

Medway Secure Training Centre

Inspection report for Secure Training Centre

Inspection date	27 July 2011
Lead inspector	Linda Christie
Additional inspector(s)	Malcolm Stannard Shaun Common

Type of inspection	Random-unannounced
Type of registration	Secure Training Centre

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About this inspection

The purpose of inspection is to provide assurance to the Secretary of State that secure training centres provide an environment that promotes the safety and welfare of young people and that will help prevent children and young people offending in the future, and in particular that:

- the safeguarding of children and young people is effective
- programmes exist to tackle offending behaviour and meet the citizenship and resettlement needs of children and young people
- the performance of the Secure Training Centre provider meets the quality of service expected in the inspections standards
- there is a purposeful regime in which children and young people are encouraged to take part
- there is effective security and control within the Secure Training Centre
- high standards of social care, health care, education and training are provided for children and young people
- the individual needs of children and young people are fully assessed and there are plans for meeting them as far as possible.

The Secretary of State for Justice causes Secure Training Centres to be inspected in accordance with Rule 43 of the Secure Training Centres Rules (produced in compliance with Section 47 of the Prison Act 1952, as amended by Section 6(2) of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994), Section 80 of Children's Act 1989 and any subsequent legislation. Her Majesty's Chief Inspector's power to inspect Secure Training Centres is provided by section 146 of the Education and Inspection Act 2006.

This was a random unannounced inspection carried out in accordance with the service level agreement between the Youth Justice Board and Ofsted. The standards used during the inspection were those agreed between the Youth Justice Board and Ofsted.

The last full inspection was carried out in February 2011 with an interim inspection in September 2010.

A team of social care inspectors spent two days on site.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

Not judged: this aspect of the provision was not judged

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Service Information

Brief description of the service

1. Medway is one of four purpose-built secure training centres that provide secure provision to young people across the country. The centre is one of three secure training centres managed by G4S Care and Justice Services Limited.
2. The centre is situated in Rochester, Kent. It offers secure provision for young people aged from 12 to 17 years who meet the criteria for a custodial sentence, or who are remanded to a secure setting.
3. Medway is designed to accommodate up to 76 young people of both genders. During the inspection up to 69 young people were in residence. Young people live in residential units, of which there are four in each of the three house blocks.

Summary

The overall quality rating is outstanding

This is an overview of what the inspector found during the inspection.

4. This is an interim unannounced inspection of the centre, intended to assess progress against recommendations made following the last inspection undertaken in February 2011. All standards included under the Every Child Matters outcome staying safe were also assessed. A site inspection took place to review the quality of the accommodation, security and building maintenance.
5. All aspects of the centre's day-to-day routines were well organised during the inspection. Young people were actively engaged with education and other activities throughout the period. Staff engage positively and professionally with young people and ensure that all their needs are met. They also ensure that young people's positive behaviour and helpful interactions are acknowledged, while challenging any inappropriate behaviour quickly and firmly.
6. Young people are very positive about staff and how they feel they care for them. One young person said 'staff are great, they are kind to you'. When asked about individual young people all staff members are able to respond with a detailed understanding of the child's needs and issues, showing insight and professionalism. Young people describe how staff have helped them understand how their choices and behaviour while in the community contribute to negative outcomes. One young person described in detail how staff have helped her develop an emotional resilience that will help when she

is released. She described her time at the centre as being a period of reflection. She feels staff have helped strengthen her determination to 'do things differently in the future'.

7. A continuing strength of the centre are the links with the local safeguarding services including the Local Safeguarding Children Board, which ensure young people are safe.

What has been improved since the last inspection

8. At the last inspection managers were asked to consider four recommendations. Of those two were related to the education provision and as education inspectors did not form part of the team these were not explored during this inspection.
9. Action has been taken to ensure that substance misuse workers are kept up-to-date with developments and research. Relevant staff have access to publications, research and have attended training. They are also provided with regular clinical supervision from the community substance misuse service. The recommendation relating to this aspect of service had been met.
10. Efforts have been made to improve the telephone system available to young people's families to make calls to the centre. Proposals are being considered, all of which will result in considerable expenditure. One option is to commission the same system that has recently been installed at Oakhill secure training centre. As this recommendation has not yet been implemented it is therefore repeated.

