

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL

Executive Sub-Committee of Lifelong Learning Committee

25 November 2015

Inspections of services for Children and Young People by the Care Inspectorate

Report by Director (Education and Children's Services)

PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report sets out the key findings following announced (short notice) inspections of Fostering Services and Adoption Services in July 2015 and an unannounced inspection of Wellbank House in May 2015 carried out by the Care Inspectorate.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Care Inspectorate (also known as Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland - SCSWIS) was created by the [Public Services Reform \(Scotland\) Act 2010](#). The Act sets out general principles for the Care Inspectorate's inspection and improvement functions. These are:
- The safety and wellbeing of all persons who use, or are eligible to use, any social service are to be protected and enhanced;
 - The independence of those persons is to be promoted;
 - Diversity in the provision of social services is to be promoted with a view to those persons being afforded choice; and
 - Good practice in the provision of social services is to be identified, promulgated and promoted.
- 1.2 The Act places duties on the Care Inspectorate to make arrangements which will secure continuous improvement, to ensure user focus, and to co-operate with other specified scrutiny bodies.
- 1.3 Since April 2008, regulated care services in Scotland have been inspected using a framework of quality themes and quality statements. Services have been given grades based on the findings at each inspection and the written reports and grades are made public via the Care Inspectorate's website.
- 1.4 Services are measured against the [National Care Standards](#) and quality themes:
- Quality of Care and Support;
 - Quality of Environment or Information;
 - Quality of Staffing; and
 - Quality of Management and Leadership.
- 1.5 Each quality theme is graded on a 6-point scale in which 1 = unsatisfactory, 2 = weak, 3 = adequate, 4 = good, 5 = very good and 6 = excellent.

- 1.6 In addition to a visit to each service, inspectors consider evidence from a range of sources when judging a service's performance since it was last graded, including:
- Upheld complaints and whether identified issues have been resolved;
 - Notifiable incidents and how the service has dealt with them;
 - Feedback from people who use the service and carers;
 - Evidence that previous action plans have been implemented; and
 - Information in the annual return.
- 1.7 The Care Inspectorate conducts unannounced inspections for all regulated services as the main inspection method unless there are practical reasons that this is not appropriate. There are longer intervals between inspections for better performing services and a greater focus on risk-based inspections for poorly performing and high-risk services, such as those which provide 24 hour residential care.
- 1.8 Following an inspection, the Care Inspectorate may set out a series of:
- **Recommendations:** statements that set out actions the care service provider should take to improve or develop the quality of the service.
 - **Requirements:** statements which set out what is required of the care service provider to comply with relevant legislation.
- 1.9 Care service providers must submit an action plan to the Care Inspectorate addressing any requirements and recommendations identified. Progress against the action plan is monitored by the Care Inspectorate through annual return and self-assessment forms submitted by the care service provider, and through subsequent inspection.

2 RECENTLY PUBLISHED REPORTS

- 2.1 This report presents the findings of the inspection of the Fostering Service in July 2015, Adoption Service in July 2015 and Wellbank House in May 2015 by the Care Inspectorate. A progress update is provided on planned actions resulting from the recommendations highlighted in the Fostering Service inspection report. No requirements or recommendations were highlighted within the inspection report for Adoption Services or Wellbank House. There are ongoing service developments in all three of the quality themes inspected (Quality of Care and Support, Quality of Staffing and Quality of Management and Leadership) as a result of self evaluation and improvement planning. Some of these areas are highlighted in the Care Inspectorate inspection reports as areas for improvement.

2.2 Fostering Service

2.2.1 The Care Inspectorate carried out an inspection of the Council's Fostering Services in July 2015. The inspection was announced (short notice) and low intensity. This level of inspection is carried out when the Care Inspectorate is satisfied that services are working hard to provide consistently high standards of care.

2.2.2 The Fostering Service provides a family placement service for children and young people 0 to 18 years who are looked after by the Council and whose needs are best met through foster care. The service recruits and supports family-based carers within Perth and Kinross and surrounding areas. Foster carers are approved and reviewed by the Fostering and Permanence Panel. They provide respite and short breaks, emergency, temporary and/or permanent care for looked after children and young people.

2.2.3 The Care Inspectorate identified the following important key strengths:

- The service provides a good quality of support to their foster carers including good access to training and development, opportunities for peer support through support groups and easy access to workers who are knowledgeable and skilled in fostering work.
- Social workers within the service generally felt well supported.
- The service provides young people with good quality foster care placements and young people are supported in achieving good outcomes.

2.2.4 The inspection found both the Quality of Staffing and the Quality of Management and Leadership to be **very good**. The inspection found that the Quality of Care and Support is **good**.

2.2.5 The inspection report does not set out any requirements. It sets out two recommendations which relate to further enhancing the quality of performance and practice within the service. A summary of progress against the recommendations is provided in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Summary of Progress against Recommendations for Improvement

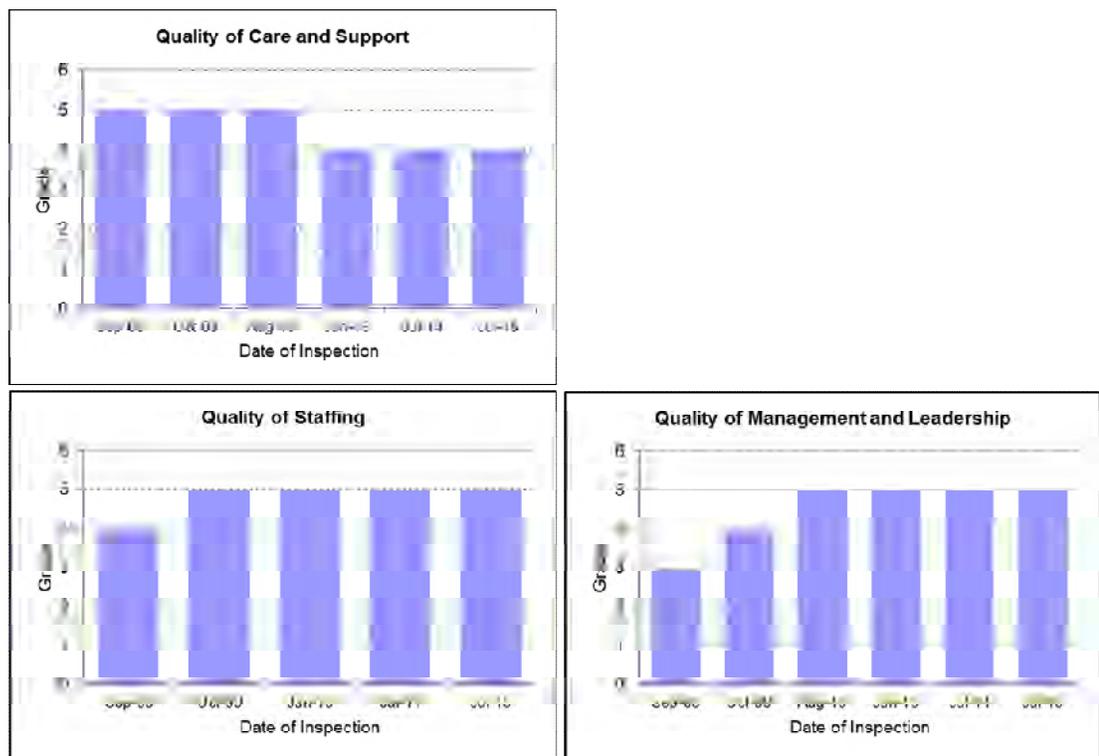
Areas for Improvement	Progress/Proposed Actions
Quality of Care and Support	
<p>Recommendation: The service should ensure that all strengths and vulnerabilities of caring situations should be fully discussed and recorded prior to decisions being made.</p>	<p>Comment: At present, weekly discussions take place however this is not fully recorded. The team will introduce a new matching format which will allow for strengths and vulnerabilities to be recorded for each child and young person in placement.</p>

Quality of Management and Leadership	
<p>Recommendation: The agency should maintain an overview of key elements such as incidents and accidents and develop a system to ensure that reportable events are notified to the Care Inspectorate.</p>	<p>Comment: The team will ensure that carers are aware of the incidents and accidents which should be reported. The carer will be asked with their worker to complete the accident/incident form and a copy of this will be stored centrally, both in the carer's file and the child's file. The team will monitor this on a quarterly basis.</p>

2.2.6 A copy of the inspection report is provided in Appendix 1 together with a copy of the action plan submitted to the Care Inspectorate.

2.2.7 The last inspection of the Fostering Service was completed in July 2014 and reported to the Executive Sub-Committee of Lifelong Learning Committee on 26 November 2014 (Report No. [14/508](#) refers). Fostering Services were first inspected in September 2008 and Figure 1 below shows the inspection and grading history since then.

Figure 1: Grading History, Fostering Service



2.3 Adoption Service

2.3.1 The Care Inspectorate carried out an inspection of the Adoption Service in July 2015. The inspection was announced (short notice) and low intensity. This level of inspection is carried out when the Care Inspectorate is satisfied that services are working hard to provide consistently high standards of care.

2.3.2 The Care Inspectorate identified the following key strengths:

- The process to be approved as an adoptive family is very thorough and supportive.
- There is a very good system in place for planning for children in need of adoption, and the process of matching children with families who could meet their needs was of a high quality.
- Staff have access to regular training and told the Care Inspectorate that their learning and development needs were well met, which supported them to plan efficiently for children and to support adoptive families.
- The service has a very good overview of their work and this allows any issues to be identified and action to be taken.

2.3.3 The inspection found the Quality of Care and Support, Quality of Staffing and the Quality of Management and Leadership to be **very good**.

2.3.4 The inspection report does not set out any requirements or recommendations.

2.3.5 A copy of the full inspection report is provided in Appendix 2.

2.3.6 The last inspection of the Adoption Service was completed in July 2014 and reported to the Executive Sub-Committee of Lifelong Learning Committee on 26 November 2014 (Report No. [14/508](#) refers). Adoption Services were first inspected in September 2008 and Figure 2 below shows the inspection and grading history since then.

Figure 2: Grading History, Adoption Service



2.4 Wellbank House

2.4.1 The Care Inspectorate carried out an inspection of Wellbank House in May 2015. The inspection was unannounced and low intensity. This level of inspection is carried out when the Care Inspectorate is satisfied that services are working hard to provide consistently high standards of care.

2.4.2 Wellbank House provides a short term period of proactive residential work which supports a move to independence for homeless young people between the ages of 16 and 24.

2.4.3 The Care Inspectorate identified the following key strengths:

- The service is exceptionally good at involving young people in the development of their own support plans and in the development of the service as a whole.
- The manager provides strong leadership for a professional, skilled and well motivated staff team.
- The young people who use the service were very positive about the quality of the service they receive.

