

Ochil Tower School

School Care Accommodation Service

140 High Street
Auchterarder
PH3 1AD

Telephone: 01764 662416

Type of inspection: Announced
Inspection completed on: 19 January 2017

Service provided by:
Ochil Tower School

Service provider number:
SP2003002133

Care service number:
CS2003009785

About the service

This 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 seven pupils.
2. Elmtree will provide accommodation to a maximum of four pupils.
3. Priory will provide accommodation to a maximum of five pupils.
4. Rowan will provide accommodation to a maximum of six pupils.
5. Sycamore will provide accommodation to a maximum of seven 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 Priory and Coach House were not being used as residencies. Priory was in the process of being refurbished.

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. Day-to-day management is the responsibility of four joint coordinators who, with other experienced and permanent co-workers whose home is the school, form the core group members. Other co-workers, many from overseas, spend a year or more at Ochil Tower, assisting with care and education. There is also a small number of paid care staff and ancillary workers.

The five houses and three school buildings are set in grounds located unobtrusively off the main street of Auchterarder, 14 miles west of Perth, 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.

Ochil Tower School's aims include:

"A form of community life which recognises the universality of the human spirit as an essential element in its formation and working. Expression is given to this in the celebration of festivals, concern for the environment and mutual care.

Developing shared living situations which recognise the needs of individuals.

The staff/client relationship is replaced by mutual relationships based on sharing daily life in all its manifold aspects, including preparation and sharing of meals, caring for the household and surroundings, creating social events and so on.

Operating financially so that there is a flexible relationship between work and payment for work done."

What people told us

During this inspection we met with many of the pupils. They told us that Ochil Tower was a good school and they liked staying there. They identified very positive relationships they had made with friends and staff.

During the inspection we spoke with eight parents by telephone. Views of the school were very positive, with

young people's relationships with staff and effective communication being highlighted as particular strengths.

All eight respondents stated that they were very happy with the care and support offered to their young person.

Comments included:

"excellent care and support"

"building confidence and social skills"

"communication is very good - I am very happy with the service"

"brilliant - I cannot fault it"

"(key worker) is very good - I can always get hold of someone by telephone"

"it is the best care and support we have seen"

"communication is great - we get to speak with the people we need to"

"(young person) is more independent - he has very good relationships with the staff"

"(key worker) is lovely - (young person) gets on with them very well"

"top class - (young person) is looked after very well"

"life changing - absolutely chuffed with the service"

"it has changed family dynamics in a positive way"

"excellent - I couldn't praise it highly enough - communication is excellent"

"I am very, very happy with the service - the people are tremendous"

We also saw the returns from the service's own parent/carer survey carried out on 14 January 2017. Fourteen parents/carers had responded and indicated a high level of satisfaction with the service. They highlighted young people's progress, in addition to effective communication and relationships between young people and staff as the key strengths of the school.

Self assessment

The Care Inspectorate received a fully completed self assessment from the provider.

The provider identified what it thought the service did well and gave examples of improvement. The self assessment clearly identified some key areas that the provider thought could be improved and showed how the service intended to do this.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	6 - Excellent
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

In the 2016/17 inspecting year the Care Inspectorate is scoping child sexual exploitation (CSE) practice in children and pupil's services. This is part of our contribution to 'Scotland's National Action Plan to tackle Child Sexual

Exploitation' and focusses on frameworks of CSE practice, staff understanding and care planning outcomes. Child sexual exploitation care practice and staff awareness were evident. The service could develop this further through continued training updates.

Staff were aware of and followed child protection guidelines which meant that children experienced safe care within the residencies. The service had a child protection policy and procedure which was closely followed by staff. During the inspection we made some suggestions which we felt would improve the child protection policy.

All of the pupils had care plans which reflected the children's aims within the house setting and how these would be achieved. We suggested that care plans could further reflect the GIRFEC guidance and make use of the SHANARRI indicators and wellbeing wheel to assess pupil's progress and strategies to help them achieve their potential. **(see Recommendation 1)**

Care plans included very good information and guidance about medical needs and how the service ensured the health and wellbeing of individual pupils. We saw that medication was well-managed within the service.

