

Riverside House School Care Accommodation Service

1 Bridgend
Newmilns
KA16 9BU

Telephone: 01560 323436

Type of inspection: Unannounced
Inspection completed on: 1 February 2018

Service provided by:
Spark of Genius (Training) Ltd

Service provider number:
SP2006008009

Care service number:
CS2005093148

About the service

This service registered with the Care Inspectorate on 1 April 2011.

Riverside House is registered for school care accommodation. The service is registered to care for a maximum of seven young people aged between ten years and eighteen years at Riverside House, one of whom will be respite. At the time of this inspection, six young people were living in the service.

The service is provided by Spark of Genius (Training) Ltd. (Spark of Genius) and operates a 24 hour service 52 weeks of the year. Riverside House is located in the town of Newmilns in East Ayrshire.

The service provides the residential living accommodation for the young people while their educational needs are met through attendance at learning centres also provided by Spark of Genius, or at other educational provision, whichever is identified in care plans.

What people told us

We spoke with three young people during the inspection and received returned questionnaires from two other young people living in Riverside House. Below are some of the comments made about living in Riverside House.

"Staff are so positive, they smile a lot and are happy to be around so they make me feel happy, they don't come in here in a bad mood".

"My mental health has really improved and I can think about things and ask staff for help, I wouldn't do that before".

"Its good here different from other places, staff are fair and they do lots of stuff for me".

"I like it here I feel settled and happy".

"We get a say in how the place looks and we get listened too and if its an ok idea its gets done".

"Staff tell you honestly about things and don't make you feel bad".

"The rules are fair and they are explained to you".

"If we don't get on with another young person we try not to fight we just stay out of each others way".

"The food is decent".

"I get individual time I prefer to get out for a drive with staff and they know I like this so make time to do it!

"I'm going to school now before I just got kicked out for behaviour but I like this school and I'm doing really well".

Self assessment

This was not requested for this inspection year, however, the manager provided a detailed service development plan which we found benefited the inspection process.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	6 - Excellent
Quality of environment	5 - Very Good
Quality of staffing	not assessed
Quality of management and leadership	not assessed

What the service does well

We considered an excellent standard of care and support was being provided to the young people living in Riverside House within a very good environment.

There was a strong value base which complimented the nurturing approach used by staff and interactions with young people. We considered this to be a particularly outstanding aspect to the quality of care and provided the secure base from which young people were flourishing. A young person told us, "The staff here are different from other places because they really care about you and it's not about the pay". A further young person stated, "They (the staff) know when something is wrong and they just keep trying until they find out what it is so they can help me". These positive relationships transcended beyond living in Riverside House with many ex-resident keeping in touch by visiting, staying for meals and receiving ongoing advice.

Staff members had an excellent insight into the different needs and preferences of the young people and provided highly individualised care. Daily and weekly planners were in place and provided a structured routine and as a result, young people were making impressive strides in education, employment and positive use of free time.

Participation and engagement was embedded with young people meetings, support for 'Looked after' reviews and regular contact with independent advocacy all enabling the views of young people to be heard. On an organisational level young people from the service contributed to staff recruitment and participated in the 'Spark Parliament', a forum where young people meet with senior management from the organisation.

Staff and management led by example and we found the respectful ethos within the team was reflected in the relationships between young people, who at times could disagree, but worked together to resolve issues and come to an appreciation of different points of view. We considered the harmonious atmosphere we encountered during the inspection was attributed to this ethos and also the skilled management of group living balanced with an appreciation of the need for young people to have quality individual time. The attractive and homely environment contributed to Riverside House being a positive care experience for young people. Young people were rightly proud of their environment. We noted a lack of vandalism, the participation in small household chores and the young people's' reluctance to show us their bedroom until after they had completed a quick tidy up.

Safer care was prioritised with staff employing a consistent and considered approach to harm reduction and we found significantly improved outcomes for young people who were particularly vulnerable to substance misuse, exploitation, self-harm and offending. Consequently young people were thriving, were making significant changes to their lifestyle and looking forward to a more positive future. One young person told us, "My life had totally turned around, things were terrible before now I feel proud".

