

Break-away

Inspection report for residential holiday schemes for disabled children

Inspection date 30/10/2013
Inspector Gwen Buckley
Type of inspection Full

Registered person Break of Davison House
Registered manager Nicholas Loone
Responsible individual Hilary Richards
Date of last inspection N/A

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Service information

Brief description of the service

The residential holiday scheme for disabled children provides a holiday for up to three children or young people, for two night's duration, up to six times a year. The scheme is run by a charity specifically for children and young people who may have complex needs, including learning and physical disability and related health needs. Places are organised and agreed through the local authority that own the property and contract the charity to operate the scheme.

The inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: a service that significantly exceeds minimum requirements

Good: a service that exceeds minimum requirements

Adequate: a service that only meets minimum requirements

Inadequate: a service that does not meet minimum requirements

Overall effectiveness

The overall effectiveness is judged to be adequate.

This is a new service, registered in July 2013 as a residential holiday scheme for children with disabilities. Registration is in line with the new regulations and national minimum standards when these were first came into force in July 2013. This is therefore their first inspection.

Children enjoy their time at the holiday scheme and have good relationships with staff. The staffing ratio ensures children are continually monitored to ensure their safety and negates any opportunity for bullying to take place.

Children take part in a good range of activities both in the home, in the park where the holiday scheme is located and further afield in the local community.

Staff are good role models and are exceptionally well trained and experienced in caring for children with a range of disabilities. Staff have a very flexible approach and work very well with parents and others prior to and during the child's stay at the holiday scheme. This ensures the children get highly individualised help and support needed during their stay.

The manager and staff team are committed to improving the service and experiences for the children. They reflect on practice and make changes to ensure each child's needs are considered and highly personalised care is provided. For example, changes to the admission process help children who may struggle being away from home for the first time. The changes afford the opportunity for children to become familiar with the home, the grounds and staff prior to them saying overnight for the first time. This reduces any anxiety.

Because of this inspection, areas have been identified for development. These do not have a detrimental effect on the children attending the scheme. They mainly relate to the need to review some recording practice and other written information such as the Statement of Purpose and improving risk assessment recording procedures. These need to clearly reflect the unique service being provided to the children.

Areas for improvement

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the service should take account of the following recommendation(s):

ensure all children and staff are given an opportunity to discuss incidents of restraint they have been involved in, witnessed or been affected by, with a relevant adult. When appropriate, children will be given the right support to discuss incidents of restraint and specifically, when it is difficult to obtain the views of children due to communication difficulties (NMS 2.15)

ensure staff and volunteers inform the child's parents and actively search for children who are missing, including working with police where appropriate. In particular ensure that there is an easily accessible map of the area on the premises to assist in search procedures as required in the missing person protocol agreed with the police (NMS 4.3)

ensure risk assessments of the whole HSDC environment are carried out, to identify any potential sources of harm to the children, are recorded in writing and regularly reviewed. This relates to all the facilities used as part of the holiday scheme (NMS 6.3)

review the emergency escape plan so that all staff and children are familiar with and have practised it so they know what to do in an emergency. This relates to ensuring the needs of children with disabilities are fully considered when planning for and undertaking evacuation drills (NMS 6.4)

ensure the scheme has a clear Statement of Purpose which is available to and understood by staff and which is reflected in any policies, procedures and guidance. It is available to the child, employee and any parent or person with parental responsibility. This specifically relates to ensuring the focus of the statement reflects that the registration is for a holiday scheme and not short break care and that planning for care clearly focus on the aspirations of young people (NMS 7.1)

ensure recruitment records show the date on which each check was completed and who carried out the check. The DBS Disclosure information must be kept in secure conditions and be destroyed by secure means as soon as it is no longer needed. Before the Disclosure is destroyed, records need to be maintained as set out within standard 9. (NMS 9.4)

Experiences of children and young people

The experiences of children and young people are good.

Children participate in a range of activities that take into account their very differing and complex needs and wishes. The holiday scheme is set in a holiday park and the children really enjoy the activities provided. Children are given choices that affect the daily living routines and what activity they undertake. Children try activities that are new to them and this helps them to develop their confidence and learn new skills. Children and young people have good access to a wide range of activities no matter how complex their needs are. This allows them to develop skills and enjoy new experiences they may not otherwise have. The experiences of all those attending the scheme have enabled them to develop as individuals, make new friends, and play alongside others. All children make progress and for some, this is significant progress.

External professionals report that the children enjoy their time at the scheme. They also state ‘Young people have activities that meets their individual needs and interests, such as quiet time walking through the woods and park where there is peace and quiet. They may also have time in the community such as visits to the beach, where it was very busy and exciting’.