We saw that all pupils had a risk assessment which provided guidance to staff about how they should minimise risk to keep everyone safe. We identified some instances where incidents should have resulted in changes to risk assessments. We asked the managers to review the process for monitoring incidents. **(see Recommendation 2)**

We saw that all the staff had very positive relationships with the pupils within the care setting and in education. Staff knew the pupils well and were acutely aware of their physical care needs and their particular likes and dislikes. We saw that pupils experienced a nurturing, caring environment which respected them as individuals. Staff strived to offer pupils activities they enjoyed and would further promote their development. Staff were very mindful of group dynamics and relationships and helped pupils to live as comfortably as possible within the group environment.

Mealtimes were comfortable and tranquil events when everyone in the house met together. Pupils and adults were involved in discussion whilst enjoying their meals. Pupils ate well and staff tried to help them extend their tastes and introduced new foods when appropriate.

Established rhythms and routines helped pupils to feel safe and relaxed. Everyone in the houses played a part in ensuring tasks were carried out and the house ran smoothly. We saw that pupils made choices about a range of things, like activities, menus and personalising their rooms.

Weekly progress sheets provided placing social workers and parents with updates to inform them about developments in the pupil's lives and provide them with opportunity to comment or suggest changes to care plans.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 2

1. We recommend that the school should review care plans to further reflect the GIRFEC guidance and make use of the SHANARRI indicators and wellbeing wheel to assess pupil's progress and develop strategies to help them achieve their potential.

National Care Standards, School Care Accommodation Services: Standard 6 - Support arrangements

2. We recommend that all incidents are closely monitored and when necessary result in changes to risk assessments.

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

Grade: 6 - excellent

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

The school were successful in creating a supportive community culture for both staff and pupils. This resulted in a very welcoming and calm atmosphere throughout the campus.

The school had made improvements to the environment since the last inspection. Rearrangements to accommodation helped to provide more spaces for pupils to use individually and in groups. In addition the school had recognised the need to make further improvements and had plans to refurbish accommodation to provide better facilities for all of the pupils.

We saw that some redecoration had taken place in the residencies to improve the comfort and preferences of the pupils.

All of the pupils had their own bedroom. The bedrooms provided private space and were comfortable and well furnished.

In all of the houses the dining room provided a hub where pupils and staff gathered for meals and conversation.

There were enough communal rooms for pupils to spend time on their own if they wished or join in group activities.

The houses were clean and tidy. Standards of decoration were very good. We saw attractive displays which identified changes to seasons and current themes. The displays were helpful to sensory development where pupils were encouraged to touch, taste and smell the items on the displays.

Pupils had access to extensive grounds within a beautiful setting. The grounds were well used by everyone, taking walks, cycling, in the playgrounds and planting and growing. All of this was beneficial to promoting physical activity and wellbeing.

During the inspection we discussed some aspects of security and how this could be further improved. We also stressed the importance of continued close supervision of pupils to minimise risk given the location of the campus

We saw that maintenance of the premises was of a good standard and maintenance issues were dealt with quickly and effectively.

The school was an integral part of the local community and enjoyed the support of many of the local shops and services.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of staffing

Findings from the inspection

The staff we met during the inspection were knowledgeable about the needs of the pupils in their care and demonstrated commitment to finding strategies to meet those needs.

The school ensured that enough staff were available at all times to meet the needs of all pupils within the residencies.

We saw that appropriate recruitment and induction arrangements were in place for all staff and volunteers to ensure that those working at the school were suitable for the task.

All staff were registered with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC). Most staff held appropriate qualifications. A small number of staff had conditions on their registration with SSSC to attain appropriate qualifications for full registration.

Staff had carried out core training such as child protection and Management of Actual or Potential Aggression (MAPA) which they used in their work with pupils to keep them safe. Staff had access to a range of appropriate policies and procedures to inform their practice such as whistle blowing and codes of practice.

We saw that all staff had regular supervision where they reflected on their practice and considered areas for professional development

Regular staff meetings in the residencies provided opportunities for discussion and planning.

We saw that staff were very caring, supportive and sensitive. They had very positive relationships with the pupils.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of management and leadership

Findings from the inspection

We saw that very good management processes were in place within the residencies and all of the managers were confident in their role.

