

Youth Activity Programme Scotland Support Service

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Inspection completed on: 1 November 2017

Service provided by:
The National Deaf Children's Society, a
company limited by guarantee

Service provider number:
SP2014012393

Care service number:
CS2016344367

About the service

The Scottish Youth Activity Programme is provided by the National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS) and delivers organised events for young deaf people aged 8 to 18 throughout the year. The programme consists of residential events and day youth activities across Scotland.

The service offers young people opportunities to come together, build confidence and make friends by increasing social networks.

The service events are well-coordinated by the service manager from the service offices in Glasgow city centre and the Scottish NDCS director oversees the service from these Glasgow offices also.

The events are staffed by sessional workers and volunteers in addition to the events staff.

What people told us

We spoke to several parents whose children had attended activities and events with the service. All parents we spoke with were highly complimentary of the service and manager.

One parent told us that their daughter had a 'fantastic, fabulous time'. Having been anxious on her first event she has returned for more and this has improved her confidence.

Another parent told us that they consider the service to be 'brilliant', 'exactly what was needed' for their child.

Parents stated how impressed they were with the assessments prior to the events, the level of support maintained throughout the event and the level of organisation. The impact of this was increased confidence that their children were very well cared for throughout the event.

Self assessment

No self assessment was requested from services during this inspection year. We spoke with the service manager and the director about the plans the service has for development and learned of a very good detailed plan of action for several areas.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

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

Quality of care and support

Findings from the inspection

We found that the service was providing a very good quality of care and support.

There is a great emphasis given to safety for the events to ensure the well being of the young people.

Parents and carers told us of the high regard they had for the very high attention to detail given to gathering information in relation to their child prior to the event.

The service maintained a high level of detail in assessing young people's needs in aiming to provide the young people a safe, meaningful, beneficial and enjoyable experience.

One parent told us 'my son had a brilliant time' whilst another told us of how attending the event had been a 'turning point' in their child's life. Having attended events this young person had experienced an increase in self esteem and confidence and was benefiting from positive social interaction with peers.

During the information gathering and exploration of needs calls by the service manager young people's care plans are compiled. The young people's health needs and medication routines were recorded and levels of need assessed. Where any alterations needed to these medication routines letters of confirmation were sought from the paediatrician. This ensures that young people's health needs are consistently maintained throughout the events. Similarly bedtime routines and dietary needs are discussed and assessed; with strategies devised for any recognised need. We noted examples such as one young person prone to sleepwalking being placed in close proximity to a hearing member of staff.

Young people's views are gathered through the care plan's 'All about me' section where likes and dislikes are recorded. Individual risk assessments for the identified needs of the young people were comprehensive and detailed as were event specific risk assessments.

Event risk assessments include the areas of fire safety, missing children procedures, activities risk assessments, mobile phone signals, communications, general safety of the location and medical storage. Great care is taken in securing medication in safe secure storage with codes for access given only to those trained and cleared to administer medication.

Specific venue risk assessments are explored and addressed prior to the event commencing and for each event there is an out of hours protocol in place.

Prior to events commencing young people are instructed in the 'Ground Rules'. This provides the young people with a clear understanding of expectations of positive behaviour and what consequences are introduced for negative or challenging behaviour. The emphasis is on good behaviour being encouraged; and when consequences are given for challenging behaviour young people are clear on what is required of them to return to the activity.

Young people were accessing activities with peers that they had limited access to in the community. For one young person this had led to the award of certificates which enabled access to these activities. Through this level of achievement young people's self esteem and feeling of well being was increased. We heard from several parents of the positive impact this had on children in social situations at the events and then back in their communities.

In discussion with the manager and director we heard that the service development plans for the forthcoming year included making the GIRFEC principles, and associated well being indicators, more explicit in compiling risk assessments and care plans. We also heard that these will be further informed through consideration of the new Health and Social Care standards. We look forward to reviewing these at the next inspection.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of staffing

Findings from the inspection

We found that the service was achieving a very good standard in relation to the quality of staffing.

In auditing recruitment policies and procedures and inspecting staff and volunteer employment files we found a rigorous system for employing suitable skilled people for the role in supporting young people. Background checks included Protection of Vulnerable Group Scheme (PVG) membership, previous work references, medical information, and qualifications. Volunteer's attended interview and took part in a two day induction process. This gave an insight into the role and responsibilities of volunteers and sessional staff whilst supporting young people and maintaining their safety and well being.

We inspected previous and current training schedules and learned of the arrangements for each event. During the beginning of each event staff undergo a three hour training meeting covering important topics including missing child and safeguarding policies and procedures.

Group support and pastoral support roles are clarified also.

Further training is provided during training weekends for volunteers and this training is tracked on the service data base. This training covers a range of appropriate topics such as child protection, child sexual exploitation, fire risk and safety and safety arrangements for young people.

The service development plan includes consideration of whether staff training should include a model of behaviour management techniques and restraint. In discussion with the manager and director we understood the positives and negatives being considered in relation to this issue.

The service has a supporting positive behaviour policy that has raised the need for further discussion of this and we will review the outcome of this matter at the next inspection.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of management and leadership

Findings from the inspection

We found that the quality of management and leadership for the service was very good.

Service evaluations are conducted at each event through three methods. Group evaluation - where young people indicate through discussion and stickers and charts their thoughts and views of the service.

Secondly through individual evaluation. Young people are asked their views at three points during the event. On arrival they are asked 'what would you like to get from the event' (outcomes). During the event they are asked 'have you had the chance to do what said in section 1'. If the response is no young people are then allocated a volunteer to help achieve their aim or something new. For example learning to play a musical instrument.

At the event end young people are asked what they got from the event. This person centred approach to these evaluations provide valuable information for looking to improve each subsequent event.

The third evaluation is derived from feedback forms from parents and carers. Typical of the positive comments found in these were 'Big efforts were made in getting to know my child prior to event.' Many additional positive comments related to young people achieving new skills; such as self care skills and self management skills and in making new friends and enjoying opportunities they may not otherwise get the opportunity to access.

The service promotes leadership values within the staff team through a 'competency catch up' process where staff competencies are evaluated and assessed over a number of events. - promoting skills of staff. Staff and volunteers can also identify training needs and skill strengths though this.

The service providers Safe and Effective Practice Group discuss Scotland specific issues that arise. Solutions are explored to ensure the service is complying with national guidance, regulations and care standards. For example, where staff are required to wear a uniform and this conflicts with guidance and standards the Safe and Effective Practice Group will discuss the needs of the service and young people to derive a solution.

The service plan has also identified that young people could be involved in the recruitment of staff and we would encourage this initiative.

We will review these matters at the next inspection.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at or since the last inspection

Previous requirements

There are no outstanding requirements.

What the service has done to meet any recommendations we made at or since the last inspection

Previous recommendations

There are no outstanding recommendations.

Complaints

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

Enforcement

No enforcement action has been taken against this care service since the last inspection.

Inspection and grading history

This service does not have any prior inspection history or grades.

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