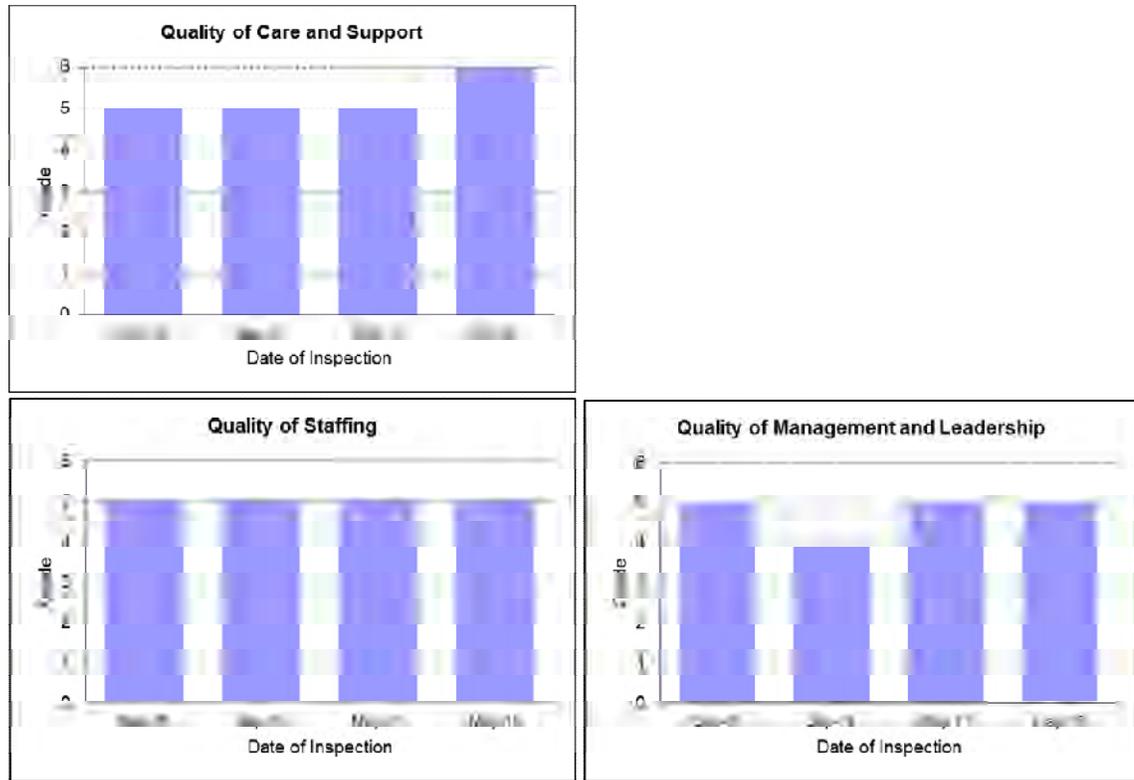
2.4.4 The inspection found Quality of Care and Support to be **excellent** and found the Quality of Staffing and Quality of Management and Leadership to be **very good**. It should be noted that across the 6 Quality Statements that have been considered as part of this inspection, four received grades of **excellent**, with the remaining two graded **very good**.

2.4.5 The inspection report does not set out any requirements or recommendations.

2.4.6 A copy of the full inspection report is provided in Appendix 3.

2.4.7 The last inspection of Wellbank House was completed in May 2013 and reported to the Executive Sub-Committee of Lifelong Learning Committee on 13 November 2013 (Report No. [13/537](#) refers). Wellbank House was first inspected in December 2008 and Figure 1 below shows the inspection and grading history since then.

Figure 3: Grading History, Wellbank House



3 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 The report by the Care Inspectorate provides further information on the standards and quality in our services and sets out a clear agenda for continuous improvement.
- 3.2 It is recommended that the Executive Sub-Committee of Lifelong Learning Committee considers and comments as appropriate on the contents of the report.

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Approved

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You can also send us a text message on 07824 498145.

All Council Services can offer a telephone translation facility.

1. IMPLICATIONS, ASSESSMENTS, CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Strategic Implications	
Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement	Yes
Corporate Plan	Yes
Resource Implications	
Financial	None
Workforce	None
Asset Management (land, property, IST)	None
Assessments	
Equality Impact Assessment	None
Strategic Environmental Assessment	None
Sustainability (community, economic, environmental)	None
Legal and Governance	None
Risk	None
Consultation	
Internal	Yes
External	None
Communication	
Communications Plan	None

1. Strategic Implications

Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement

1.1 This report relates to Objective No (i) Giving every child the best start in life.

Corporate Plan

1.2 The Perth and Kinross Community Plan 2013-2023 and Perth and Kinross Council Corporate Plan 2013/2018 set out five strategic objectives:

- (i) Giving every child the best start in life;
- (ii) Developing educated, responsible and informed citizens;
- (iii) Promoting a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy;
- (iv) Supporting people to lead independent, healthy and active lives; and
- (v) Creating a safe and sustainable place for future generations.

This report relates to Objective No (i) Giving every child the best start in life.

1.3 The report also links to the Education & Children's Services Policy Framework in respect of the following key policy area: Change and Improvement

2. Resource Implications

Financial

2.1 Not applicable (n/a)

Workforce

2.2 Not applicable (n/a)

Asset Management (land, property, IT)

2.3 Not applicable (n/a)

3. Assessments

Equality Impact Assessment

3.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, the Council is required to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between equality groups. Carrying out Equality Impact Assessments for plans and policies allows the Council to demonstrate that it is meeting these duties.

The function, policy, procedure or strategy presented in this report was considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment process (Eq1A) with the following outcome: assessed as **not relevant** for the purposes of Eq1A.

However, it is anticipated that the work on the quality indicators will promote equality of access to care and support. Where appropriate, improvement policies, procedures or strategies will require equalities assessments to ensure compliance with our duty to ensure there is no adverse impact on any community group.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

3.2 The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 places a duty on the Council to identify and assess the environmental consequences of its proposals. No further action is required as it does not qualify as a PPS as defined by the Act and is therefore exempt.

Sustainability

3.3 Not applicable (n/a)

Legal and Governance

3.4 Not applicable (n/a)

Risk

3.5 Not applicable (n/a)

4. Consultation

Internal

4.1 Relevant Heads of Service and Service Managers within Education and Children's Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

External

4.2 Not applicable (n/a)

5. Communication

5.1 Not applicable (n/a)

2. BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (and not containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to a material extent in preparing the above report:

- Care Inspectorate inspection reports of [Fostering Services](#), [Adoption Services](#) and [Wellbank House](#).

3. APPENDICES

Appendix 1a: [Fostering Services](#)
Care Service Inspection Report
Appendix 1b: Action Plan

Appendix 2: [Adoption Services](#)
Care Service Inspection Report

Appendix 3: [Wellbank House](#)
Care Service Inspection Report



Care service inspection report

Full inspection

Perth & Kinross Council - Fostering Services Fostering Service

Colonsay Resource Centre
37-39 Colonsay Street
Perth



Inspection report for Perth & Kinross Council - Fostering Services
Inspection completed on 20 August 2015

Service provided by: Perth & Kinross Council

Service provider number: SP2003003370

Care service number: CS2004083801

Inspection Visit Type: Announced (Short Notice)

Care services in Scotland cannot operate unless they are registered with the Care Inspectorate. We inspect, award grades and set out improvements that must be made. We also investigate complaints about care services and 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.

Contact Us

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Summary

This report and grades represent our assessment of the quality of the areas of performance which were examined during this inspection.

Grades for this care service may change after this inspection following other regulatory activity. For example, if we have to take enforcement action to make the service improve, or if we investigate and agree with a complaint someone makes about the service.

We gave the service these grades

Quality of care and support	4	Good
Quality of staffing	5	Very Good
Quality of management and leadership	5	Very Good

What the service does well

We found that Perth and Kinross Council Fostering service was providing a good quality of support to their foster carers. This included good access to training and development, opportunities for peer support through support groups and easy access to workers who were knowledgeable and skilled in fostering work.

Social workers within the service generally felt well supported within the organisation.

Young people were being provided with good quality foster care placements and we found young people were supported in achieving good outcomes.

What the service could do better

The service should consider how best to inform young people about what it means to be in foster care, and ask young people what information would be helpful.

The service needed to develop their approach to assessing the risks of specific placements. Each looked after young person within a household should have a safer caring plan specific to them.

The service should develop systems to ensure they have an overview of accidents, incidents, serious events and that reportable events are notified to the Care Inspectorate.

What the service has done since the last inspection

A major focus has been on staff recruitment. The family placement team are now fully staffed and the service is now turning its focus to improvement and development of core services such as formal supervision of foster carers, foster carer reviews and foster carer recruitment.

Conclusion

There has been a number of staff shortages and these have impacted on the quality of support being offered to foster carers and the availability of fostering families available to meet this need.

1 About the service we inspected

The Care Inspectorate regulates care services in Scotland. Prior to 1 April 2011, this function was carried out by the Care Commission. Information in relation to all care services is available on our website at www.scswis.com.

The service was previously registered with the Care Commission and transferred its registration to the Care Inspectorate on 1 April 2011.

Perth and Kinross Council Fostering Agency provides a fostering and family placement service for children and young people aged from 0 to 18 years who are assessed as in need of this. The service recruits and supports carer families to provide a fostering service to a range of children and young people mostly within the Perth and Kinross area.

At the time of the inspection, the family placement team was fully staffed and based at Almondbank House.

At the time of the inspection 52 foster carer families providing a range of emergency, temporary, respite and permanent care were looking after 81 children. Five new carers had been approved during the year.

One private fostering arrangement had been assessed within the Local Authority Area. We considered the private fostering assessment carried out and considered this to be of a good quality with all necessary checks completed.

Recommendations

A recommendation is a statement that sets out actions that a care service provider should take to improve or develop the quality of the service, but where failure to do so would not directly result in enforcement.

Recommendations are based on the National Care Standards, SSSC codes of practice and recognised good practice. These must also be outcomes-based and if the provider meets the recommendation this would improve outcomes for people receiving the service.

Requirements

A requirement is a statement which sets out what a care service must do to improve outcomes for people who use services and must be linked to a breach in the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010 (the "Act"), its regulations, or orders made under the Act, or a condition of registration. Requirements are enforceable in law.

We make requirements where (a) there is evidence of poor outcomes for people using the service or (b) there is the potential for poor outcomes which would affect people's health, safety or welfare.

Based on the findings of this inspection this service has been awarded the following grades:

Quality of care and support - Grade 4 - Good

Quality of staffing - Grade 5 - Very Good

Quality of management and leadership - Grade 5 - Very Good

This report and grades represent our assessment of the quality of the areas of performance which were examined during this inspection.

Grades for this care service may change following other regulatory activity. You can find the most up-to-date grades for this service by visiting our website www.careinspectorate.com or by calling us on 0345 600 9527 or visiting one of our offices.

2 How we inspected this service

The level of inspection we carried out

In this service we carried out a low intensity inspection. We carry out these inspections when we are satisfied that services are working hard to provide consistently high standards of care.

What we did during the inspection

We wrote this report after an inspection which took place between Thursday 23 July 2015 and Thursday 20 August 2015. We told the service a few days in advance of our intention to start the inspection. The inspection was undertaken by one inspector. An inspection of the adoption agency took place at the same time.

As requested by us, the fostering service sent us an annual return. They also completed a self-assessment of their service prior to the inspection starting.

We asked the service to send out short questionnaires to foster carers, panel members and staff. We received two responses from staff, three responses from panel members and six responses from foster carers.

In this inspection we gathered evidence from various sources, including the relevant sections of policies, procedures, records and other documents including:

- evidence from the services most recent self evaluation
- evaluations of the service collected by the service
- Perth and Kinross Council website which contained information about becoming a foster carer.
- foster carer files
- children's files.

We had discussion with:

- the Agency Decision Maker
- the management team of the fostering service
- children's social workers
- the Looked After Children Review Officers
- staff within the family placement team
- the Who Cares? Scotland worker
- children and young people who were using or had used the fostering service
- foster carers individually in their homes.

We also attended and observed a fostering panel as part of the inspection.

Grading the service against quality themes and statements

We inspect and grade elements of care that we call 'quality themes'. For example, one of the quality themes we might look at is 'Quality of care and support'. Under each quality theme are 'quality statements' which describe what a service should be doing well for that theme. We grade how the service performs against the quality themes and statements.

Details of what we found are in Section 3: The inspection

Inspection Focus Areas (IFAs)

In any year we may decide on specific aspects of care to focus on during our inspections. These are extra checks we make on top of all the normal ones we make during inspection. We do this to gather information about the quality of these aspects of care on a national basis. Where we have examined an inspection focus area we will clearly identify it under the relevant quality statement.

Fire safety issues

We do not regulate fire safety. Local fire and rescue services are responsible for checking services. However, where significant fire safety issues become apparent, we will alert the relevant fire and rescue services so they may consider what action to take. You can find out more about care services' responsibilities for fire safety at www.firescotland.gov.uk

The annual return

Every year all care services must complete an 'annual return' form to make sure the information we hold is up to date. We also use annual returns to decide how we will inspect the service.

Annual Return Received: Yes - Electronic

Comments on Self Assessment

Every year all care services must complete a 'self assessment' form telling us how their service is performing. We check to make sure this assessment is accurate.

The self assessment was completed to a satisfactory standard and highlighted areas where the service thought they did well and some areas for development.

