

Heswall Disabled Children's Holiday Fund

Inspection report for residential holiday schemes for disabled children

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Inspector	Nick Veysey
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Registered person	Heswall Disabled Children's Holiday Fund
Registered manager	Vincent Keating
Responsible individual	Andrew Powell
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Service information

Brief description of the service

The residential holiday scheme for disabled children is a voluntary and charitable trust. It provides a residential holiday for one week only during the summer holidays for children and young people with complex needs, including learning and physical disabilities and complex health needs. The scheme operates from a residential activity centre.

The inspection judgements:

- Outstanding
- Good
- Requires improvement
- Inadequate

The overall experiences of children and young people

The overall experiences of children and young people is judged to be outstanding.

Children and young people really enjoy an outstanding holiday that has an enduring impact on their lives. They benefit from a wide range of positive social and recreational experiences that enriches their lives and promotes their personal development. Children said, 'I enjoy coming here and spending time with my friends and making new friends' and 'the only time I cry is when it's time to go home.' Many of the children and young people have been before and said they always look forward to the holiday. Parents are extremely positive about the holiday and the high standard of care their children receive. They said, 'the holiday is fantastic, having a seven day break is really important and my son has a lovely time', 'the holiday gives him a break from his everyday routine and he can have fun' and 'I am a bit of a nervous parent, it was his first time away last year. He really enjoyed it and said he wanted to go back this year.'

Children and young people with a broad range of disabilities and complex health needs have plenty of active, interesting, stimulating, creative, and above all fun things to do. The activities include arts and crafts, campfire and barbeque, swimming, making theatre props and costumes, climbing wall, ball games, flying kites, a circus workshop, a disco and going to the seaside, an aquarium and the zoo. The wide range of activities enable children and young people to do things they are interested in and already enjoy, as well as trying lots of new things. The holiday provides them with opportunities to build their confidence, independence, and sense of achievement. A child said, 'I got to the top of the climbing wall, it's the first time I've done it.' Many children and young people have experiences that they may not be able to have with their families. A young person said 'I get the chance to do things don't do at home like going to the cinema.' Children and young people's views, wishes and feelings are taken into account in all aspects of the holiday, including

their care and making choices about what they want to do. A young person said, 'you can choose what to do, don't have to do something if you don't want to, lots of other things to do.' A parent said, 'I love the amount of activities, he is able to join in with everything. He enjoys singing around the camp fire, swimming, going to the zoo, the company of other children who also use wheel chairs. It helps to normalise things for him, he really enjoys it and does not feel out of his comfort zone.'

Children and young people receive exceptionally high quality care that is responsive and tailored to children and young people's individual needs and interests. Their physical and emotional health is suitably protected and promoted. Children and young people feel safe and happy. The extremely friendly and inclusive atmosphere has built a strong sense of community, irrespective of children and young people's background, abilities and how they communicate. Children and young people make friends, enjoy extremely positive relationships with each other and with the leaders and helpers. They are protected by safe care practices that promote children and young people's safety and reduce the risk of harm.

The leaders and helpers have developed strong links and relationships with parents and other people involved in the lives of children and young people, including health professionals. This has enabled them to develop an excellent understanding of each child and young person's needs, including complex health needs, and manage their care effectively while they are away from home. The leaders also have established very good links with local agencies to ensure that the children and young people holiday are able to get the appropriate support they may need.

The leadership and management arrangements are highly effective in making sure that children and young people have an excellent time and receive high quality care in a safe environment. The holiday is exceptionally well-planned to meet the needs of a wide range of children and young people with disabilities. The helpers are energetic and enthusiastic, and provide children and young people with an excellent care support. The leaders have a clear and realistic understanding of the strengths of the holiday and the areas for development and how they plan to improve things. The leaders and helpers are resourceful and creative provide children and young people with holidays that makes an exceptional difference to their lives.

Areas for improvement

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the service should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure that the written record of any non-prescribed medication given to children is kept on a suitable medication administration record chart and medication received by the holiday scheme has the appropriate pharmacy label that confirms the name of the medication and arrangements for its administration (NMS 5)

How well children and young people are helped and protected

The service is outstanding at helping and protecting children and young people.

Children and young people receive high quality individualised support that meets their needs and enables them to enjoy their holiday. Parents said, 'the helpers are dedicated and I love that they take care when they have to lift him or helping in the shower' and 'I am delighted with the holiday and the care he receives.' Leaders and helpers communicate effectively with children and young people in ways that they easily understand. They have consistently high aspirations for all the children and young people to enjoy their holiday and have new and fulfilling experiences. They effectively challenge barriers to children and young people being able to take part in everything on offer; for example every one enjoyed watching a film at the cinema, swimming and having a go at the climbing wall.

Children and young people feel safe and are protected from harm. They have a strong sense of well-being and that the adults are interested in their welfare. A child said, 'the helpers are friendly and you can talk to any of them.' Leaders and helpers are knowledgeable and experienced in the care and protection of disabled children and young people. The leaders have made links with local safeguarding agencies. Helpers follow excellent safe care practices based on an understanding of safeguarding issues, including child protection procedures and statutory guidance for missing children. They provide children and young people with suitable supervision at all times and know what action to take if they have concerns about children and young people's safety. Helpers recognise when children and young people may have been at risk of harm and have taken prompt and decisive action to protect them from potential serious harm.

Children and young people's behaviour is exceptionally good and helpers also provide excellent support when children and young people feel sad or upset. They find out what is wrong and provide them with reassurance. For example, a young person said 'my helper helped me text my family and friends when I was missing them.' Leaders and helpers have an excellent understanding of the potential risks to individual children and young people and consistently use effective strategies to keep them safe, including preventing them from going missing and involved in potentially harmful behaviour. However, children and young people do take suitable risks that challenge them to build their skills and confidence; for example, having a go at the climbing wall, supported by suitably trained people.