Staff managed the environment extremely well and we were impressed that despite high levels of supervision staff made this look natural and relaxed by utilising the many games and resources available to engage positively with young people. Crisis and upset were managed using the best approach for each young person utilising influential relationships which had been developed. Successful de-escalation rarely involved the need for physical intervention with a marked reduction in the use of safe holds noted.

Effective partnership working with other agencies and links to the community had brought about some outstanding outcomes. Particular strengths were in improved mental health. The service used an independent clinical psychologist who provided staff consultation, training and when appropriate direct work with young people. This had significantly up-skilled staff and their understanding of children who had suffered trauma and neglect. This enabled excellent support to be provided and successful interventions. Links established with Police had brought about major safeguards in protecting against child sexual exploitation. Another considerable achievement had been the success from working alongside 'Fresh Airshire' resulting in two young people ceasing smoking tobacco.

Staff and management sought to overcome the marginalisation experienced by many young people in care by making links with the community seeking innovative ways of achieving this. Young people had enjoyed work experience in local charity shops, festive employment in retail, work experience in horse riding stables enhancing self-esteem, valuable learning opportunities and experiencing being part of their community. For one young person this has led to full-time employment and other career aspirations and development of links in the community.

What the service could do better

We considered the care plan documentation could benefit from less duplication and better linked to bring the young person and staff views together in creating a joint action plan. We also considered that the wellbeing web could be better used to prioritise support needs, inform action plan and monitor outcomes. We suggested if effectively used, the outcomes across the service could be used to give an overview of strengths as well as contributing to the service improvement agenda. This was agreed at the inspection feedback as an area the service would take forward.

We could see the manager was taking forward a programme of redecoration and repair as advised in a recent independent audit of the service and suggested that a more user-friendly means of recording repairs could help keep track of progress.

The manager was aware that water quality check is overdue and is in the process of arranging for this to be carried out.

The large basement area is mostly unused apart from the kitchen. The kitchen in being so far away from the main part of the house is a disadvantage and not in keeping with otherwise homely ambiance of Riverside House. We discussed moving the kitchen be considered as an environmental improvement.

The designated respite rooms are cold and unwelcoming and although seldom used we recommend they are not used until they are redecorated, refurnished and adequate heating installed. (Refer to recommendation 1)

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 1

1. The respite rooms should not be used until conditions have improved.

National Care Standards for school care accommodation services - Standard 5: You live in a comfortable, safe and secure environment.

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
25 Jan 2017	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment Not assessed Staffing Not assessed Management and leadership 5 - Very good
31 Mar 2016	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment 5 - Very good Staffing 5 - Very good Management and leadership 5 - Very good
23 Mar 2015	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment 5 - Very good Staffing 4 - Good Management and leadership 4 - Good
18 Dec 2014	Unannounced	Care and support 4 - Good Environment 4 - Good Staffing 4 - Good

Date	Type	Gradings	
		Management and leadership	4 - Good
8 Oct 2014	Re-grade	Care and support	2 - Weak
		Environment	2 - Weak
		Staffing	2 - Weak
		Management and leadership	2 - Weak
17 Feb 2014	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
30 Jan 2013	Announced	Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	4 - Good
		Staffing	4 - Good
		Management and leadership	4 - Good
29 Oct 2012	Re-grade	Care and support	Not assessed
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	Not assessed
		Management and leadership	2 - Weak
27 Aug 2012	Unannounced	Care and support	2 - Weak
		Environment	3 - Adequate
		Staffing	2 - Weak
		Management and leadership	Not assessed
8 Mar 2012	Unannounced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	4 - Good
		Staffing	Not assessed
		Management and leadership	Not assessed
29 Sep 2011	Unannounced	Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	5 - Very good
		Staffing	Not assessed

Date	Type	Gradings	
		Management and leadership	Not assessed
6 Oct 2010	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good Not assessed Not assessed Not assessed
25 May 2010	Announced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good Not assessed Not assessed 5 - Very good
9 Nov 2009	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good Not assessed 5 - Very good Not assessed
2 Oct 2009	Re-grade	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	Not assessed Not assessed 5 - Very good Not assessed
17 Aug 2009	Re-grade	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	Not assessed Not assessed 2 - Weak Not assessed
3 Feb 2009	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good 5 - Very good 5 - Very good 4 - Good
14 Aug 2008	Announced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good 4 - Good 4 - Good 4 - Good

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