Taking the views of people using the care service into account

We spoke with a number of foster carers and a number of foster carers sent us their views by email. Generally foster carers viewed the service positively. However, a number of foster carers highlighted that initial information given to them about children could be of a better quality.

Taking carers' views into account

We did not speak with birth families as part of this inspection.

3 The inspection

We looked at how the service performs against the following quality themes and statements. Here are the details of what we found.

Quality Theme 1: Quality of Care and Support

Grade awarded for this theme: 4 - Good

Statement 1

“We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of the care and support provided by the service.”

Service strengths

We looked at this statement at the time of the last inspection and assessed that the service provided very good opportunities for people who used the service to influence their care and support. This statement was examined during this inspection as the participation of foster carers and the children and young people in their care is very important to achieving good outcomes for them.

In 2015-16 all services are being inspected against this statement. During this inspection we confirmed that foster carers and young people continued to have positive opportunities to assess, and improve the quality of support within the service.

Foster carers told us that the 'Fostering Agency' listened to their views and offered opportunities to suggest service improvements. We confirmed that foster carers received regular email communications, which kept them informed about what was happening within the agency. In addition foster carers told us they enjoyed positive relationships with their supervising social workers and could discuss any issues with them.

Evidence provided by the service supported that regular feedback was sought concerning the preparation process, training events and attendance at panel. We looked at the website and found this had good information for prospective foster carers. This included information about how they could complain about any aspect of the service provided.

Annual foster carer review arrangements supported formal opportunities for foster carers to comment on the quality of support they received from the 'Fostering Agency'. A range of proformas had been reviewed and developed to support a range of people expressing their views about the quality of foster carer provision. The service planned to continue to integrate a range of reports, and views into foster carer reviews to ensure that a range of views was used in relation to assessing quality within the service.

Regular support groups and service information days provided more formal and informal opportunities for foster carers to raise issues as a group, in relation to elements of service delivery.

We spoke with foster carers and young people who told us how they had participated in the fostering agency. Some young people and their carers had attended activity days and during the inspection an annual picnic took place. Foster carers had supported recruitment and training opportunities for new foster carers.

There had been some opportunities for the sons and daughters of foster carers to take part in activities, and talk about what it was like to be part of a fostering family.

We met with some young people in their foster carer's home and a small group of young people who had been involved in some corporate activities. Some young people had been involved in developing a DVD of what it means to be in foster care. This DVD provided a powerful insight into the lives of young people in foster care and had been used in many areas of the council to raise awareness in respect of policy development and reviewing practice. The group was supported by the Throughcare and Aftercare team and the Children's Rights Officer regularly attended.

Perth and Kinross Council had established links with "Who Cares Scotland" which is a national independent organisation for young people who are accommodated.

We noted throughout the organisation a focus on advocacy for young people. This was included as part of the 'Corporate Parenting Strategy' where children and young people were identified as benefitting from a corporate parent who is a senior officer within the council. The fostering agency told us they planned to further develop the Children's Rights service in light of the Children and Young People's (Scotland) Act 2014.

A young person's participation worker had just been recruited at the time of the inspection. It was anticipated that this care experienced young person would support and develop participation opportunities for all looked after children.

We also visited a drop in service called @Scott St where young people could access youth workers to discuss any aspect of their care and support.

Young people told us they had a good relationship with their social worker who visited them regularly. This supported them to express their views about a range of areas including the quality of their care and support.

One young person told us about their foster carer:

- "They treat me like family - we have fun, we laugh and the food is good".

Looked After Child Reviews, Day to Day Placement Agreements and Child Protection Meetings provided formal opportunities for children, young people and their parents to make comment on the quality of the service provided and to influence care planning for the child.

The service told us of their commitment to improve feedback opportunities for birth parents. We saw that where necessary translation services had been made available to parents so that they could fully contribute to planning for their children.

Social workers told us they encouraged parents to write reports to ensure that their views were fully considered during meetings. We also noted an open and transparent approach to working with parents when planning for children either to go home or to move to more permanent care situations.

Areas for improvement

The service hoped to better collate and evaluate the views of children and young people about the quality of the service.

We noted that over the past year formal supervision sessions with foster carers had not happened regularly. Formal supervision offers opportunities for an open and transparent conversation about what was happening currently, and any learning and development opportunities which may be useful.

The participation strategy had not yet been shared with people who used the service.

Some young people did not remember getting any information about fostering prior to being received into accommodation. None knew how to contact the 'Who Cares Worker' independently of their social worker or foster carer. We assessed that this area should be developed further and the role of the 'Who Cares Worker' should be more established within the service.

In conclusion, we assessed that in relation to care and support issues, foster carers and young people had opportunities to raise issues individually and collectively in groups. The service was likely to take action in respect of any issues raised. The areas identified for development highlighted do not impact on the practice in this area. This has informed the grade of very good for this statement.

Grade

5 - Very Good

Number of requirements - 0

Number of recommendations - 0

Statement 2

“We enable service users to make individual choices and ensure that every service user can be supported to achieve their potential.”

Service strengths

We looked at this statement at the time of the last inspection and considered that the service was working at a good level in meeting this statement. We decided to look at this statement again during this inspection as we are looking at the educational outcomes for children and young people in this inspecting year.

At this inspection we noted that staff recruitment had been undertaken over the year and at the time of the inspection the team was fully staffed. This provided opportunities to improve the support available to foster carers.

We noted that foster carer reviews were up to date, and unannounced visits and foster carer reviews were routinely taking place ensuring that learning and development for foster carers was discussed regularly. This supported foster carers to have the knowledge and develop the skills necessary to support the children and young people they were looking after.

Although we noted a net decrease in the numbers of foster carers, more recently recruitment activity had increased and six potential fostering families were being assessed. An increase in the numbers of fostering families would support a range of different families being available to meet children's needs.

Most children and young people had been placed within the boundaries or close to the council area. This supported children remaining in their communities, staying at their school of origin, and supporting contact with families where appropriate.

The service recognised the need to specifically recruit foster carers who could provide planned short breaks. We noted the continued use of the innovative programme *cu@sport* which provided activity weekends for young people, so that their foster carers and the young people could have a break. Young people did not view this as respite although the reality was both the young person and their carers enjoyed the short break.

We assessed that most foster carers were supported to meet the needs of children in their care and to help the children aspire to reach their potential. Foster carers told us they had good access to training and knew what the expectation was in respect of training and development. They mostly enjoyed positive relationships with supervising social workers. This supported foster carers to meet the needs of the children for whom they were caring.

One foster carer told us:

- "Before the team was fully staffed, we did not feel valued. Having a worker who visits regularly and regular training helps us to feel valued."

Young people told us they had very good relationships with their foster carers who helped them keep in touch with their family and friends, and to attend various activities in the community. Most children had seen the foster carer's profile and/or had visited the foster carer home, which gave them information about the foster carers before moving to live with them, and helped them feel less anxious about the move.

We saw some individualised approaches to supporting children. For example, in the case of very young children, plans involved parents travelling to contact rather than children having to travel distances. We were impressed with the individualised approach by some foster carers, in supporting young people in their daily lives and in planning for the future. Transitions into independent living were supported by the through care and after care team.

Discussions were ongoing in relation to the option of continuing care for young people. One foster carer was dual approved as a children and adult carer, which meant some young people would have the option to remain with the support of a caring family.

The local authority prioritised improving the educational attainment of young people. Multi agency training focussed on the needs of young people and how these could be met within education. Links had been made with vocational programmes and other organisations who could offer a wider range of achievement awards for children, such as the 'Duke of Edinburgh' award scheme and the 'Award Scheme Development & Accreditation Network' (ASDAN) programme.

Schools offered more flexible individualised programmes for children and young people and offsite provision was aimed at reintegration. For young people this meant they could achieve in education in the widest sense. Young people who produced the DVD stated that being in foster care supported them to be more confident individuals, and to achieve more in education that they otherwise would have done.

Foster carers told us that they mostly received good quality information about the children they were being asked to look after. Any challenging behaviour which may pose a risk to the child or other children in the household was included in the referral information. This supported them to meet the needs of these children.

Additional support to foster carers and young people was available through the 'Family Change Project'.

One foster carer told us:

- "The duty system means there is always someone at the end of the phone. I feel supported and trusted."

Social workers told us:

- "We visit foster carers regularly with their supervising social worker. Where there is a need to challenge or direct practice we do so in a very open way."

All children had regular 'Looked After Child Reviews' attended by a range of professionals including health, education and social work. During these meetings the local authority reviewed the effectiveness of the child's plan and the need for any changes. We could see that children's care plans were regularly reviewed and updated.

Staff told us that all approved foster carers were subscribed to 'Fostering Network' which is a national organisation for foster care who:

- "lobby, campaign and influence policy in order to develop, improve and champion fostering" (<http://www.fostering.net/contact-us>).

Carers we spoke to told us they valued this subscription, and that it gave them access to an independent organisation including their publications and training events. This also ensured that carers' rights were safeguarded.

Health and safety risk assessments had been appropriately completed on the files inspected. Foster carer agreements were in place which detailed the responsibilities of both staff within the service and the foster carer.

Areas for improvement

The service told us they planned to improve their links with the through care, and after care service to ensure that young people experienced seamless support when moving on independently.

We saw a good quality of risk identification where children were placed outwith the approval of the foster carers. However, where this was not the case we were unclear whether specific risks such as the relative inexperience of the foster carer, or other young people in the house was appropriately taken into account.

(See recommendation 1 made under Quality Theme 1, Quality Statement 2).

The impact of previous staff shortages was evident during the inspection. Recruitment activity had been reduced during the previous year and this had resulted in a net decrease in foster carers. The numbers of emergency extensions to approval for foster carers had risen. We noted that compromises made during the discussions about matching children's needs to a foster carer's capacity to meet those needs, often meant that children's needs were not as comprehensively addressed as they could be.

Some children had had a number of moves before achieving a stable fostering situation. Some foster carers had felt unsupported and noted that the face-to-face contact they had with their supervising social worker had reduced for a time although this was increasing once more.

We noted that medical updates of foster carers did not take place regularly. In some cases these were more than three years out of date. We noted that there were ongoing discussion within the local health partnership about how the service might aspire to best practice in this area.

Best practice, as described in the National Care Standards, is for annual updates of health assessments with full health assessments taking place at intervals prescribed through the Looked After Children (Scotland) Regulations 2009.

Risk assessments of household pets were not always reviewed annually to reflect changes in behaviour, perhaps due to age and carer profiles were in need of updating. There is a need for better overview of such issues to ensure that regular checks are undertaken.

Some foster carers told us that the present informal buddying and/or mentoring system worked well and should be more formalised within the service.

In conclusion, we noted that there were important strengths in the quality of care and support within the service and generally we saw that children using the service were supported to achieve positive outcomes.

We assessed that the outcomes for some people who used the service were not of the quality that the service would wish or that we would want to see. This has informed the grade of good for this statement.

Grade

4 - Good

Number of requirements - 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations - 1

1. The service should ensure that all strengths and vulnerabilities of caring situations should be fully discussed and recorded prior to decisions being made.

National Care Standards foster care and family placement services.

Standard 2: promoting good quality care.

Quality Theme 3: Quality of Staffing

Grade awarded for this theme: 5 - Very Good

Statement 1

"We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of staffing in the service."

Service strengths

We considered this statement at the time of the last inspection and assessed that there were very good opportunities for foster carers to make comments about the quality of staffing within the service. We decided to consider this statement again at this inspection to monitor any improvements

Strengths highlighted in Quality Theme 1, Quality Statement 1 are also relevant to this statement.

Foster carers were asked at the time of their annual review about the quality of support they received from their supervising social worker. We saw that foster carers had been kept up to date with all changes in staffing within the team supporting them, and within the management team.

Foster carers had also been actively involved in the staff recruitment process, ensuring they could influence what staff were appointed.

Children and young people could express their views about the relationship with their social worker at their 'Looked After Children' reviews.

Areas for improvement

The service told us they planned to involve young people more in staff recruitment.

The service should continue to develop increased opportunities for foster carers, young people and birth parents to comment specifically on staffing issues and for this feedback to be linked to improvements in staff performance.

