

# National Deaf Children's Society

Castle House, 37–45 Paul Street, London EC2A 4LS  
Inspection under the social care common inspection framework

## **Information about this residential holiday scheme for disabled children**

This large and diverse charity supports deaf children and their families through a range of information and support services. The National Deaf Children's Society provides programmes of activities to challenge and inspire deaf children aged eight to 18 years. Some children may also have additional needs. The holiday and activity schemes consist of a variety of one-day, weekend and week-long events dedicated to outdoor sports or creative activities. Events within the scheme vary in size and are based in a range of venues across the country.

**Inspection dates:** 22 to 23 March 2019

**Overall experience and progress of children and young people,** taking into account: **good**

How well children, young people are helped and protected **good**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

The residential holiday scheme for disabled children provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

**Date of previous inspection:** 21 February 2018

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Key findings from this inspection

This residential holiday scheme for disabled children is good because:

- Children thrive in a nurturing environment where they can engage in an extensive range of activities and new experiences.
- Children benefit from having increased confidence, communication skills and self-esteem.
- The comprehensive care planning ensures that the staff have a clear understanding of children's health, educational, emotional, social and psychological needs.
- Deaf staff members and volunteers are positive role models for the children.
- Children gain a sense of belonging and the opportunity to make new friends.
- Children with additional needs receive one-to-one support.
- There are good safeguarding arrangements and children feel safe.
- The organisation has good procedures and policies which focus on safeguarding children.
- Leaders and managers provide excellent deaf-awareness training for staff working at the venues.
- Children and their parents are extremely satisfied with the service and there have been no formal complaints since the last inspection.
- Leaders, managers and staff are passionately dedicated to providing a quality service for children.
- Leaders and managers are aware of the service's strengths and there is a good development plan in place.
- The service is led by a highly experienced and well-qualified registered manager.
- Children receive high-quality care from a dedicated, skilled and culturally diverse team of staff and volunteers.

The areas for development for the residential holiday scheme for disabled children:

- At the time of the inspection, a window in a children's bedroom on the ground floor did not have a restrictor. This was a potential hazard, as a child could have climbed out of this window.
- Leaders and managers review the quality of care provided by the service, but the last regulation 30 report did not include the views of children and their parents.

## What does the residential holiday scheme for disabled children need to do to improve?

### Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to meet the Care Standards Act 2000, Residential Holiday Schemes for Disabled Children (England) Regulations 2013 and the national minimum standards. The registered person(s) must comply within the given timescales.

| Requirement   | Due date   |
|---|------------|
| The system referred to in paragraph (1) (review of quality of care) must provide for consultation with children accommodated by the scheme and their parents. (Regulation 30 (3)) | 01/05/2019 |

### Recommendations

- Ensure risk assessments identify any potential sources of harm to the children. (NMS 6.3)

In particular, highlight windows which children can climb out of.

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good**

Children thrive in a nurturing atmosphere of respect and understanding. The organisation provides an extensive range of activities and new experiences for the children, which enhance their personal development, knowledge and skills and help them to fulfil their potential. Feedback on these activities is extremely positive. One child said that they 'loved it'.

Holiday programmes succeed in building children's confidence, communication skills and self-esteem. They also provide children with the valued opportunity to socialise with other deaf children. Children enjoy learning from each other, for example improving their signing skills. They also enjoy a sense of belonging that arises from their shared experience of being deaf.

Comprehensive care planning is a strength of the service, and ensures that staff have a clear understanding of children's individual needs. Parents praised the extensive pre-event communication with staff. This provides valued reassurance for parents. Children also benefit from the personalised support.

The provision of pre-event information helps to alleviate children's anxieties by enabling them to familiarise themselves with the programme of activities and with the staff. Children are consulted throughout their stays. Children are provided with a diary in which to write down their thoughts and feelings throughout their breaks. Each child has personal objectives that they wish to achieve during their stay.

Interactions between staff and children are good. Deaf staff members and volunteers are positive role models for children. Staff have a good understanding of each child's health, educational, emotional, social and psychological needs. Children who have additional needs also receive one-to-one support when required.

