

Old Mill

School Care Accommodation Service

Branshogle
Balfron
Glasgow
G63 0LQ

Telephone: 01360 449009

Type of inspection: Unannounced
Inspection completed on: 26 September 2017

Service provided by:
Spark of Genius (Training) Ltd

Service provider number:
SP2006008009

Care service number:
CS2009232535

About the service

Old Mill provides a registered school care accommodation service for young people who are attending school away from their home area. It is provided and supported by the Spark of Genius company. This service has been registered since December 2010.

Old Mill provides very good quality residential care and support for up to five young people. The service is in a quiet countryside location yet within reach of Glasgow. The house is decorated, furnished and maintained to a very good standard.

What people told us

We spoke with three young people at inspection and received four completed care standards questionnaires. In the main, young people were happy living at Old Mill and told us that they "got on" very well with the staff.

In response to the statement, 'Overall, I am happy with the care I get here', three young people 'Strongly Agreed' and one young person replied 'Don't know'. Of the three young people we spoke with, two "Strongly Agreed" and one "Agreed".

In response to the statement 'This is a nice place to stay', one young person 'Strongly Agreed', two young people 'Agreed' and one young person replied 'Don't Know'. Of the three young people we spoke with, two "Strongly Agreed" and one "Agreed". All the young people felt safe from bullying and abuse.

Comments included:

"It is ok here".

"I get on great with the staff".

"I can always speak to the staff".

"I like it here".

"School was good but now it's too hard".

"The food is good and (the cook) is nice".

"It is like a family here".

"Some of the best days of my life have been here".

Self assessment

The service had not been asked to complete a self assessment in advance of the inspection. We looked at their own improvement plan and quality assurance paperwork. These demonstrated their priorities for development and how they were monitoring the quality of the provision within the service.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	5 - Very Good
Quality of environment	not assessed
Quality of staffing	5 - Very Good
Quality of management and leadership	not assessed

What the service does well

At this inspection we looked at the Quality Themes of 'Care and Support' and 'Staffing'. We found that Old Mill provided very good quality residential care and support to young people. Outcomes were positive for the young people and we saw that the service was very good at supporting young people's schooling and training. At inspection, two young people were attending mainstream school, two were attending 'Sky Point', an educational resource operated by Spark of Genius, and one young person was attending college.

The service had a Participation policy in place which made it clear that views, concerns and suggestions were welcomed.

Young people were supported to attend formal care reviews with some young people contributing a 'Having Your Say' written report. It was evident in speaking with young people, that staff listened to their views about future plans and advocated on their behalf.

Young people were involved in planning their week ahead, including activities and the menu.

A young people's meeting took place two weekly, although all the young people we spoke with preferred to raise issues directly with staff and managers. 'Fire sticks', activities and a new TV had been progressed through this meeting.

Young people knew how to contact Who Cares? Scotland, a young people's advocacy service. This meant that they could get assistance if they wished to raise an issue. We were told that the 'new' Who Cares? Scotland worker had visited on two occasions recently and was in regular telephone contact regarding advocacy for a young person.

Very good support planning and risk assessment/management arrangements were in place. Each young person was supported by a 'Key Team' of three staff or more. Support plans and risk assessments were updated regularly. We saw that support plans used the SHANARRI (safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, responsible, respected and included) wellbeing indicators. This allowed young people to use 'key time' with staff to set achievable targets.

All young people were registered with a local GP, dentist and, if applicable, optician.

Medication was stored appropriately and administration records were in order.

We saw that young people could be referred to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) if necessary. Spark of Genius had its own psychologist who was consulted regarding support planning and practice.

We saw that the service worked hard to ensure that young people met with, and stayed in touch with, their families as appropriate.

We saw that due regard was given to healthy eating. Young people, in conjunction with staff and the cook, planned the menu and, if they chose, were involved in the grocery shopping and cooking. The cook worked hard to provide a healthy diet, balanced with young people's likes and dislikes. Young people were very happy with the quality and variety of meals. They held the cook in high regard and enjoyed very good relationships with him. The service had received a 'Healthy Living Award'.

Young people told us of their opportunities to be involved in sport and leisure activities. These included football, swimming, gym, cinema, dancing, go karting, trampolines, cycling and hill walking.

We found the service to be well-managed and staffed. We formed a view of a motivated, skilled and knowledgeable management and staff team. We were advised of recruitment arrangements that ensured all relevant checks were carried out prior to appointment. Young people, if they wished, were routinely involved in drawing up questions for staff selection.

A robust induction and mandatory training programme was in place.

Relationships between young people and staff were very good.

Staff had access to a range of training and development opportunities including attachment, child sexual exploitation (CSE), self harm, report writing, CEOP (child exploitation and online protection) and health and safety. This meant that they were well prepared to meet the needs of young people. All staff received child protection training on an annual basis. Likewise, all staff were trained in Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI), a de-escalation and physical intervention framework. The manager was a qualified TCI trainer.

Staff had enjoyed a 'Development Day', focused on attachment, in May 2017 and a further event was planned for the near future.

All staff were registered with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC). We saw that SSSC Codes of Practice and National Care Standards were available to staff for reference. Staff we spoke with evidenced good knowledge of both. Staff told us that they felt supported in their work and that, although people were 'tired', morale and team cohesion were good. This was supported by a very good supervision and staff meeting model.

What the service could do better

We felt that the use of the bedroom as a sanction for one young person was inappropriate. We also felt that his bedroom could be more 'homely'. We acknowledged that the young person concerned damaged his room and furnishings. It was apparent that the young person had negative associations with time in his bedroom and, further more, the strategy was ineffective in modifying his behaviour. **(See recommendation 1.)**

We discussed with the assistant manager the need for the provider to place a greater focus on 'matching' new admissions to the established group. **(See recommendation 2.)**

Parking arrangements remained poor and potentially dangerous. The provider had been in ongoing dialogue with the landlord. This was with a view to creating a more appropriate parking area that would negate the need to reverse on to the main road and allow emergency service's access. We were told that planning permission had been granted. **(See recommendation 3.)**

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 3

1. For one young person, staff should avoid using 'time out' in his bedroom as a consequence of non school attendance or disruptive behaviour. The bedroom should reflect a nurturing environment.

National Care Standards School Care Accommodation Services - Standard 3: Care and Protection.

2. The provider should place a greater focus on "matching" new admissions to the established group.

National Care Standards School Care Accommodation Services - Standard 6: Support Arrangements (for those schools which provide specialist education and care).

3. The work to create a new parking area should be progressed as soon as possible.

National Care Standards School Care Accommodation Services - Standard 5: Comfort, Safety and Security.

Complaints

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

Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings
29 Nov 2016	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment Not assessed Staffing 5 - Very good Management and leadership Not assessed
21 Oct 2015	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment 5 - Very good Staffing 5 - Very good Management and leadership 5 - Very good
9 Feb 2015	Unannounced	Care and support 4 - Good Environment 4 - Good Staffing 4 - Good

Date	Type	Gradings	
		Management and leadership	4 - Good
11 Aug 2014	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	4 - Good 4 - Good 4 - Good 4 - Good
21 Mar 2014	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good 5 - Very good 5 - Very good 5 - Very good
26 Jul 2013	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good 5 - Very good 5 - Very good 5 - Very good
21 Dec 2012	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	Not assessed 5 - Very good 5 - Very good Not assessed
26 Sep 2012	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	4 - Good Not assessed Not assessed 4 - Good
15 Dec 2011	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	3 - Adequate 3 - Adequate 3 - Adequate 3 - Adequate
5 Aug 2011	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	4 - Good 4 - Good 4 - Good 4 - Good

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