In conclusion, we assessed that in relation to staffing issues, foster carers had some opportunities to raise issues individually and collectively through the fostering panel and the consultative group and the Agency was likely to take action in respect of these. We assessed that current practice generally is very good in this area.

Grade

5 - Very Good

Number of requirements - 0

Number of recommendations - 0

Statement 3

“We have a professional, trained and motivated workforce which operates to National Care Standards, legislation and best practice.”

Service strengths

We looked at this statement at the time of the last inspection and at that time we assessed that the staff were operating at a very good level within the agency. We decided to look at this statement again given the numbers of staff changes. During this inspection we noted that many of the strengths of the staff continued to be in evidence.

At the time of the inspection, the fostering agency was fully staffed. The priority of the service was now focussed towards staff training and development.

During the inspection we noted that the majority of staff within the agency were professional and appropriately registered with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC). Where this did not occur the service quickly made alternative arrangements to address the issue, and ensure that all staff working within the service were appropriately registered. The SSSC is the regulatory body for workers working in social care settings (www.sssc.com).

Staff throughout the agency told us that supervision was regular, fully recorded and of a good quality. Appropriate levels of direction, guidance and reflection supported staff to feel confident in their work.

All staff had had an annual review which identified their areas of strength and any areas in their practice which could be developed further. Appropriate learning and development plans had been put in place. Likewise all staff were aware of the content of their team plans which were aimed at service improvement.

Regular team meetings were held for all staff. We attended a team meeting for the fostering team and observed a range of discussion areas including ideas for developing the service, creating welcome packs for children, improving safer caring assessments and organising training for foster carers.

The fostering team reported appropriate space had been given for team development and at the time of the inspection the team were working well together and building trusting relationships with foster carers.

All staff told us that they had very good access to training both internally and externally and we confirmed that there was a wide range of training available. Staff told us they had recently attended a range of training appropriate to their role. We assessed that staff were confident in their work.

We saw a well established and well used resource library which supported staff in their work, and assisted them to keep up to date with emerging research and good practice.

Good links had been established between teams working within the agency, and with a number of agencies such as the 'Fostering Network'.

All the foster carers we spoke with told us that they thought their supervising social workers were knowledgeable and skilled in their work and as a result they felt well supported.

Areas for improvement

We noted that staff within the service continued to work with high case loads, and in particular the management of fostering payments impacted negatively on their opportunities to work more developmentally. Foster carers also highlighted that their social workers were under pressure to ensure that payments were applied for timeously. They suggested a more centralised administrative system to manage payments.

In conclusion, we noted that there were major strengths in the quality of staffing and the areas identified for improvement did not call into question the knowledge, skills or motivation of the staff group. This has informed the grade of very good for this statement.

Grade

5 - Very Good

Number of requirements - 0

Number of recommendations - 0

Quality Theme 4: Quality of Management and Leadership

Grade awarded for this theme: 5 - Very Good

Statement 1

"We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of the management and leadership of the service."

Service strengths

We considered this statement at the time of the last inspection and assessed that there were very good opportunities for people who used the fostering service to make comments about the quality of the service. We decided to look at this statement again to monitor any improvements.

Strengths highlighted in Quality Theme 1, Quality Statement 1 and Quality Theme 3, Quality Statement 1 are also relevant to this statement.

A consultative committee met regularly and we saw evidence of wide ranging discussions with regard to a number of service issues. We were also confident that foster carers knew who the manager of the service was and were happy to make contact if there was an issue.

Information days provided opportunities for foster carers to be fully involved in the team evaluation. The annual report of the fostering service had been shared with foster carers who could make comment on the overall work of the agency.

We saw where issues had been raised for example in managing the move of children from temporary care situations to more permanent ones, the agency involved foster carers in developing guidance to support consistent practice.

Some young people told me about their plans to produce a children's guide to continuing care. Workers told me that care experienced young people were also facilitating group discussion at a forthcoming corporate event for all Perth and Kinross children in relation to council policy development.

Areas for improvement

The service told us that they planned to continue to take forward the participation strategy in order that the views of people who use the service fully contribute to planning improvement within the service.

The service should also continue to expand membership of their young person's group to ensure it represents a wider range of young people using the fostering service

In conclusion, we assessed that in relation to management and leadership issues, foster carers and children and young people had some opportunities to raise issues individually and collectively and the Agency was likely to take action in respect of any issues raised.

Plans were in place to provide more opportunities for children and young people to express their views about Perth and Kinross Council services. This has informed the grade of very good for this statement.

Grade

5 - Very Good

Number of requirements - 0

Number of recommendations - 0

Statement 4

"We use quality assurance systems and processes which involve service users, carers, staff and stakeholders to assess the quality of service we provide"

Service strengths

We looked at this statement at the time of the last inspection and assessed that the Agency had very good systems in place to support the quality of work they did. We decided to look at this statement again during this inspection to assess whether this was still the case.

We assessed that Perth and Kinross Council had clear planning processes in place to support positive outcomes for children and their families.

We noted a number of key systems aimed at providing a management overview and which could indicate the quality of the service. This included an overview of statutory reviews taking place within timescales, educational attainments for children, and numbers of moves in placement for children.

Tracking meetings were effective at maintaining an overview of the children currently accommodated by Perth and Kinross Council and planning was in place to support stability for these children. Clear links were in place in relation to family placement services, fieldwork teams, Looked After Children review services and legal services so that everyone was aware of the current situation for children.

Staff confirmed they could access guidance which supported their work. Policies and procedure are important as they guide staff in their practice and provide consistency of decision making.

Regular staff supervision monitored staff practice and performance.

We saw some evidence of file auditing. Regular auditing of files supports consistent recording of information for children and foster carers.

The fostering panel provided an important quality assurance measure for the service. Panel recruitment had continued to be aimed at supporting a better gender balance in panel membership. Appraisal processes were now taking place and training had been identified as part of this process. We saw that panel member profiles were now available for people attending the panel. This was aimed at supporting people to feel less anxious about coming into the panel.

We attended a fostering panel and found the members were well prepared, thorough, knowledgeable, and respectful of the foster carers. Foster carers were given the chance to present their views, and were appropriately shown thanks for their care and input into improving the lives of the children fostered. The chairperson ensured good preparation for the meeting and clarity of the agenda for discussion and summarised the situation and recommendations. In turn the fostering panel gave feedback to the agency in relation to the work of the agency in terms of quality of written information and worker presentation.

We could see there were clear links between the Agency and the panel. The Agency Decision Maker, had an effective overview of the Fostering Agency and the work of the fostering panel. An annual report had been produced which detailed the work of the panel over the previous year. The work of the panel was increasing and discussions were ongoing about the best way to develop this area of the agency.

An annual report had been written and had been shared with foster carers. This provided an update of the work of the fostering agency and areas they would like to see improve over the next year. This helped share the vision of the fostering agency with foster carers and stakeholders.

A service development plan identified areas of improvement with timescales for the completion of tasks. We could see that this action plan had been developed by staff and from feedback people who used the service and stakeholders. One of the main focus areas was stabilising and improving the core business of the agency.

Quality Assurance systems involved a range of key people. Foster carers were asked about the quality of the service during their preparation, training events, the consultative group, information days and more informally through their relationship with their resource worker. Foster carers knew who the manager was and felt able to contact the manager directly with any issues.

Children and young people had some opportunities to raise issues about the quality of their care and support through the review process. Some young people could directly influence service improvement.

Staff raised issues at team meetings. Stakeholders were offered opportunities to reflect on the quality of the service annually through the service review process.

Areas for improvement

The service told us they would continue to build on stakeholder involvement

The service had not followed Care Inspectorate notification procedures on all occasions. We discussed this with the management team within the service and signposted the notifications guidance. **(See recommendation 1 made under Quality Theme 4, Quality Statement 4).**

We assessed that the service should continue to improve and develop auditing procedures within the service. For example, they should ensure that foster carer supervision, reviews of pet risk assessments, and medical assessment updates are taking place at prescribed intervals.

The service should continue to review fostering panel membership to ensure a continued independent focus from the panel including people with direct experience of fostering.

In conclusion, we noted major strengths in the quality assurance systems within the agency. The areas we have identified for improvement did not call into question the very good practice in this area. This has informed the grade of very good for this statement.

Grade

5 - Very Good

Number of requirements - 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations - 1

1. The agency should maintain an overview of key events such as incidents and accidents and develop a system to ensure that reportable events are notified to the Care Inspectorate.

**National Care Standards, foster care and family placement services.
Standard 13: management and staffing.**

4 What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at our last inspection

Previous requirements

There are no outstanding requirements.

5 What the service has done to meet any recommendations we made at our last inspection

Previous recommendations

1. This recommendation was made under Quality Theme 1, Statement 2.

The provider should ensure that each year the agency reviews your performance and the quality of care you provide and a review meeting is held with your supervising social worker.

**National Care Standards foster care and family placement services.
Standard 10.1**

This recommendation was made on 02 July 2014

The service had developed a system of internal reviews with reviews taking place at the fostering panel at prescribed intervals or if there was a need for review.

We were satisfied that all foster carers had now either had a review, or there was one scheduled in the near future.

2. This recommendation was made under Quality Theme 1, Statement 2.

The provider should ensure that staff use methods that reflect up to date knowledge and best practice guidance, and that the management are continuously striving to improve practice.

**National Care Standards foster care and family placement services.
Standard 13.**

This recommendation was made on 02 July 2014

A new medication policy and procedure had been developed in consultation with foster carers. We were satisfied that the policy was aimed at promoting positive outcomes for children and young people.

3. This recommendation was made under Quality Theme 4, Statement 1.

The provider should ensure that information (for example annual reports) is produced describing the performance of the agency.

**National Care Standards foster care and family placement services.
Standard 13.**

This recommendation was made on 02 July 2014

An annual report had been produced for the fostering service and had been shared with foster carers.

4. This recommendation was made under Quality Theme 4, Statement 4.

The service should continue to ensure that panel membership is diverse, representing a mix of skills, a gender balance, independent members and people with direct experience of fostering.

**National Care Standards, Foster care and Family placement services.
Standard 13.**

This recommendation was made on 02 July 2014

The agency had continued to recruit panel members and intends to continue to do so as the work of the panel increases. During our observation of the panel we saw a mix of skills and a gender balance.

5. This recommendation was made under Quality Theme 4, Statement 4.

The provider should ensure that the recording of the review meeting and its outcomes are accurate and a full record covering the guidance contained in the Looked After Children (Scotland) Regulations 2009.

**National Care Standards foster care and family placement services.
Standard 9.**

This recommendation was made on 02 July 2014

We looked at records of reviews in foster carers files. We saw that records appeared full and contained relevant information in relation to the Looked After Children (Scotland) Regulations 2009.

6 Complaints

No complaints have been upheld, or partially upheld, since the last inspection.

7 Enforcements

We have taken no enforcement action against this care service since the last inspection.

8 Additional Information

There is no additional information.

9 Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings	
2 Jul 2014	Announced (Short Notice)	Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	Not Assessed
		Staffing	5 - Very Good
		Management and Leadership	5 - Very Good
6 Jun 2013	Announced	Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	Not Assessed
		Staffing	5 - Very Good
		Management and Leadership	5 - Very Good
11 Aug 2010	Announced	Care and support	5 - Very Good
		Environment	Not Assessed
		Staffing	Not Assessed
		Management and Leadership	5 - Very Good
2 Oct 2009	Announced	Care and support	5 - Very Good
		Environment	Not Assessed
		Staffing	5 - Very Good
		Management and Leadership	4 - Good
11 Sep 2008	Announced	Care and support	5 - Very Good
		Environment	Not Assessed
		Staffing	4 - Good
		Management and Leadership	3 - Adequate

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

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

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Inspection Documents **Action Plan**

**Perth & Kinross Council - Fostering
Services CS2004083801**

General Information

General Information about the Inspection

Inspected by: Lorna Black

Type of Inspection: Announced (Short Notice)

Inspection Completed on (date): 20 August 2015

Requirements

Details of the following entries are included in the Appendix at the end of this document along with blank forms for adding new entries.

Quality Theme

Quality Statement

Requirement Number

Please enter responses for each of the requirements listed below

Recommendations

Details of the following entries are included in the Appendix at the end of this document along with blank forms for adding new entries.