The effectiveness of the service

Helping children to be healthy

The provision was not judged

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding

11. There are excellent relationships between staff and young people. Interactions are warm and friendly, with mutual respect and clear professionalism exhibited by the staff team. A sense of calm, control and order is apparent across the centre, with clear and consistent boundaries being implemented. Young people say that they get on very well with staff. Any negative or challenging behaviour is appropriately addressed. Managers and staff provide young people with an environment where they can adapt quickly to life at the centre and progress in social development.
12. The incentive scheme remains very effective, encouraging young people to develop positive behaviour and social skills. Young people stated they understand the system and it helps them to behave more positively. There is a generic system and framework; however programmes are also developed where appropriate, to meet young people's individualised needs. For example, if a young person cannot manage a weekly based programme daily programmes are developed and implemented. This ensures that all young people are able to engage, attain rewards and benefits and make progress at the centre.
13. Physical restraint has seen a significant reduction since 2008, though there has been a very small increase in the last six months in comparison with the previous six months. This is due to disruptive behaviour presented by particular young people. All physical intervention is fully recorded and robustly scrutinised through monitoring and use of closed circuit television to ensure that best practice is delivered at the centre. Young people and staff are debriefed after any incident. Reflective meetings are held with staff teams so any learning points can be discussed and implemented in practice. Behaviour management plans have been developed that guide staff in supporting the young people. These are kept up-to-date through regular review. Importantly the plans include specific approaches to be taken with each young person if physical restraint is necessary; for example, taking into account any current or previous health conditions.
14. The use of separation has continued to reduce with staff effectively engaging with young people where it is appropriate to do so, rather than young people being locked in their rooms. Where separation is necessary, appropriate monitoring and supervision takes place to keep the young people safe. Young people confirm that separation is used for the right reasons. The use of separation is closely monitored by managers ensuring its use is legitimate and young people are safeguarded.
15. The use of sanctions has reduced in the last six months, though there are fluctuations in figures as a result of some young people who display

particularly challenging behaviour. The newly implemented reparation system runs alongside the use of sanctions. This is viewed positively by young people who speak highly of the system, saying it gives them the opportunity to make up for what they have done wrong and where appropriate, the ability to earn back privileges. This process helps young people to develop understanding of the effects of their negative behaviour and to take responsibility for their actions. Sanctions used are appropriate to the misdemeanour, varied in their use and deemed as fair by the young people. Sanctions and reparation used are fully recorded on each occasion. A senior manager monitors the use of sanctions and reparation closely, providing regular feedback to staff on the appropriateness of their use. This ensures that staff consider carefully the use of any sanction and reparation so young people are supported to develop positive social skills and behaviour.

16. Robust monitoring processes are in place for all behaviour management events including the use of physical restraint, separation and sanctions. Managers routinely analyse and discuss records and comprehensive data to identify any learning points and disseminate these to all staff, thus supporting and guiding staff to deliver best practice. These processes help managers identify any trends and patterns and then adjust service delivery accordingly, ensuring the young people are treated equally and fairly.
17. A robust and well-established procedure is in operation which ensures that all relevant information held on a young person is known to the centre. Information gathered prior to and during admission informs a thorough assessment of vulnerability and risk, including potential risk to others. The assessment of risk includes gathering information, if available, of any known or implied affiliation a young person may have with gangs in their local area. The detailed assessment of risk informs the centre's procedures for the potential for suicide or self harm. If required support plans are established which are regularly reviewed and revised and any alterations communicated quickly with relevant staff within the centre and to significant people involved with the care of the young person concerned.
18. Young people say they feel safe and that staff keep them safe. They describe a zero-tolerance approach to bullying. They are clear that any actual or potential bullying or harassment will be picked up by staff immediately and strategies put in place to deal with them. Young people know exactly what the process is should they be involved as a perpetrator or victim of any incidences of bullying or harassment.
19. The centre has excellent links with the local authority safeguarding team, and there are robust and highly effective procedures in place to deal with any potential child protection or safeguarding matters. All referrals to the local safeguarding manager are dealt with in a timely manner. The safeguarding manager maintains detailed notes on the investigations, with clear outcomes and recommendations for the centre available to relevant stakeholders, for example the Youth Justice Board. This ensures transparency in all cases.

