

Harmeny School

School Care Accommodation Service

Mansfield Road
Balerno
Edinburgh
EH14 7JY

Telephone: 0131 449 3938

Type of inspection: Unannounced
Inspection completed on: 16 March 2017

Service provided by:
Harmeny Education Trust Ltd

Service provider number:
SP2003002598

Care service number:
CS2003011066

About the service

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

Harmeny School provides school care accommodation. Harmeny School is an independent, grant aided school which is owned and managed by Harmeny Education Trust Ltd., a not for profit organisation with charitable status.

The school is situated in extensive grounds in a rural setting on the edge of Edinburgh with good access to local amenities and bus routes. The accommodation is provided in four purpose built cottages within the grounds and in one wing of the original nineteenth century house. The school also provides a day education service, supported by a dedicated cottage.

The stated aims of the service were contained in the service ethos statement:

- "Harmeny strives to become a unique community characterised by a climate of encouragement and support for all, to achieve success".
- "We seek to create a living and learning environment which promotes personal, social, physical, intellectual and spiritual development".
- "We encourage high standards within a framework of a structured social organisation which encourages participation and promotes equality of opportunity, fairness and justice. In recognising our staff as our major resource, we acknowledge our professional accountability to the child, his/her carers and placing agencies for the quality of experiences we provide. The responsibility to sustain and develop this community is accepted by all regardless of role or status".

These aims are reflected in the provision of 32 places for children of primary school age up to secondary stage two who have complex social, emotional and behavioural needs. Specialist help is provided to enable children to address and overcome disadvantage.

Harmeny School is a national resource with children in residence from throughout Scotland. It operates throughout the year.

What people told us

During this inspection we spoke with children who were staying at the school. They told us Harmeny was a good school and they liked living there. They told us that they liked the people who look after them. Some of the children were keen to show us their bedrooms, which they said were very comfortable. They enjoyed showing us their toys and how they played their computer games. They said that Harmeny was a safe place to stay. Children told us that if any of the other children were unkind to them staff would help them to sort that out.

We sent out questionnaires to ask the children what they thought about the Harmeny School residential service. We received 14 completed questionnaires. In response to the question 'Overall, I am happy with the quality of care I get here' all of the children agreed or strongly agreed.

Self assessment

The Care Inspectorate received a fully completed self assessment from the provider.

The provider identified what it thought the service did well and gave examples of improvement. The self assessment clearly identified some key areas that the provider thought could be improved and showed how the service intended to do this.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

| | |
|---|---------------|
| Quality of care and support | 6 - Excellent |
| Quality of environment | not assessed |
| Quality of staffing | 6 - Excellent |
| Quality of management and leadership | not assessed |

What the service does well

The staff at Harmeny had established extremely positive relationships with the children. They were kind, caring and sensitive in their interaction with the children and used very positive approaches to encourage good behaviours.

Since the last inspection the school had developed an outstanding bespoke assessment and planning framework which covered every aspect of the child's life. This enabled all staff to easily access the important information they needed to work with the children effectively and safely. It also provided managers with very strong audit systems in order to check if children were making progress. This major piece of work had included input from all staff in the school and external professionals, in order to ensure it met the needs of the school and fully supported the planning for children in order to achieve good outcomes.

The Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC), government strategy was completely embedded in the work with the children. Staff used comprehensive assessment tools such as the SHANARRI indicators (Safe, Healthy, Active, Nurtured, Achieving, Respected, Responsible and Included), and particularly detailed chronologies and genograms. This ensured full understanding of the needs of the children and resulted in the development of innovative strategies to help them achieve their potential.

The school fully promoted the health and wellbeing agenda. Children benefited from 'Harmeny Outdoors', where they were involved in an abundance of adventurous activities such as camping, cycling and water sports. Children also furthered their knowledge and experience of their environment, growing and planting and caring for wildlife. In addition, children were fully involved in activities around the campus, playing football and games with staff from the houses. The children were keen to show us their favourite toys and games in their bedrooms, and staff made sure that the children had times in their day when they could take part in more relaxed activities and recharge energy levels.