Quality Theme	Quality Statement	Recommendation Number
Care And Support	1.2	1
Management And Leadership	4.4	1

Please enter responses for each of the recommendations listed below
2 records

Submission Declaration

Declaration I confirm that by submitting this action plan I have the authority of the service provider to complete the action plan.

Name:

Debbie Gillespie

I am: (Select an option)

The manager of the service / The owner of the service

Appendix

Quality Theme - Care and support

Quality Statement 1.2 We enable service users to make individual choices and ensure that every service user can be supported to achieve their potential.

Recommendation: The service should ensure that all strengths and vulnerabilities of caring situations should be fully discussed and recorded prior to decisions being made.

National Care Standards foster care and family placement services. Standard 2: promoting good quality care.

Action Planned: Verbal discussion in relation to the above happens at present: weekly at the FPT briefing meetings, within the team at the point of any referral, within the Resource meeting and is recorded when referral and risk assessment forms are completed. We will discuss as a team about developing and introducing a system which records the strengths and vulnerabilities of each care situation and the decisions made.

Timescale: December 2015

Responsible Person: Debbie Gillespie/Gail Harris

Quality Theme - Management and leadership

Quality Statement 4.4 We use quality assurance systems and processes which involve service users, carers, staff and stakeholders to assess the quality of service we provide.

Recommendation: The agency should maintain an overview of key events such as incidents and accidents and develop a system to ensure that reportable events are notified to the Care Inspectorate.

National Care Standards, foster care and family placement services. Standard 13: management and staffing.

Action Planned: The Incident/Accident form has recently been developed and shared with carers. Supervising workers will continue to address this within supervision to identify any reportable incidents/accidents. Debbie Gillespie will re-send the reporting form out to carers and the issues will be raised at the next Consultative group meeting which is minuted and the minute is sent out to all carers.

A copy of the incident/accident form is sent to the child's social worker to be retained in the child's file and a copy is kept in the carer's file. This is signed by the Team Leader and a copy is kept in the Incident/Accident folder.

A copy of notifiable incidents is on the notice board in the Family Placement Team room. This is discussed within Team Meetings, supervision and with any new members of staff in Induction.

Timescale: December 2015 and ongoing

Responsible Person: Debbie Gillespie



Care service inspection report

Full inspection

Perth & Kinross Council - Adoption Service Adoption Service

Colonsay Resource Centre
37-39 Colonsay Street
Perth



Inspection report for Perth & Kinross Council - Adoption Service
Inspection completed on 20 August 2015

Service provided by: Perth & Kinross Council

Service provider number: SP2003003370

Care service number: CS2004080884

Inspection Visit Type: Announced (Short Notice)

Care services in Scotland cannot operate unless they are registered with the Care Inspectorate. We inspect, award grades and set out improvements that must be made. We also investigate complaints about care services and 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.

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Summary

This report and grades represent our assessment of the quality of the areas of performance which were examined during this inspection.

Grades for this care service may change after this inspection following other regulatory activity. For example, if we have to take enforcement action to make the service improve, or if we investigate and agree with a complaint someone makes about the service.

We gave the service these grades

Quality of care and support	5	Very Good
Quality of staffing	5	Very Good
Quality of management and leadership	5	Very Good

What the service does well

Adopters told us the process to be approved as an adoptive family was very thorough and supportive.

We assessed there was a very good system for planning for children in need of adoption, and the process of matching children with families who could meet their needs was of a high quality.

Staff had access to regular training and told us that their learning and development needs were well met. This supported them to plan effectively for children and to support adoptive families.

We assessed that the service had a very good overview of their work and this helped them to identify where there were any issues and take action to address these.

What the service could do better

The service need to further develop their post adoption support services. These should be well publicised in terms of accessibility and the support on offer.

Some adopters told us that a buddying or mentor scheme for newly approved families with more experienced adopters would be useful as part of the process.

We thought the service should continue to consider how the views of people who use the service can be linked to staff appraisal processes.

What the service has done since the last inspection

The agency has begun to consider how they might plan for children from birth more effectively where this is assessed as appropriate.

The adoption handbook has been updated and provides a useful information tool for adopters.

Post adoption support groups have now been established and have considered a range of issues identified by adopters for discussion.

Improvements have been made to the adoption panel process. Leaflets for attendees have been developed. Profiles of panel members are available in the waiting room. Adoption panel members appraisal processes have now been established and training has been identified.

Conclusion

We assessed that Perth and Kinross Council continues to provide a valuable adoption resource for children and families in need of this service. The staff team and the team leader were knowledgeable, skilled and motivated to achieve positive outcomes for all service users. The service was committed to continued improvement and developing as a team.

1 About the service we inspected

The Care Inspectorate regulates care services in Scotland. Prior to 1 April 2011, this function was carried out by the Care Commission. Information in relation to all care services is available on our website at www.scswis.com.

The service was previously registered with the Care Commission and transferred its registration to the Care Inspectorate on 1 April 2011.

Perth and Kinross Council provides an adoption service for children, young people and their families who are assessed in need of this service.

The permanence team has the main responsibility for fulfilling the duties of the adoption agency although some assessment of children's needs for adoption remains within the locality teams. The registered manager for the adoption agency has responsibility for overseeing permanence planning within the council and as such oversees all functions of the adoption agency.

Since the last inspection, two new members of staff have been recruited and the team is now fully staffed. Over the last year, there have been efforts made to stabilise the team and begin to further develop the work of the team.

At the time of the most recent annual return (January 2015), the agency had eight approved adopters, six of whom had been approved within the year. Eleven children had been registered as in need of adoption and 10 children had been placed with an adoptive family within the year.

Recommendations

A recommendation is a statement that sets out actions that a care service provider should take to improve or develop the quality of the service, but where failure to do so would not directly result in enforcement.

Recommendations are based on the National Care Standards, SSSC codes of practice and recognised good practice. These must also be outcomes-based and if the provider meets the recommendation this would improve outcomes for people receiving the service.

Requirements

A requirement is a statement which sets out what a care service must do to improve outcomes for people who use services and must be linked to a breach in the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010 (the "Act"), its regulations, or orders made under the Act, or a condition of registration. Requirements are enforceable in law.

We make requirements where (a) there is evidence of poor outcomes for people using the service or (b) there is the potential for poor outcomes which would affect people's health, safety or welfare.

Based on the findings of this inspection this service has been awarded the following grades:

Quality of care and support - Grade 5 - Very Good

Quality of staffing - Grade 5 - Very Good

Quality of management and leadership - Grade 5 - Very Good

This report and grades represent our assessment of the quality of the areas of performance which were examined during this inspection.

Grades for this care service may change following other regulatory activity. You can find the most up-to-date grades for this service by visiting our website www.careinspectorate.com or by calling us on 0345 600 9527 or visiting one of our offices.

2 How we inspected this service

The level of inspection we carried out

In this service we carried out a low intensity inspection. We carry out these inspections when we are satisfied that services are working hard to provide consistently high standards of care.

What we did during the inspection

We wrote this report after an announced inspection which took place between Thursday 23 July 2015 and Thursday 20 August 2015. The inspection was undertaken by one inspector. An inspection of the fostering service took place at the same time.

As requested by us, the adoption agency sent us a completed annual return. They also completed a self assessment of their service prior to the inspection starting.

We asked the service to send out short questionnaires to adopters, panel members and staff. We received 11 responses from adoptive families, three responses from panel members and four responses from staff.

In this inspection we gathered evidence from various sources, including the relevant sections of policies, procedures, records and other documents including:

- evidence from the services most recent self evaluation
- evaluations of the service collected by the service
- surveys completed by adopters, panel members and staff for the Care Inspectorate
- adopters' files
- children's files.

We also had discussion with:

- the manager of the adoption agency, the improvement officer and the team manager of the permanence team
- staff within the permanence team
- children's social workers
- adopters.

Grading the service against quality themes and statements

We inspect and grade elements of care that we call 'quality themes'. For example, one of the quality themes we might look at is 'Quality of care and support'. Under each quality theme are 'quality statements' which describe what a service should be doing well for that theme. We grade how the service performs against the quality themes and statements.

Details of what we found are in Section 3: The inspection

Inspection Focus Areas (IFAs)

In any year we may decide on specific aspects of care to focus on during our inspections. These are extra checks we make on top of all the normal ones we make during inspection. We do this to gather information about the quality of these aspects of care on a national basis. Where we have examined an inspection focus area we will clearly identify it under the relevant quality statement.

Fire safety issues

We do not regulate fire safety. Local fire and rescue services are responsible for checking services. However, where significant fire safety issues become apparent, we will alert the relevant fire and rescue services so they may consider what action to take. You can find out more about care services' responsibilities for fire safety at www.firescotland.gov.uk

The annual return

Every year all care services must complete an 'annual return' form to make sure the information we hold is up to date. We also use annual returns to decide how we will inspect the service.

Annual Return Received: Yes - Electronic

Comments on Self Assessment

Every year all care services must complete a 'self assessment' form telling us how their service is performing. We check to make sure this assessment is accurate.

The self assessment was completed to a satisfactory standard and identified some areas the service thought they did well and other areas where they would like to improve.

Taking the views of people using the care service into account

We spoke with a number of adoptive families and received written views from others. Generally the majority of adopters thought the service was of a very good quality. Some adopters highlighted that post adoption services could be improved. Some adopters' views are contained within the main body of the report.

We did not speak with children formally as part of this inspection due the children being very young. However informally we saw children with their adoptive parents and observed good quality relationships. Families knew their children well and were attentive to their needs. Children were happy to tell us about their holidays and about starting school and nursery for the first time.

Taking carers' views into account

We did not speak with birth parents as part of this inspection.

3 The inspection

We looked at how the service performs against the following quality themes and statements. Here are the details of what we found.

Quality Theme 1: Quality of Care and Support

Grade awarded for this theme: 5 - Very Good

Statement 1

“We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of the care and support provided by the service.”

Service strengths

We looked at this statement at the time of the last inspection and assessed that there were good opportunities for adopters to make comments about the quality of support within the service. This statement was examined during this inspection as the participation of adopters and the children and young people in their care is very important to achieving good outcomes for them. In 2015-16 all services are being inspected against this statement.

During this inspection we confirmed that adopters and young people continued to have positive opportunities to assess and improve the quality of support within the service.

The website continued to provide information about the process of adoption for people wishing to adopt in the Perth and Kinross area.

The service told us and we confirmed through evidence and through our discussions, that adopters were regularly asked for their views about the process of adoption including attending the panel. We could see where some issues raised had influenced change within the service. A manager from the service visited each applicant towards the end of the assessment process.

This supported prospective adopters to express any views about the assessment process. Adopters knew how to make a complaint if they were unhappy with any aspect of the service.

An adoption handbook had been produced in consultation with adopters. Adopters were pleased that this was now in place. This provided written information about the roles, responsibilities of key individuals and the different processes of adoption.

Information about post adoption support for adopters, young people and birth parents was being produced at the time of the inspection.

Adopters told us of the good quality of relationships they had developed with their supervising social workers and how this supported them to be fully involved in their assessment to become an adoptive family. Adopters had time to make any changes to their final report. This meant that the finished report provided an accurate picture of the family.

Adoption support groups had been re-established and adopters could influence the agency for these. Recently issues around food had been discussed.

All adopters had one year's membership of Adoption UK. This provided opportunities to attend social events, access to an online forum and provided links with Post Adoption Central Support Service (PACS).

Children, where they were of an age to do so, and their birth families could write reports for Looked After Children Reviews and be involved in planning for their future. We saw that birth parents were routinely invited to meetings considering their children's future including adoption panel meetings.

Where children were too young to express their views we noted that careful observations on their relationships and behaviours had taken place. These gave an indication in relation to their attachments and could influence planning.

Children's social workers told us and we saw that birth parents views were routinely included in reports, and birth parents were encouraged to write reports for meetings to ensure they could express their views effectively.

Areas for improvement

The service told us that they planned to continue to develop their practice around support for birth parents. They noted the difficulty of supporting parents through the adoption process and tried to allocate a different worker to the child's worker.

They also planned to continue how best to provide effective post adoption support for children and their families.

