

Nether Johnstone House Care Home Service

Barochan Road
Johnstone
PA5 8YP

Telephone: 01505 322984

Type of inspection:

Unannounced

Completed on:

7 March 2019

Service provided by:

Julia Stewart Limited

Service provider number:

SP2010977037

Service no:

CS2010237321

About the service

The Care Inspectorate regulates care services in Scotland. Information about all care services can be found on our website at www.careinspectorate.com

The service was registered with the Care Inspectorate on 1 April 2011.

Nether Johnstone House is a Care Home for Children and Young People and is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to seven children and young people, aged eight to eighteen years. At the time of this inspection, there were four young people living at the service. The service is provided by Julia Stewart Limited.

The house sits in private grounds, set within a semi rural location. A double storey property provides spacious and comfortable accommodation for children and young people. There is a large lounge, with a smaller adjoining lounge where young people can relax away from the group. A dining/kitchen is also located on the ground floor. On the upper floor, each young person has their own bedroom with ensuite facilities. There is also a self contained 'flat' should this be required. Outside space offers a large garden, with separate meeting space within a converted outhouse.

The vision of the service is:

- Nether Johnstone House is a place where all children and young people are listened to and involved in decisions that affect their lives.
- Our service actively engages children and young people and use their views and experiences to inform plans and improve outcomes.
- Participation is embedded in our organisational culture and practice.

What people told us

We spent time in the company of three young people and spoke individually with two, who were happy to speak with us in private.

During mealtime young people spoke about a recent visit to a local beauty salon where they chose a specific treatment. They had clearly enjoyed this experience and seemed genuinely pleased with their choices. As other young people joined us for dinner, they appeared relaxed and were happily chatting about their day and how they had chosen to spend their time. We likewise heard young people discussing with staff, what activity they had planned for the evening.

By speaking with young people individually, we were able to listen to their views about living at the service. Young people told us that they had not lived at Nether Johnstone for a long period, but that they were "getting to know staff who seem nice" and were "just working out what I'm doing". When we explored this comment further, we found that the young person was talking about their school day. Young people went on to speak about not liking some of the rules around their placement. Again exploration of this highlighted that rules related to decisions made at review meetings, which included everyone involved in young people's care plans.

We asked young people to tell us how they spent their time at the service. Young people chatted about cycling in order to "get fitter". They told us that they used the cycle track nearby and that they liked that staff also took part in this activity. Other young people said that they did not "get out as much as I'd like", but again clarification of this showed that this was consistent with placement objectives.

Given that some young people had more recently arrived at the service, we explored their views of staff support during their transition to Nether Johnstone House. Young people commented that they "got to know staff", during visits to the service, prior to coming to stay. They told us that they "liked doing this cos I got to meet people". Young people also said that "staff are really friendly and they'll spend time with you".

Overall, young people spoke positively about their care and support, during the early stages of their placement.

Self assessment

The provider was not required to submit a self assessment document for this inspecting year.

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

During this inspection, we inspected the quality themes relating to Care and Support and Staffing. Further to speaking with young people, observing staff practice and considering feedback from others involved in young people's care and support, we awarded grades of very good for both quality themes. We also reviewed written evidence to help inform the inspection process.

Further to discussions with several members of the management and staff team, we developed a clear perspective regarding proactive practices adopted by the service in support of positive outcomes for young people. We comment on some of these below.

We noted an excellent transition planning process for one young person moving into the service. As part of a detailed process, we found that staff had implemented creative approaches to promote the engagement of the young person, including writing to them, as a means of communicating and reflecting upon time spent together. Written records were insightful and sensitively composed, by staff who were keenly motivated to develop their understanding of the young person's needs and wishes. This process was fully supported by multi agency meetings and a comprehensive assessment and admissions procedure, which was initiated in advance of confirming the placement. By thoroughly considering ways in which the service could promote positive experiences, a number of visits for dinner and overnight stays were organised as a means of carefully introducing the young person to unfamiliar people and new surroundings. Where more than one organisation was involved, this process was well coordinated to provide consistency and continuity for the young person, at a crucial stage in their life. When we chatted with the young person, they recognised that they had the opportunity to meet with staff and other young people prior to coming to live at the service and this appeared to be important to them.

It was evident that support for young people moving on from the service, was attended to equally by managers and staff and where relationships were well developed between young people, their families and key members of staff, we found that significant support had encouraged improved family relationships and acceptance of young people's choices and circumstances. In order to prepare young people for adulthood, we noted that a range of strategies had been implemented to support awareness of budgeting skills, importance of attending health appointments and the benefits of independent travel, when leading a fulfilling life in the community. The result of such intervention, was that young people moved on successfully from the service, to more independent lives, which offered optimism and hope for their future. Ongoing contact with the service, provided much needed reassurance at times, for those who needed encouragement and this provided further evidence of corporate parenting principles adopted by staff working at the service.

Shift teams worked well together and we heard about the range of creative and stimulating supports in place for young people. For example, visual aids were used to communicate expectation, while a range of worksheets helped young people to express their thoughts, feelings and emotions. By supporting clear communication, through personalised approaches, young people were more able to participate and understand the purpose and expectations of their placement. As a means of responding to evolving and emerging need, staff met in specific teams, to identify and act upon young people's plans. In discussion with members of staff, we heard that one young person's desire to become fitter and healthier, was encouraged through activity, such as, walking and cycling, rather than using the car. Staff were fully engaged in such activity, accompanying the young person on their journey, to improved fitness and wellbeing.