Staff continually monitor children and have lots of one-to-one time with them. This means all young people have staff they know well and trust caring for them. Children who are familiar with the surroundings and facilities available look forward to returning so they can continue to participate in and enjoy a wide range of both new and familiar experiences.

Quality of care

The quality of care is good.

Staff ensure the children have an enjoyable time when they are at the scheme. They consider the needs of each individual and due to the scale of the scheme are able to make changes easily to accommodate the wishes of individual children and young people. The staffing ratio for the scheme is at least one member of staff to one child. This ensures children and young people always have a member of staff near who is aware of how they are and to whom they can go to if they are unsure about anything. The children and young people enjoy the company of each other and the staff with whom they clearly get on well with.

Staff are extremely well qualified and experienced in the care of children with disabilities. They are trained to meet the needs of children with a range of disabilities specific health care tasks. Medication administration and recording is well managed

and medication is securely stored. Social workers are extremely complimentary about the practice, commitment and ability of staff to ensure the needs of individual children are met. The manager and staff reflect on practice and the experiences the children have during their stay. As a result, changes are made and young people who found it difficult to stay away from home overnight are given highly individualised support so that they can access the scheme at a pace they are comfortable with.

Staff effectively work with others prior to and during the period children attend the scheme. Information from a wide variety of sources informs the care planning such as discussions with teachers, social and health care professionals, parents, and visits to the child at home and school. This ensures staff have a thorough understanding of each child's needs. This comprehensive information shows the children may present differently in different facilities. Parents report they are confident in the staff caring for their children and that the staff ensure all the information needed is obtained prior to their child attending the scheme. However, the wide range of information available is not brought together in a detailed care plan or other format and agreed by children and parents prior to a child's stay. Staff effectively communicate with the parents/carers during the scheme, which lessens any disruption to a child or young person's stay.

Safeguarding children and young people

The service is adequate at keeping children and young people safe and feeling safe.

Behaviour is well managed and boundaries are clear ensuring restraints are very seldom used. Restraint records contain all the information required by regulation, but are not as expected in line with the home's own procedures.

Fire evacuation procedures take place each time a new group of children and young people access the scheme. All young people have personal emergency evacuation plans, which are known to staff and highlight the support needed so that children are able to leave the premises safely. At times children with specific disabilities can find evacuation drills difficult to manage and staff are aware of this. A review of the fire policy and procedural guidance is planned in order to better reflect the needs' of individuals and lessen the difficulties and anxieties, some children experience during emergency evacuation procedures.

The manager and staff have a sound understanding of child protection procedures and safeguarding children with disabilities. The scheme's own procedures for child protection, bullying and behaviours management are consistently followed which means children are kept safe at all times. In addition all staff are committed to ensuring children are safe and they know the action to take if there are any concerns.. They also reflect on incidents that take place to see if they could have managed them better and take any learning from this so as to improve the care

provided. Children approach staff with ease and they are comfortable in their company and that of the other children on the scheme.

Staff recruitment procedures are sound and staff are very experienced. The holiday scheme ensures only staff suitable to work with children are employed. Records show all checks required are undertaken prior to staff starting work although they do not indicate who cleared the checks and the date these decision were made are not always noted.

A clear risk assessment is in place for the holiday lodge used by the scheme. However, there are no risk assessments in place for the surrounding areas and other venues used by the scheme to ensure they are safe for children using the scheme.

Leadership and management

The leadership and management of the residential holiday scheme for disabled children are adequate.

The Registered Manager and staff are very experienced child-care workers who work with children with disabilities all year round in residential and short break services. The scheme is well run and focuses on how to continually improve the experiences children have when attending the scheme. As a result, changes to the admission process agreed with the funding authority help children to manage their feelings and anxieties of being away from home for the first time. Comprehensive information is provided to children about the holiday scheme. This is provided in formats they can understand which helps them know what they can expect and what is expected of them.

Sufficient numbers of competent well-trained staff are employed ensuring children are continually supported. The premises used are a large wooden lodge situated in a holiday park with an adventure park and other activities on site. There is a lake, wooded and open grassed areas offering opportunities for both stimulating and quiet activities.

The scheme's Statement of Purpose reflects the Holiday Scheme for Children with Disability Registration Legislation that came into force in July of this year and covers all the areas required by regulation. However, this does not clearly focus on the 'holiday' aspect of the service provided and what individuals' will gain during their time on the scheme.

No children have gone missing from the events provided by the scheme and the scheme's missing person protocol agreed with the police is known to staff. A map of the area expected to be on site to assist police and any searches needed was not available.

About this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to inform children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service and to consider how well it complies with the relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the *Inspection of residential holiday schemes for disabled children - Interim framework for inspection of residential holiday schemes for disabled children* and the evaluation schedule for residential holiday schemes for disabled children.