We noted the participation strategy was still not well publicised within the service.

In conclusion we assessed that in relation to care and support issues, adopters had opportunities to raise issues individually and collectively and the agency was likely to take action in respect of these. This has informed the grade of very good for this statement. We assessed that the service should continue to develop formal feedback opportunities for adoptees in particular. Continuing to promote links to the agency post adoption can help young people who have been adopted become more involved in developing adoption services in the future.

Grade

5 - Very Good

Number of requirements - 0

Number of recommendations - 0

Statement 2

"We enable service users to make individual choices and ensure that every service user can be supported to achieve their potential."

Service strengths

We looked at this statement at the time of the last inspection and considered the service was operating at a very good level.

We saw evidence of active family finding. This supported a range of families being available for children in need of adoption in the Perth and Kinross area. Good use had been made of the Adoption Register and Adoption Exchange Days to find families for children.

We evidenced good practice in relation to linking families with children and of matching reports. Reports, in relation to why children had been matched with specific families, clearly detailed why specific decisions had been made and how families would meet the identified needs of the child and/or the wishes of the birth parent. This provided for a transparent recording for children who may wish to access their records in the future.

Information days for prospective adopters provided very good information for adopters. Foster carers, the medical advisor and any other professionals involved with the child spoke to the adoptive family about the child and their needs.

Careful notes taken by the social worker supported adopters to reflect on whether they could meet a child's needs. Such important information supported adopters to make informed decisions about being able to provide good quality care for children.

Similarly, all the adopters we spoke with knew about the arrangements for contact with birth families, whether this was direct face-to-face or indirect through use of a letterbox scheme.

Form F assessments were generally well written and contained relevant information about the capacity of the family to meet children's needs. The Form F is a pro forma produced by the British Association of Adoption and Fostering (BAAF) which is widely used by adoption agencies when assessing the suitability of adoptive families.

Adopters told us that the quality of preparatory training they received, supported them to meet the needs of the children they were adopting.

Some comments from adopters included:

- "We were magnificently prepared.....no stone was left unturned. We explored adoption from every angle."
- "We both felt very prepared to take on adoption. Throughout the whole process we learned a great deal. Right from our very first meeting ... as well as all the useful information, recommended reading."

Effective procedures were in place in respect of planning for children in need of permanent alternative care. This meant that planning for children was timely and regularly reviewed and aimed at reducing drift and delay.

The Form E Assessments we considered as part of this inspection, generally provided clear information about the child's history and an analysis of why adoption was needed. The Form E is a pro forma produced by the British Association of Adoption and Fostering (BAAF) which is widely used by local authorities when assessing a child's needs for permanence. Children's social workers told us that permanence assessments were appropriately prioritised within area teams, and we could see for the most part that assessments were completed timeously.

The agency were currently developing a concurrent approach to adoption. Concurrent planning is a means by which children can be placed earlier with prospective adoptive families on a fostering basis.

However, this approach may carry more legal uncertainty and risk for the adoptive family. The approach can be successful in supporting attachments for children by reducing the number of moves children can experience when in the process of being adopted.

The co-ordination process was the process by which the transition from foster carers to the adoptive family was planned. We saw that this was child-centred and saw evidence of information being passed between the adoptive family and the fostering family. This included photographs and mementos which could be kept by the adoptive family for the child. Such information supported adopters to have a good understanding of their child's life history.

Life story work and books was prioritised. One child within the sample had a life story book which told his story about the adoption journey so helping his understanding about adoption. We saw that some work had been undertaken with children about the meaning of adoption.

Discussions were ongoing within the agency about how transitions should be managed. Foster carers were actively involved in these decisions and the plan was to produce guidance aimed at ensuring this process was aimed at further reducing stress and/or anxiety for children.

Adopters generally reported good levels of support throughout the adoption process.

Some comments included:

- "We have always had faith in the solutions and ideas (our worker) presents to us and that has allowed us to parent more confidently."

Areas for improvement

The service told us they intended to continue to recruit a range of adoptive parents to meet the needs of children and develop a consistent use of the adoption support plan.

During the inspection we saw a great deal of very good quality work particularly around engaging with children. However, adopters raised a number of issues in relation to post adoption services and thought these could be improved.

Some comments included:

- "After we adopted our child we received no letters from Perth and Kinross, no congratulations and no information about support groups or follow-up whatsoever - basically just get on with it."
- "The post adoption support has been an area of great disappointment. The post adoption support needs to be upgraded in terms of knowledge and probably staffing levels."

When decisions were made about adoption, the case responsibility moves to the children's workers within the permanence team. We assessed that the service could do more to involve the original social worker in the life story process to provide a first hand account of the circumstances leading to decisions made about adoption.

Some adopters thought a formalised buddying/mentoring scheme would be extremely beneficial particularly in the early stages and during periods of transition.

In conclusion, we thought many of the strengths associated with this statement were of an extremely high standard and in some cases exemplary. As a result, outcomes experienced by children in Perth and Kinross were of a very high standard. We did however assess that further development was needed in relation post adoption services. This has informed the grade of very good for this statement.

Grade

5 - Very Good

Number of requirements - 0

Number of recommendations - 0

Quality Theme 3: Quality of Staffing

Grade awarded for this theme: 5 - Very Good

Statement 1

"We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of staffing in the service."

Service strengths

We considered this statement at the time of the last inspection and assessed that there were very good opportunities for adopters to make comments about the quality of staffing within the service. We decided to consider this statement again at this inspection to monitor any improvements

Strengths highlighted in Quality Theme 1 - Statement 1 are also relevant to this statement.

Adopters had been involved in staff recruitment. This meant they could influence directly the quality of staff appointed to posts

Adoptive families were involved in the preparation training for new adoptive families. Adopters told us that this provided an important insight into adoption and helped them and staff within the service to understand the adoption process from differing perspectives.

As panel members, adopters could make comment about the quality of the work of the service including the quality of assessment and planning by staff in throughout the agency.

Second opinion visits and coordination meetings offered prospective adopters an opportunity to speak directly with the manager of the service and to make comments about the quality of work undertaken by the supervising social worker.

Areas for improvement

The service should continue to develop increased opportunities for adopters, young people and birth parents to comment specifically on staffing issues and for this feedback to be linked to improvements in staff performance.

In conclusion we assessed that in relation to staffing issues, adopters had opportunities to raise issues individually and collectively through the adoption panel and the agency was likely to take action in respect of these. The area identified for improvement does not call into question the general very good standard of practice in this area. This has informed the grade of very good for this statement.

Grade

5 - Very Good

Number of requirements - 0

Number of recommendations - 0

Statement 3

"We have a professional, trained and motivated workforce which operates to National Care Standards, legislation and best practice."

Service strengths

We looked at this statement at the time of the last inspection and at that time we assessed that the staff were operating at a very good level within the agency. We decided to look at this statement again to measure any improvement. During this inspection we noted that many of the strengths of the staff continued to be in evidence.

At the time of the inspection, the adoption agency was fully staffed. The priority of the service was now focussed towards staff training and service development.

During the inspection we noted that all staff within the agency were professional and appropriately registered with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC). The SSSC is the regulatory body for workers working in social care settings (www.sssc.com).

Staff throughout the agency told us that supervision was regular, fully recorded and of a good quality. Appropriate levels of direction, guidance and reflection supported staff to feel confident in their work.

All staff had had an annual review, where appropriate, which identified their areas of strength and any areas in their practice which could be developed further. Appropriate learning and development plans had been put in place. Likewise all staff were aware of the content of their team plans which were aimed at service improvement.

Regular team meetings were held for all staff. We attended a team meeting for the adoption team and observed a range of discussion areas including ideas for developing the service for example, reviewing the adoption handbook and looking at improving post adoption services.

All staff told us that they had very good access to training both internally and externally and we confirmed that there was a wide range of training available. Staff told us they had recently attended a range of training appropriate to their role. We assessed that staff were confident in their work.

We saw a well established and well used resource library which supported staff in their work and assisted them to keep up to date with emerging research and good practice.

Good links had been established between teams working within the agency.

The majority of the adopters who contributed to the inspection told us that they thought their supervising social workers were knowledgeable and skilled in their work and as a result they felt well supported.

Areas for improvement

In conclusion we noted that there were major strengths in the quality of staffing. This has informed the grade of very good for this statement.

Grade

5 - Very Good

Number of requirements - 0

Number of recommendations - 0

Quality Theme 4: Quality of Management and Leadership

Grade awarded for this theme: 5 - Very Good

Statement 1

"We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of the management and leadership of the service."

Service strengths

We considered this statement at the time of the last inspection and assessed that there were good opportunities for people who used the adoption service to make comments about the quality of the service. We decided to look at this statement again to monitor any improvements.

Strengths highlighted in Quality Theme 1 - Statement 1 and Quality Theme 3 - Statement 1 are also relevant to this statement.

Panel membership included one person who had adopted. This meant that comments could be made about a range of issues including the quality of management and leadership, the quality of assessment and the quality of decision-making.

We saw evidence of adopters being involved in wider service development. For example, the adoption handbook had been developed in consultation with adopters. The service also planned to involve adopters in the production of leaflets about post adoption support.

Areas for improvement

The agency told us they planned to make annual report accessible to adopters either through email or by publishing it on their website.

The service should continue to develop increased opportunities for adopters, young people and birth parents to comment and participate in wider service development. Continuing to promote links to the agency post adoption can help young people who have been adopted become more involved in developing adoption services in the future.

In conclusion, we assessed that in relation to management and leadership issues, adopters had some opportunities to raise issues individually through questionnaires during their preparation and regular consultation and some opportunities collectively through post adoption groups. This has informed the grade of very good for this service.

Grade

5 - Very Good

Number of requirements - 0

Number of recommendations - 0

Statement 4

"We use quality assurance systems and processes which involve service users, carers, staff and stakeholders to assess the quality of service we provide"

Service strengths

We looked at this statement at the time of the last inspection and assessed that the agency had very good systems in place to support the quality of work they did. We decided to look at this statement again during this inspection to assess whether this was still the case.

We assessed that Perth and Kinross Council had clear planning processes in place to support positive outcomes for children and their families.

We noted a number of key systems aimed at providing a management overview and which could indicate the quality of the service. This included a number of key performance indicators which monitored timely decision-making for children.

Tracking meetings were effective at maintaining an overview of the children currently accommodated by Perth and Kinross Council and planning was in place to support stability for these children. Clear links were in place in relation to family placement services, fieldwork teams, Looked After Children review services and legal services so that everyone was aware of the current situation for children.

Staff confirmed they could access guidance which supported their work. Policies and procedures are important as they guide staff in their practice and provide consistency of decision-making.

Regular staff supervision monitored staff practice and performance.

We saw some evidence of file auditing. Regular auditing of files supports consistent recording of information for children and foster carers.

The adoption panel provided an important quality assurance measure for the service. Panel recruitment had continued aimed at supporting a better gender balance in panel membership. Appraisal processes were now taking place and training had been identified as part of this process. We saw that panel member profiles were now available for people attending the panel. This was aimed at supporting people to feel less anxious about coming into the panel.

We attended an adoption panel and found the members were well prepared, thorough, knowledgeable and respectful of the adoptive family. The chairperson ensured good preparation for the meeting and clarity of the agenda for discussion and summarised the situation and recommendations. In turn the adoption panel provided feedback to the agency in relation to the work of the agency in terms of quality of written information and worker presentation. We could see there were clear links between the agency and the panel. The agency decision maker, had an effective overview of the adoption agency and the work of the adoption panel. An annual report had been produced which detailed the work of the panel over the previous year.

The work of the panel was increasing and discussions were on going about the best way to develop this area of the agency.

An annual report had been written but was yet to be shared with adopters. This provided an update of the work of the adoption agency and areas they would like to see improve over the next year. This helped share the vision of the adoption agency with adopters and stakeholders.

A service development plan identified areas of improvement with timescales for the completion of tasks. We could see that this action plan had been developed by staff and from feedback people who used the service and stakeholders. One of the main focus areas was developing post adoption services and a concurrent planning approach.

Quality assurance systems involved a range of key people. Adopters were asked about the quality of the service during their preparation, individual consultation opportunities and more informally through their relationship with their supervising social worker. Adopters knew who the manager was and felt able to contact the manager directly with any issues.