Each of the houses had a dedicated homemaker who cared for the house and prepared healthy nutritious meals. We saw that they were very attentive to the likes and dislikes of the children and always ensured that there was something that everyone could enjoy. Mealtimes were very sociable occasions, where children were encouraged to take time to digest their food and have meaningful conversations about their day.

Clear and very effective systems were in place for the administration of medication, and staff worked closely with the GP and pharmacist to ensure that children received the best medical care.

Staff encouraged the children to form good relationships and have understanding for each other. They were confident and considerate when managing disputes between children, and had a clear overview of the dynamics within the groups of children. The high ratio of staff to children ensured that all of the children could get the attention they needed.

Senior staff led by example and provided excellent role models for both staff and children. Senior staff spent time in the houses, where they could observe practice and provide feedback to staff.

A comprehensive training programme provided opportunities for staff to further develop their knowledge and skills. The leadership team demonstrated a strong commitment to staff development and had rolled out programmes such as resilience training and 'mindfulness' training to all staff. Staff gave us very good examples of how they had used the training in their work with the children, particularly in relation to communication and observing compassion. All staff received regular supervision from their line manager. Staff told us they found this helpful. They said it provided a supportive opportunity to discuss practice issues as well as review casework and personal and professional development. Staff were also given tasks to broaden their development, such as reading or carrying out pieces of research to bring back to the cottage team meeting.

Staff met regularly to share practice and ideas. Senior managers visited the residential cottages routinely, which provided them with an overview of practice and an opportunity to hear the views of staff and children.

A comprehensive range of audits were in place across all aspects of the service. This resulted in managers being very well informed about individuals and incidents, leading to appropriate action plans. An important outcome from this was the significant reduction in physical interventions with children over the past year.

Methodical and organised administrative support ensured that safe recruitment processes were carried out effectively.

What the service could do better

Harmeny School have an ethos of continuous improvement. The board and managers have a clear vision for the progression of the service and continue to move the school forward.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Complaints

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

Inspection and grading history

| Date | Type | Gradings |
|-------------|--------------------------|--|
| 31 Mar 2016 | Unannounced | Care and support 6 - Excellent Environment 6 - Excellent Staffing 6 - Excellent Management and leadership 6 - Excellent |
| 24 Mar 2015 | Unannounced | Care and support 6 - Excellent Environment 6 - Excellent Staffing 6 - Excellent Management and leadership 6 - Excellent |
| 5 Nov 2014 | Unannounced | Care and support 6 - Excellent Environment 6 - Excellent Staffing 6 - Excellent Management and leadership 6 - Excellent |
| 25 Mar 2014 | Announced (short notice) | Care and support 6 - Excellent Environment 6 - Excellent Staffing 6 - Excellent Management and leadership 6 - Excellent |
| 26 Nov 2013 | Unannounced | Care and support 6 - Excellent Environment 6 - Excellent Staffing 6 - Excellent Management and leadership 6 - Excellent |
| 16 Nov 2012 | Unannounced | Care and support 6 - Excellent Environment 6 - Excellent Staffing 6 - Excellent Management and leadership 6 - Excellent |
| 9 Mar 2012 | Unannounced | Care and support 6 - Excellent |

| Date | Type | Gradings | |
|-------------|-------------|--|--|
| | | Environment Staffing Management and leadership | Not assessed 5 - Very good Not assessed |
| 25 May 2011 | Unannounced | Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership | 6 - Excellent Not assessed 5 - Very good Not assessed |
| 26 Jan 2011 | Unannounced | Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership | 6 - Excellent Not assessed 5 - Very good Not assessed |
| 23 Jun 2010 | Announced | Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership | 6 - Excellent Not assessed 5 - Very good 5 - Very good |
| 29 Jan 2010 | Unannounced | Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership | 6 - Excellent Not assessed 5 - Very good Not assessed |
| 4 Mar 2009 | Unannounced | Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership | Not assessed Not assessed 5 - Very good Not assessed |
| 5 Nov 2008 | Announced | Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership | 6 - Excellent 6 - Excellent 5 - Very good 5 - Very good |

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