affected some level of support in the short term. However, a stable core staff group was maintained to build the team around. This core group provided consistency and reassurances for the young people whilst new recruits become established.

Staff recruitment and training followed best practice and the individual needs of the young people. There was a mix of experienced and less experienced staff in the service. The service followed safer recruitment principles in employing new staff regarding background checks and references. The staff also had access to the service's training suite in addition to some specific training that was required for young people's needs.

There was a clear strength in the very comprehensive, robust system the service employed for self-evaluation and quality assurance purposes. Frequent internal inspections were conducted by an independent agent. These were themed inspections looking at specific areas of the service, or more general inspections if requested by the service provider. These evaluations resulted in reports containing very good reflections on the areas looked at and assessments of the evidence. These processes were clearly informed with recognition of trauma informed practice, attachment theory impact and ASD training. The level of scrutiny did not appear to be too invasive with managers appreciative of the feedback they received and acting upon any recommendations identified to improve the quality of care.

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
7.2 Leaders and staff have the capacity and resources to meet and champion children and young people's needs and rights	5 - Very Good

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