Children and young people's health needs are promoted. The leaders and helpers have a detailed understanding of individual children's health needs, including, complex medical conditions, allergies, and dietary needs, and the support needed to promote their health and well-being. Helpers have received suitable guidance and training to provide appropriate care to individual children and young people, including using gastrostomy tubes. They follow safe care practices that ensure personal and intimate care respect children's rights to choice, respect privacy and

dignity. Clear and detailed plans show how children and young people's health needs will be met in an emergency or following an accident, including seeking medical advice promptly.

Children and young people receive the medication they receive in line with medical advice. The helpers manage medication safely. They follow recommended good practice in relation to the storage, recording and checking of prescribed medication, including controlled drugs. The helpers involved in managing medication are suitably trained and have medical qualifications and expertise. However, non-prescribed medication given to children is not recorded on a suitable medication administration record, and on rare occasions leaders and helpers have accepted medication from parents that was not appropriately labelled and packaged. These shortfalls have not impacted negatively on children and young people's welfare because medication is safely and effectively managed.

Leaders and helpers have constructive relationships with parents. They keep them fully informed about how their children are enjoying their holiday, what activities they have taken part in, and if there are any problems or illnesses. They also welcome parents contacting them if they have any concerns, complaints and worries. A parent said 'They let me know when my son was unwell and asked what I wanted them to do. They kept me informed about how he was, what they were going to do and what the hospital said. I was happy with how they managed the situation. He never cried which shows that they were able to keep him calm. They dealt really well with the situation, with every situation.'

The holiday takes place in a suitable location with comfortable accommodation and very good facilities that takes into full account the safety and welfare needs of disabled children and young people.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers

The effectiveness of leaders and managers is outstanding

The leaders and managers provide passionate, energetic and effective leadership. They are strongly committed to delivering high quality care and excellent activities to disabled children. They ensure that disabled children are safe and really enjoy their time away from home. The holiday is thoughtfully planned to provide children and young people with positive experiences that make a lasting difference to their lives. The leaders and managers work extremely hard to understand children and young people's specific needs and make sure that they have the expertise, skills and experience to fully meet their needs while they are away from home. The holiday is adequately resourced to meet its aims, and to promote and meet the needs and enjoyment of children and young people. Children and young people, parents and helpers have a clear understanding of the objectives of the holiday and the ranges of service it provides. Written information in the statement of purpose, leaflets and children and young people's guide provide an accurate and clear picture of the holiday in an easy to understand format.

The leaders and managers are not complacent and continue to strive to develop and improve the holiday. They effectively monitor and scrutinize the quality of the holiday and the care provided. This includes a trustee of the charity visiting to evaluate the quality of care, including speaking with children and young people about their experiences. As a result leaders and managers have a realistic understanding of the strengths of the holidays and areas for development to improve holidays for children. They have secured improvements in the quality of information they receive about children and the quality of training for helpers to enable them to develop their skills and knowledge; for example developing skills in how to deliver activities to improve children's participation and enjoyment and meet the needs of children with broad range of abilities within the same activity. The high quality training ensures that helpers are well prepared and equipped to support and meet the individual needs of children and young people. The leaders and managers have also improved the administration of recruiting helpers since the last inspection. The recruitment, vetting, selection of helpers is thorough and safe; as a result children and young people are only looked after by suitable people.

There are a sufficient number of suitably skilled and experienced helpers to meet the diverse needs of disabled children and facilitate a wide range of activities. Helpers are trained, supported and supervised effectively to fulfil their roles and understand the needs and circumstances of the children and young people attending the holiday. New and less experienced helpers are actively supported and guided. They value the support and help they receive from the leaders, managers and more experienced people.

Children and young people's written records and plans are clear, up-to-date and securely stored. The records provide sufficient detail and information to understand children and young people's needs, circumstances and interests, and how best to support them. Helpers encourage children to keep diaries about their experiences, achievements and feelings about the holiday. The diaries, which also include holiday photographs, are an excellent way of sharing children's experiences with their parents and a memento for children to take home. The information contained in the diaries contributes to an understanding of children and young people's lives, abilities, talents, skills and potential for personal development and independence.

Working in partnership to improve outcomes for children and young people

The service is outstanding at working in partnership to improve outcomes for children and young people.

The leaders, managers and helpers have established strong and extremely effective relationships with children and young people, families, school and health professionals. As a result they understand and able to meet children and young people's diverse and specific needs and enable them to enjoy the holiday. They consistently involve all the important people in children's lives in planning for the

holiday, including finding out about children and young people's health, social, cultural, emotional, communication needs, personal qualities and interests. They visit children and parents at home to let them know about the holiday and get to know the child and about their care. They build up a detailed picture of each child as an individual. This collaborative approach reassures parents and builds trusting working relationships. A parent said, 'I am confident that they can look after him and meet his needs.' The leaders and managers also encourage children, parents and professionals to let them know about their views about the holiday as part of their review. They are attempting to further improve relationships by developing the ways they are able to share information with parents and receive feedback, including the use of social media.

The leaders and managers have effective and constructive relationships with the local community and local services including, recreational facilities, the police, safeguarding and health agencies. They are knowledgeable about the facilities and activities locally and have maximised the use of the wider community to provide children with a wide range of interesting and fun activities that have an enduring impact on their lives. The leaders and managers also actively challenge agencies to provide the support and assistance that children and young people should expect to receive while they are away from home. This includes working assertively with agencies to reach clear agreements about the expectations of what they will offer to promote children and young people's welfare.

About this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to inform children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service and to consider how well it complies with the relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against *Residential holiday schemes for disabled children: The inspection framework, evaluation schedule and grade descriptors*.