The four coordinators were clear about their individual tasks and responsibilities and also supported each other in the management of the school.

House coordinators ran the residencies effectively and efficiently and had a clear overview of what was happening on a day to day basis.

Both the coordinators and the house coordinators had a significant presence within the residencies and were readily accessible to pupils and staff. We saw that the pupils had a good relationship with the senior staff and we saw this in practice during the inspection.

The staff we talked with during the inspection spoke highly of the senior management team and said they were encouraging and understanding. This gave staff confidence in working with pupils.

We heard that the board of governors were very supportive and some staff knew who they were. We heard that board members sometimes visited the residencies. We suggest that the board develops a programme to regularly visit the residencies in order to have a clearer overview of practice and identification of areas for improvement.

(see Recommendation 1)

Incidents were well recorded and overviewed by the responsible coordinator. We suggested that incidents are a standing item on the agenda for the board of governors' meeting. This is in order to provide them with an overview and promote analysis with a view to reduction in incidents. We have made a recommendation about this under quality of care

Whilst the school had informed us of some notifications, we said that they should look at notification guidance and consider what the Care Inspectorate should be notified about. The responsible coordinator had done this by the end of the inspection.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 1

1. We recommend that the board of governors develops a schedule of planned visits to residencies where they can observe practice and identify areas for improvement.

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

Grade: 5 - very good

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

Previous requirements

There are no outstanding requirements.

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

Previous recommendations

There are no outstanding recommendations.

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
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 Environment 6 - Excellent Staffing 5 - Very good Management and leadership 6 - Excellent
18 Nov 2013	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment 5 - Very good Staffing 5 - Very good Management and leadership 5 - Very good
30 May 2013	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment 5 - Very good Staffing 5 - Very good Management and leadership 5 - Very good
20 Nov 2012	Unannounced	Care and support 6 - Excellent Environment 5 - Very good Staffing 6 - Excellent Management and leadership 5 - Very good
9 Mar 2012	Unannounced	Care and support 6 - Excellent Environment Not assessed Staffing Not assessed Management and leadership 5 - Very good
17 Nov 2011	Unannounced	Care and support 6 - Excellent Environment Not assessed Staffing Not assessed

Date	Type	Gradings	
		Management and leadership	5 - Very good
12 Jan 2011	Unannounced	Care and support	6 - Excellent
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	Not assessed
		Management and leadership	Not assessed
13 Oct 2010	Announced	Care and support	6 - Excellent
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	Not assessed
19 Mar 2010	Unannounced	Care and support	6 - Excellent
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	Not assessed
2 Oct 2009	Announced	Care and support	6 - Excellent
		Environment	6 - Excellent
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	5 - Very good
4 Sep 2008		Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	5 - Very good
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	4 - Good

To find out more

This inspection report is published by the Care Inspectorate. You can download this report and others from our website.

Care services in Scotland cannot operate unless they are registered with the Care Inspectorate. We inspect, award grades and help services to improve. We also investigate complaints about care services and can take action when things aren't good enough.

Please get in touch with us if you would like more information or have any concerns about a care service.

You can also read more about our work online at www.careinspectorate.com

Contact us

Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

enquiries@careinspectorate.com

0345 600 9527

Find us on Facebook

Twitter: @careinspect

Other languages and formats

This report is available in other languages and formats on request.

Tha am foillseachadh seo ri fhaighinn ann an cruthannan is cànan eile ma nithear iartras.

অনুরোধসাপেক্ষে এই প্রকাশনাটি অন্য ফরম্যাট এবং অন্যান্য ভাষায় পাওয়া যায়।

یہ اشاعت درخواست کرنے پر دیگر شکلوں اور دیگر زبانوں میں فراہم کی جاسکتی ہے۔

ਬੇਨਤੀ 'ਤੇ ਇਹ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਨ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰਨਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਉਪਲਬਧ ਹੈ।

هذه الوثيقة متوفرة بلغات ونماذج أخرى عند الطلب

本出版品有其他格式和其他語言備索。

Na życzenie niniejsza publikacja dostępna jest także w innych formatach oraz językach.