Staff raised issues at team meetings and had open door access to senior managers.

Stakeholders were offered opportunities to reflect on the quality of the service during annually through the service review process.

Areas for improvement

The service told us in their self assessment that they would continue to build on stakeholder involvement.

The service needs to continue to review their membership of the adoption panel to ensure a continued independent focus from the panel.

In conclusion, we noted major strengths in the quality assurance systems within the agency. The areas we have identified for improvement did not call into question the very good practice in this area.

This has informed the grade of very good for this statement.

Grade

5 - Very Good

Number of requirements - 0

Number of recommendations - 0

4 What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at our last inspection

Previous requirements

There are no outstanding requirements.

5 What the service has done to meet any recommendations we made at our last inspection

Previous recommendations

1. This recommendation was made under Quality Theme 4 - Statement 1.

The service should produce an annual report to inform service users and stakeholders about the work of the agency and the priorities for further developing the agency.

National Care Standards adoption agencies. Standard 32: providing a good quality service.

This recommendation was made on 02 July 2014

The service had produced an annual report and had plans to share this with people who used the service and with stakeholders.

2. This recommendation was made under Quality Theme 4 - Statement 4.

The service should continue to ensure that panel membership is diverse.

This recommendation was made on 02 July 2014

The service had continued to recruit panel members to support diversity within the panel.

6 Complaints

No complaints have been upheld, or partially upheld, since the last inspection.

7 Enforcements

We have taken no enforcement action against this care service since the last inspection.

8 Additional Information

There is no additional information.

9 Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings	
2 Jul 2014	Announced (Short Notice)	Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	Not Assessed
		Staffing	5 - Very Good
		Management and Leadership	4 - Good
6 Jun 2013	Announced	Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	Not Assessed
		Staffing	4 - Good
		Management and Leadership	4 - Good
11 Aug 2010	Announced	Care and support	5 - Very Good
		Environment	Not Assessed
		Staffing	Not Assessed
		Management and Leadership	5 - Very Good
2 Oct 2009	Announced	Care and support	5 - Very Good
		Environment	Not Assessed
		Staffing	5 - Very Good
		Management and Leadership	4 - Good
11 Sep 2008	Announced	Care and support	5 - Very Good
		Environment	Not Assessed
		Staffing	4 - Good
		Management and Leadership	3 - Adequate

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You can also read more about our work online.

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Tha am foillseachadh seo ri fhaighinn ann an cruthannan is c?nain eile ma nithear iarrtas.

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

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Care service inspection report

Full inspection

Perth & Kinross Council - Young People's Housing Support Service Housing Support Service

Wellbank House
41 Dundee Road
Perth



Inspection report for Perth & Kinross Council - Young People's Housing Support Service
Inspection completed on 22 May 2015

Service provided by: Perth & Kinross Council

Service provider number: SP2003003370

Care service number: CS2004074771

Inspection Visit Type: Unannounced

Care services in Scotland cannot operate unless they are registered with the Care Inspectorate. We inspect, award grades and set out improvements that must be made. We also investigate complaints about care services and 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.

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Summary

This report and grades represent our assessment of the quality of the areas of performance which were examined during this inspection.

Grades for this care service may change after this inspection following other regulatory activity. For example, if we have to take enforcement action to make the service improve, or if we investigate and agree with a complaint someone makes about the service.

We gave the service these grades

Quality of care and support	6	Excellent
Quality of staffing	5	Very Good
Quality of management and leadership	5	Very Good

What the service does well

The service is exceptionally good at involving young people in the development of their own support plans and in the development of the service as a whole.

The manager provides strong leadership for a professional, skilled and well motivated staff team.

The young people who use the service were very positive about the quality of the service they receive.

What the service could do better

The service should continue to evaluate the quality of the service using feedback from partner agencies and other stakeholders.

It should also explore how it could make use of outcome information to evaluate its practice.

What the service has done since the last inspection

The service has continued to develop meaningful involvement of young people in developing the service.

The service has developed and implemented a service improvement plan which takes account of the views of young people and staff.

In a joint initiative with young people, the service has succeeded in acquiring funding to develop arts and crafts facilities at Wellbank.

Conclusion

Wellbank provides much valued and effective support to young people, helping them to develop the skills they need to manage their own tenancy and to lead a more independent life when they move on.

The service is committed to the ongoing improvement of the service to make sure that it continues to meet the needs of young people.

1 About the service we inspected

The Care Inspectorate regulates care services in Scotland. Information about all care services is available on our website at www.careinspectorate.com.

This service was previously registered with the Care Commission and transferred its registration to the Care Inspectorate on 1 April 2011.

Perth & Kinross Council - Young People's Housing Support Service is based at Wellbank House. The service provides a short-term period of proactive residential work supporting a move to independence for homeless young people between the ages of 16 and 24. The service can accommodate 10 young people. Staff also provide support to young people in satellite flats based in the community.

The service aims are:

- To provide minimum six to 12 months accommodation in a safe environment.
- To encourage and support residents to have the practical skills for independent living.
- To support and guide residents in all areas of personal development; in assessing options; in making choices; and in reaching decisions concerning their future housing needs.
- To work with young people and families on relationships and, where appropriate, to explore reintegration into the family home.
- To encourage residents to secure or maintain employment and/or relevant education/training during their stay in Wellbank.
- To offer individualised advice and support through a key worker system.
- To liaise with other agencies in promoting greater awareness of issues concerning homeless young people and to campaign for improved resources.

Recommendations

A recommendation is a statement that sets out actions that a care service provider should take to improve or develop the quality of the service, but where failure to do so would not directly result in enforcement.

Recommendations are based on the National Care Standards, SSSC codes of practice and recognised good practice. These must also be outcomes-based and if the provider meets the recommendation this would improve outcomes for people receiving the service.

Requirements

A requirement is a statement which sets out what a care service must do to improve outcomes for people who use services and must be linked to a breach in the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010 (the "Act"), its regulations, or orders made under the Act, or a condition of registration. Requirements are enforceable in law.

We make requirements where (a) there is evidence of poor outcomes for people using the service or (b) there is the potential for poor outcomes which would affect people's health, safety or welfare.

Based on the findings of this inspection this service has been awarded the following grades:

Quality of care and support - Grade 6 - Excellent

Quality of staffing - Grade 5 - Very Good

Quality of management and leadership - Grade 5 - Very Good

This report and grades represent our assessment of the quality of the areas of performance which were examined during this inspection.

Grades for this care service may change following other regulatory activity. You can find the most up-to-date grades for this service by visiting our website www.careinspectorate.com or by calling us on 0345 600 9527 or visiting one of our offices.

2 How we inspected this service

The level of inspection we carried out

In this service we carried out a low intensity inspection. We carry out these inspections when we are satisfied that services are working hard to provide consistently high standards of care.

What we did during the inspection

We wrote this report following an unannounced inspection of the service which was carried out in May 2015. We began the inspection with an unannounced visit to the service on 7 May 2015. We made two further visits on 8 and 18 May 2015 to meet with young people and staff and to gather evidence. We then met with the manager of the service on 22 May 2015 to share our findings.

Before the inspection, the service submitted a self assessment form as requested by the Care Inspectorate.

During the inspection, we gathered evidence from a range of sources, including:

Discussions with:

- four of the young people who were currently using the service
- the manager
- three members of staff.

We also looked at a range of relevant documents, including:

- a sample of support plans
- accident and incident records
- complaint records
- medication policy and procedure
- house meeting minutes
- staff recruitment records
- staff team meeting minutes
- staff training records
- staff supervision records

- service development day records
- service development plan.

Grading the service against quality themes and statements

We inspect and grade elements of care that we call 'quality themes'. For example, one of the quality themes we might look at is 'Quality of care and support'. Under each quality theme are 'quality statements' which describe what a service should be doing well for that theme. We grade how the service performs against the quality themes and statements.

Details of what we found are in Section 3: The inspection

Inspection Focus Areas (IFAs)

In any year we may decide on specific aspects of care to focus on during our inspections. These are extra checks we make on top of all the normal ones we make during inspection. We do this to gather information about the quality of these aspects of care on a national basis. Where we have examined an inspection focus area we will clearly identify it under the relevant quality statement.

Fire safety issues

We do not regulate fire safety. Local fire and rescue services are responsible for checking services. However, where significant fire safety issues become apparent, we will alert the relevant fire and rescue services so they may consider what action to take. You can find out more about care services' responsibilities for fire safety at www.firescotland.gov.uk

The annual return

Every year all care services must complete an 'annual return' form to make sure the information we hold is up to date. We also use annual returns to decide how we will inspect the service.

Annual Return Received: No

Comments on Self Assessment

Every year all care services must complete a 'self assessment' form telling us how their service is performing. We check to make sure this assessment is accurate.

This was completed to a high standard in time for the inspection. The service identified what it does well and also how it plans to improve and develop the service. It provided a range of relevant information in support of its evaluation and evidenced that it had involved staff and service users in the process.

Taking the views of people using the care service into account

We spoke to five young people during the inspection. They were all extremely positive about their experience of using the service and were especially appreciative of the support they received from staff. They also valued the skills they had gained during the course of their placement at Wellbank. Some of the things they told us were:

- "It feels like home. I will always have really good memories of being here."
- "The staff are really good. They teach you stuff and you don't realise that you're learning. On a scale of 1-6, I would give it 5/6."
- "All staff support and encourage you. They give you really good advice about everything."
- "They have helped me to get healthier - I have cut down smoking and I go to the gym. I wouldn't have done this if it hadn't been for the staff."

- "I feel as if I have moved on. My mum is really happy with how well I've done."
- "The staff have been a massive help. I can see myself having a good future here."
- "I can make good decisions and take responsibility for things."
- "All of the staff do an excellent job."

Taking carers' views into account

We did not have the opportunity to speak with parents or relatives during this inspection.

3 The inspection

We looked at how the service performs against the following quality themes and statements. Here are the details of what we found.

Quality Theme 1: Quality of Care and Support

Grade awarded for this theme: 6 - Excellent

Statement 1

"We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of the care and support provided by the service."

Service Strengths

We found that the service had reached an excellent standard of performance in relation to this Quality Statement.

The service demonstrated a genuine commitment to involving the young people who used the service in assessing and improving the quality of the service and used a variety of methods to make sure that young people were able to give their views.

From our discussions with young people and staff and from looking at relevant documents during the inspection, we noted the following strengths:

- Young people were very closely involved in the support planning process. They were consulted at all stages; from initial assessments through regular planning meetings and reviews. They set agreed goals in conjunction with staff and the support they needed to achieve their goals was varied in line with their individual needs. In discussion, young people told us that their views had been listened to by staff, so that they felt in control of the pace of their progress through the service. This meant that young people could determine when they

were ready to move on, so that when they did they felt confident that they would be able to manage their own tenancy successfully.

- The service involved young people directly in the decisions about the day-to-day running of the house at Wellbank. Regular house meetings were chaired and minuted by young people, supported by staff. During these meetings, issues such as household rules and routines were discussed and shared activities were planned. This helped to promote a sense of belonging and cooperation and also helped to promote the idea of being a good neighbour, which would be important to young people when they moved on to their own tenancies. House meetings also provided young people with positive social contacts and role models and were a focus for discussion about social influences in the community.

- Young people were actively involved in the development of the wider service. They had recently attended an away-day with the manager and staff team to consider the development of the service from the service users' perspective. Young people's suggestions were taken on board, for example they had suggested using the term 'catch-up' instead of one-to-one to describe their regular meetings with staff, which they felt was a less formal term. During the inspection, we could see that both young people and staff used the term 'catch-up' confidently. The away-day was evaluated carefully and records showed that all of the people thought that the day was worthwhile and all felt that they could be open and honest in their discussions. All felt that their contributions were welcomed and valued.

- The service involved young people directly in the staff recruitment and selection process. As part of the process, young people were involved in devising and asking questions at interviews and contributing to the evaluation and selection of candidates as part of the interview panel. Involvement to this extent helped to make sure that service users' views and priorities were represented in the recruitment process and that they helped to directly influence the quality of the staff within the service. They also contributed to the service's 360 degree Employee Review and Development (ERD) system, whereby they gave their feedback about staff which was incorporated into the appraisal and development process.