Operating within a learning culture, this was a staff team who were highly motivated to improve outcomes for young people in their care. This was best evidenced through our discussions, which were both insightful and reassuring, in terms of continued progress. A strong indication of this commitment was evidenced through a piece of work undertaken in collaboration with a key Scottish charity, which acts to make improvements to how social service workers make use of knowledge and research across the country. By receiving a Highly Commended award at the 2018 Scottish Institute for Residential Child Care (SIRCC) Awards, for their work in improving approaches to leadership, staff further demonstrated their willingness to learn and generate improvement.

Further examples of reflective practice were noted within the excellent format for staff induction. We met with some members of staff who were currently completing this workbook approach to their development. They told us that it offered them valuable guidance in relation to recognised theory and policy intended to support their work with young people. We reviewed staff workbooks which provided excellent opportunities for staff to improve their knowledge and skills over time. For those members of staff who were additionally curious, their application of theory through imaginative practices, sought to enlighten colleagues and influence positive change in young people's circumstances. Work with families, offered this opportunity and in some instances, we found positive impact through patient and insightful practice.

When exploring the views of external stakeholders, we utilised the recent survey conducted by an independent consultant. We found that parents felt welcomed when they visited, further stating that the service, "continually offered him opportunities even if he doesn't take them up...I have a comparison with another residential unit. Compared to that one, my view is that the way Nether Johnstone House care for my child is very positive". We found that all parents said they felt involved in their child's life, with some commenting, "The meetings are good...I have no issues". Some stated that "Communication was great", and "There was good involvement...I got phoned when anything happened". When discussing the quality of staffing, parents commented that the attitude of all staff was positive and that, "I've got nothing but respect for them...they were really great with my child".

Similarly, positive feedback was obtained from placing social workers, who commented that, "The staff quickly got a good understanding of the young person", and "They've got genuine investment in the kids". These comments from parents and professionals involved with the service, helped to further demonstrate the very good standards of care and support for young people.

What the service could do better

Although the service had detailed personal plans for all young people, we felt that these could better reflect clearer, more time bound objectives. Personal plans allow young people to track their progress and where these provide small steps toward identified outcomes, young people's involvement is more easily promoted. We provided some advice regarding this improvement and will review progress at the next inspection.

We believed that team development was at a crucial stage within the service. A combination of experienced and newer staff, made up the identity of the staff team. We discussed the importance of adopting a whole team approach, with the provider, manager and senior staff, at inspection feedback. We explored this further within the context of optimising the knowledge and skills of all staff, leading to more effective and efficient team dynamics. By capitalising on key strengths, the service can build capacity and create increased accountability for all members of the staff team. This will impact positively on young people, who will benefit from staff who work together toward common goals.

Where formal supervision occurs routinely for permanent members of the staff team, we encouraged the service to ensure that similar arrangements are firmly in place for sessional staff, who provide regular support for young people. Although the service expressed a commitment to this ethos, we asked that a focus on this practice is maintained.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Complaints

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

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

Recommendation 1

The provider (Julia Stewart Limited) should ensure staff with significant areas for development are closely monitored and supported in their roles. In addition, all staff must feel comfortable and confident challenging poor practice when it arises, either directly or through relevant policies such as whistleblowing.

National Care Standards, care homes for children and young people - Standard 7: Management and staffing.

This recommendation was made on 15 November 2017.

Action taken on previous recommendation

The provider reviewed relevant policies to promote an open and accountable culture within the service. A specific approach named, Practice Highlights, helped to encourage all staff to openly explore and discuss issues of good or poor practice, as it occurred. We found good examples of completed Practice Highlights documents, in which staff had expressed praise or concern regarding colleagues practice. This system seemed to be working well and staff commented to us that the manager and senior staff, were also very approachable should they wish to discuss any issue in private.

Recommendation 2

The provider (Julia Stewart Limited) should ensure the quality and performance of Nether Johnstone House and young people's views and complaints are monitored externally. This should include quality assuring the registered manager is suitable for the role.

National Care Standards, care homes for children and young people - Standard 7: Management and staffing.

This recommendation was made on 15 November 2017.

Action taken on previous recommendation

The provider had created a Safeguarding Board. Further to this, a specific member of the Board will address any complaints on a consultancy basis, while the Board will generally quality assure the registered manager.

Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings
27 Oct 2017	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership
		5 - Very good 5 - Very good 4 - Good 5 - Very good
12 Oct 2016	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership
		4 - Good Not assessed 4 - Good 3 - Adequate
10 Sep 2015	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership
		4 - Good 4 - Good 4 - Good 4 - Good
7 Nov 2014	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership
		4 - Good 4 - Good 4 - Good 4 - Good
13 Mar 2014	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership
		3 - Adequate 3 - Adequate 3 - Adequate 3 - Adequate
2 Oct 2013	Re-grade	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership
		Not assessed Not assessed 2 - Weak 2 - Weak
14 Feb 2013	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership
		5 - Very good 5 - Very good 5 - Very good 4 - Good

Date	Type	Gradings	
5 Mar 2012	Unannounced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	5 - Very good
		Staffing	Not assessed
		Management and leadership	Not assessed
25 Aug 2011	Unannounced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	4 - Good
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	4 - Good

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