This inspection took place during a weekend that saw younger children being away from home for the first time. The registered manager said that it was very satisfying to see the children's initial fear disappearing and each child transforming over the course of the weekend. The children were particularly looking forward to crate-stacking, bushcraft, archery, indoor climbing and canoeing.

The organisation offers a wide range of age-specific holidays which include adventure, multi-activity and multi-sport breaks. Older children benefit from participating in life-skills events, which help as they transition to adulthood. A new initiative has been the science, technology, engineering and maths event, which provides an innovative and fun way of learning.

## **How well children and young people are helped and protected: good**

Children benefit from the provision of effective support and care, which enables them to feel safe. There are good safeguarding arrangements which comply with regulations. The only issue at the time of this inspection was a ground-floor window which did not have a restrictor. This was a potential hazard, as a child could have climbed out of this window.

The organisation has a good selection of procedures and policies which focus on safeguarding children. Staff and volunteers benefit from having regular training which keeps them up-to-date with child protection and safeguarding issues. The registered manager is also a designated safeguarding officer.

Children can identify a trusted adult who they can talk to about any concerns. Staff sensitively manage homesickness and children can make calls to their parents. Children and their parents are satisfied with the service and there have been no formal complaints since the last inspection.

There are no behavioural management issues. Children interact positively with each other and staff promote positive behaviour through encouragement and praise. Children enjoy being at events and there are no issues with them going missing from the service. There are also no concerns in relation to bullying, radicalisation or extremism.

The organisation ensures that the venues used comply with health and safety legislation and can meet the needs of deaf children. Leader and managers provide excellent deaf-awareness training for staff working at the venues. This ensures that activities are deaf friendly, and that venue staff know how to communicate in an emergency situation. A venue activity leader said that this training was 'very useful'.

Leaders and managers demonstrate good inter-agency working with the venues regarding health and safety matters. Certificates confirm the safety of the gas and electrical supplies. There is an appropriate risk management system, which includes consultation with the local authority and the police.

## **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good**

Children benefit from using a well-organised service which is continually evolving to meet their needs. Leaders, managers and staff are passionately dedicated to providing a quality service for children. The registered manager is aware of the service's strengths and the areas for development.

The quality assurance system is centred on continual improvement. The organisation ensures that each venue undergoes an inspection, in accordance with regulations. These reports strategically highlight shortfalls that are linked to the national minimum standards.

Leaders and managers regularly review the quality of care. However, the report does not include the views of children and their parents. The organisation has a good consultation system and the registered manager is planning on including feedback in the next report.

The statement of purpose clearly sets out the ethos and objectives of the holiday scheme. During each event, children provide meaningful feedback regarding their experiences. This is linked to the statement of purpose and focuses on positive outcomes.

The service is led by a highly experienced and well-qualified registered manager. This individual has been promoted since the last inspection and a suitably experienced new manager has been appointed to replace him. The transition to the new management arrangements is scheduled to be completed by summer 2019.

Children receive high-quality care from a dedicated, skilled and culturally diverse team of staff and volunteers. A parent described the staff as 'brilliant'. A child-focused staff-competency assessment ensures that staff develop the required skills for their role. Volunteers benefit from having a comprehensive induction programme and ongoing training.

The agency has a good development plan with realistic ambitions for the future. A new initiative is embedding policies regarding transgender children. The registered manager is particularly proud of this work, which he feels is 'groundbreaking'. The organisation is also investigating the option of providing residential events abroad.

All of the recommendations from the last inspection have been addressed. The improvements in documentation now help to better protect children. These include risk assessments regarding the self-administration of medication, the recruitment checklist and the staff training matrix.

## **Information about this inspection**

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of the help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the residential holiday scheme for disabled children knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

Using the 'Social care common inspection framework', this inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service, how it



meets the core functions of the service as set out in legislation, and to consider how well it complies with the Residential Holiday Schemes for Disabled Children (England) Regulations 2013 and the national minimum standards.

## **Residential holiday scheme for disabled children details**

**Unique reference number:** 1027090

**Registered provider:** National Deaf Children's Society

**Registered provider address:** Castle House, 37–45 Paul Street, London EC2A 4LS

**Responsible individual:** Ms Helen Cable

**Registered manager:** Mr Mark Bolton

**Telephone number:** 0207 014 1100

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### **Inspector**

Sharon Payne: social care inspector



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