- Young people had recently worked in partnership with staff to plan and deliver a presentation to Perth & Kinross Council's Angel's Share fund, as a result of which they had secured £5500 funding to develop arts and crafts provision at Wellbank. This would enhance the provision for current and future members of staff.

Overall, we found that the service was genuinely committed to involving young people in assessing and improving all aspects of the service, from determining the progress through their individual support plans, to the selection and evaluation of staff, the development of the service development plan, and involvement in specific projects to improve the quality of the service. On this basis, we have given a grade of excellent for this Quality Statement.

Areas for improvement

The service was continuing to develop the ways that young people's views could influence the quality of the service. For example, they were currently planning to find ways of improving the way that they involved young people who had previously used the service.

Grade

6 - Excellent

Number of requirements - 0

Number of recommendations - 0

Statement 2

"We enable service users to make individual choices and ensure that every service user can be supported to achieve their potential."

Service Strengths

We found very good evidence that the service effectively supported young people to make positive choices and to support them to achieve their potential.

From our discussions with the young people who used the service and from looking at support plans, we found the following examples of achievements young people had been supported to attain:

- One young person had been helped to manage his budget successfully and had been successful in securing employment after a period of voluntary work. He described how staff had encouraged him to find a suitable college course which had led to the employment.
- One young person had been supported with their studies and had secured a place at university. Although the young person had clearly been highly motivated herself to achieve, she had very much appreciated the support of staff in helping to devise structured study plans and making Do Not Disturb signs to help. The same young person had also learned "all there is to know" about cleaning and maintaining a tenancy.
- Another young person had been helped to establish positive relationships with extended family members and had valued the input of staff in helping them to make sense of sometimes confusing relationships.
- Another young person told us that they had had a great boost in confidence and self esteem since being at Wellbank, thanks to the input of staff.

From our examination of support plans, we found that the very structured approach to working with young people helped them to identify goals and work towards achieving them in a structured way. Clear boundaries and expectations provided young people with a structure around which they could begin to take on responsibilities in preparation for managing their own tenancies.

Young people were encouraged to develop their use of community facilities, for example by providing Live Active cards which gave them access to a range of sports and leisure activities, including gym and swimming. This helped young people to become more active, with a consequent effect on their physical health and mental wellbeing, as well as helping to build in constructive leisure time in preparation for them living independently in the community.

There had been a recent initiative to help young people to develop practical household skills, such as basic electrics and DIY, in preparation for moving on. They had also participated alongside staff in first aid training, again helping to develop useful life skills.

We also found that there was effective partnership working with local housing, community health and employment agencies which helped young people to establish supportive networks which could continue after they moved on from Wellbank.

Overall, we found that this service worked very effectively to support young people to achieve their potential and to develop life skills which would stand them in good stead when they moved on to live in their own tenancies. The positive outcomes identified by the young people we spoke with during the inspection gave a strong indication of the service's effectiveness and on this basis we have given a grade of 6 (excellent) for this Quality Statement.

Areas for improvement

Further to discussion during the inspection, the service should continue to review its approach to supporting young people to manage their medication independently.

Grade

6 - Excellent

Number of requirements - 0

Number of recommendations - 0

Quality Theme 3: Quality of Staffing

Grade awarded for this theme: 5 - Very Good

Statement 2

"We are confident that our staff have been recruited, and inducted, in a safe and robust manner to protect service users and staff."

Service Strengths

The service had very good arrangements in place for safely recruiting and inducting staff into the service.

We came to this conclusion after we had discussed the process with the manager, staff and young people and after looking at relevant documentary evidence.

Recruitment to the service is in line with Perth & Kinross Council's safe recruitment procedures.

The well structured Talent Link system provided a safeguard at each stage of the process which meant that candidates could not be appointed without a series of checks having been completed. The recruitment process included the submission of an application form, ID check, qualifications checks, Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme check, and taking up of two satisfactory references.

Wellbank involved young people directly in the selection process for this and for other related services (for example, one young person had recently been involved in recruiting to the local authority's throughcare and aftercare team). As part of the process, young people were involved in devising and asking questions at interviews and contributing to the evaluation and selection of candidates as part of the interview panel. Involvement to this extent helped to make sure that service users' views and priorities were represented in the

recruitment process and that they helped to directly influence the quality of the staff within the service.

There was a structured corporate induction process which introduced new staff to Perth & Kinross Council's policies and procedures. Within the service, new staff benefitted from a well planned and well supported induction period during which their learning was evaluated and validated. New staff had the opportunity to get to know young people while shadowing more experienced staff before having to take on full shift responsibilities. This meant that young people had the chance to become familiar with new staff and contributed to them receiving an informed and consistent response from staff.

Areas for improvement

The service should continue to build on the very good practice we found at this inspection.

Grade

5 - Very Good

Number of requirements - 0

Number of recommendations - 0

Statement 3

"We have a professional, trained and motivated workforce which operates to National Care Standards, legislation and best practice."

Service Strengths

We found this to be a professional, well motivated staff team which operated with a sound understanding of the complex legislative framework which underpins housing support services for young people.

From our discussions with young people and staff, from looking at relevant documents and from our observations during the inspection, we noted the following strengths:

- All staff were qualified to at least Scottish Vocational Qualification (SVQ) level 3, which exceeds the qualification requirements which will be required for housing support workers when registration with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) becomes necessary. Staff had access to a range of training through Perth & Kinross Council's training and development programme and also benefitted from service-specific training which was available from related organisations, such as Scottish Training on Drugs and Alcohol (STRADA), and through partner agencies, including local housing and community health services.
- Many staff had additional skills which they were encouraged to continue to develop through further training. These skills, which included outdoor education and counselling specialisms, were then used to enhance the range of services which were available to young people. For example, young people had been able to participate in activities, such as canoeing and hill walking, with the support of staff.
- Staff were well supported through regular one-to-one supervision, team meetings and 360 degree ERD appraisals. From looking at a sample of records, we could see that areas for development were identified and followed through, helping to ensure that staff reflected on their practice and took steps to continuously develop their practice. This meant that young people were being supported by staff with the up-to-date knowledge and skills to help them most effectively.
- Although not yet required to register with the SSSC, staff were working in line with the SSSC Code of Conduct and were aware of the need to register once the register is open.
- Staff were actively involved in evaluating and reviewing the quality of the service through the service review and development of the team plan. They worked in partnership with young people to make sure that the service developed taking into account their views and needs. Individual staff members took responsibility for taking forward areas identified for development.
- Staff worked effectively in partnership with colleagues in other agencies (including local housing providers, community health services and the police)

which helped to ensure that young people received the optimum level of support to enable them to successfully acquire and retain their own tenancies.

- Young people were very positive about the quality of support they received from staff. They felt that staff really cared about them and that they offered very good advice and encouragement. They made the following comments:

- "The staff are really good. They teach you stuff and you don't realise that you're learning."

- "All staff support and encourage you. They give you really good advice about everything."

- "They have helped me to get healthier - I have cut down smoking and I go to the gym. I wouldn't have done this if it hadn't been for the staff."

- "The staff have been a massive help. I can see myself having a good future here."

- "All of the staff do an excellent job."

Areas for improvement

The service could further develop the team training plan and the collation of team training records.

Grade

6 - Excellent

Number of requirements - 0

Number of recommendations - 0

Quality Theme 4: Quality of Management and Leadership

Grade awarded for this theme: 5 - Very Good

Statement 3

"To encourage good quality care, we promote leadership values throughout the workforce."

Service Strengths

We found that the well motivated and professional staff team readily took on additional responsibilities for leading on the development of aspects of the service.

Staff skills were valued and through supervision and the ERD system, areas for training and skills development were identified and recorded.

Some of the aspects of the service which had been developed with staff taking the leadership role included:

- One member of staff was taking the lead in helping to develop young people's awareness of healthier cooking and eating. They had encouraged an in-house Come Dine with Me which had not only helped young people to develop healthy menus and cooking skills in partnership with staff but had also been a lot of fun for all involved.
- The lead practitioner has taken on responsibility for gathering feedback from young people for the ERD, helping to increase the 'arm's length' approach to participation.
- The lead practitioner has also recently assumed lead responsibility for the recruitment process.

- Another member of staff is in the process of developing supervisory responsibilities for students.
- Another member of staff has led a number of successful outdoor activity initiatives.
- A recently recruited member of staff has been asked to review the in-house induction process in the light of her experience of being inducted into the service.

In discussion with staff, they described an open team culture in which their views and ideas were welcomed and supported. They were actively involved, in partnership with young people, in the annual service review and development plan and took responsibility for organising aspects of the away-day and for taking forward aspects of the development plan.

Overall, we found that this was a positive working environment in which staff skills were valued and leadership values were encouraged. The fact that there was a low turnover of staff within the service was perhaps indicative of the fact that staff felt valued and challenged within the service.

Areas for improvement

None noted at this inspection - the service should continue to build on the very high quality practice we found at this inspection.

Grade

6 - Excellent

Number of requirements - 0

Number of recommendations - 0

Statement 4

"We use quality assurance systems and processes which involve service users, carers, staff and stakeholders to assess the quality of service we provide"

Service Strengths

The service was proactive in seeking the views of young people, staff and other stakeholders and using these to improve the quality of the service. They used a range of methods, including exit questionnaires, house meetings, and away-days to capture a range of views.

The records we looked at showed that they actively considered the feedback they received, incorporated it into the development plan, and implemented changes in response.

In addition, the service had in place a comprehensive range of internal quality assurance systems which enabled it to monitor and develop the quality of key processes within the the service.

The service's annual improvement plan evidenced a structured approach to evaluating practice and performance and identifying areas for development. The report draws on information from a variety of sources to develop a range of desired outcomes which took account of national, local and in-house influences to define priorities for development. The plan was structured and identified key areas for improvement, desired outcomes, actions required, person(s) responsible, and evidence of progress.

An annual progress report showed that the service was effective at identifying and meeting targets for improvement. For example, the 2014-15 plan had included issues such as improving service user participation, improving understanding of the Children's Bill and taking forward the Angel's Share project, all of which had been either fully achieved or were well on the way to being successfully completed.

The supervision of staff and the annual ERD process were very effective means of monitoring and developing staff practice. The ERD system involved seeking feedback from peers and service users to enable staff to reflect on their practice and identify areas for further training and development. The positive feedback we received from young people about the quality of staff would suggest that this is a very effective strategy for maintaining a high quality staff team.

The quality of support planning was monitored in conjunction with young people through regular review meetings chaired by the lead practitioner or the manager of the service. Young people had easy access to the manager on an informal basis if they wanted to raise any concerns. There was a clear and accessible complaints procedure which was used infrequently but which provided young people with a more formal means of raising issues, if required.

Overall, we were impressed with the extent to which this service put service users and their needs at the heart of its quality monitoring processes. It had developed a range of effective internal processes which helped to make sure that the quality of the service was consistently maintained and developed.

Areas for improvement

The service should consider how it can adopt a more structured approach to gathering the views of external stakeholders, for example partner agencies. In particular, it should seek feedback about how well young people who have moved on from the service manage their tenancies.

Grade

5 - Very Good

Number of requirements - 0

Number of recommendations - 0

5 What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at our last inspection

Previous requirements

There are no outstanding requirements.

6 What the service has done to meet any recommendations we made at our last inspection

Previous recommendations

1. The service had taken appropriate action to address the one recommendation made at the last inspection in that it had amended its policy and procedure in relation to supporting young people with their medication.

This recommendation was made on 17 May 2013

7 Complaints

No complaints have been upheld, or partially upheld, since the last inspection.

8 Enforcements

We have taken no enforcement action against this care service since the last inspection.

9 Additional Information

10 Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings
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17 May 2013	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and Leadership	5 - Very Good Not Assessed 5 - Very Good 5 - Very Good
1 Sep 2011	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and Leadership	5 - Very Good Not Assessed 5 - Very Good 4 - Good
17 Dec 2008	Announced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and Leadership	5 - Very Good Not Assessed 5 - Very Good 5 - Very Good

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