20. The centre has excellent links with the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). The director is a member of the relevant secure sub-group established by the board and he has recently been asked to co-chair the board's learning and development steering group. The level of engagement the centre has with the board is illustrated by the recent involvement of two young people in the recruitment process for the replacement of the LSCB independent chair. They interviewed candidates and gave feedback to the Children's Services Director on the decisions they had reached. This included providing constructive feedback on the unsuccessful candidates. This is an excellent development initiated by the centre.
21. Another example of working together with the LSCB has been the setting of targets for the centre to reduce the numbers of restraint, the application of sanctions and the incidences of self harm. The centre has exceeded the targets in all three areas of practice.
22. Young people are confident that they are able to raise issues and concerns without fear of reprisal. A complaints system is in operation and young people are also able to use a 'grumbles' book where minor problems and comments can be brought to the attention of staff. A response is given to all entries in the book within 24 hours. The formal complaints system remains robust and effective. Young people are given a receipt for any complaint slips they have filled in; investigations are held promptly with outcomes fed back to young people within very short timescales. They are advised of how they may take matters further if they remain unhappy with the outcome of a complaint.
23. All complaints and grumble book entries are audited by a member of the local authority child protection services. This practice enhances the robustness and independence of the complaints structure as well as ensuring outcomes of investigations are fed back appropriately to young people.
24. Independent advocacy is provided by a group of visitors from an external service who attend the centre regularly. Young people have regular and easy access to advocates who support them with a range of matters, including any relevant to the centre, or to planning by the placing agency. Young people know exactly who the advocates are and report having received support from them.
25. Robust security arrangements are in operation at the centre. These are regularly reviewed to ensure they remain efficient and appropriate. Information regarding the security status of the centre is updated on a daily basis. Security intelligence reports are circulated to all staff where an indicator of a possible breach of security has been identified. The measures in place help to ensure that a young person is not able to leave the confines of the secure perimeter without authority. Excellent systems are in place to ensure that prohibited items cannot be brought into the centre.

26. Security risk assessments of the site have recently been undertaken to identify any areas where there may be a possible high risk to the integrity of the centre. Following the assessment, plans have been produced by the staff member responsible for security which will guide staff should any breach occur.
27. Desktop and practical exercises continue to be carried out regularly to test contingency arrangements in the event of an emergency situation occurring. Duty directors are trained in contingency command. Recent training has been undertaken by Residential Service Managers in the operation of the command suite, which has provided them with the knowledge to set up the required provision promptly in the event of an emergency. The regular testing of contingency plans means that staff are made aware of their responsibilities and actions to be taken.
28. Good relationships remain in place with local emergency services. An agreed protocol with the fire service is available to ensure enhanced and prompt action in the event of an emergency.
29. Health and safety issues at the centre continue to be addressed rigorously. Bitesize training sessions are held for staff, enabling them to refresh their knowledge and practice. Meetings are held at which all departments of the centre are represented. This enables the sharing of any health and safety concerns. The staff member responsible for health, safety and security is constantly striving to develop everyone's practice at the centre and ensure that any occurrence is fully investigated so that possible lessons to be learned are identified. The safety of young people is promoted.
30. A number of highly respected health and safety awards are held by the centre and staff and managers continue to strive to ensure the stringent and exceptional practice is maintained. An external audit was recently carried out of the safety, hygiene and health arrangements on the living units. The result of the audit was very positive. Young people benefit from the knowledge and practice at the centre. Information on safety is shared with them and this can also be made available in different formats including audio recordings for those who require it. The experience and knowledge of all staff is shared with other training centres, enabling a joined up approach to practice should any issues arise.
31. Written procedures are in place with relation to the searching of young people. Information is given to young people explaining when it may be necessary for searches to be carried out. All young people entering the centre for the first occasion or who may have been on mobility are assessed prior to any search occurring. Areas which are taken into account as part of the assessment include, whether staff have accompanied the young person, the type of visit they have been on and who they may have been in touch with.

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32. The privacy and dignity of young people at the centre is highly respected. During searches care is taken to ensure privacy. Staff always announce their arrival at a young person's room prior to entering. The telephone can be used by young people in private and new arrangements for the distribution of personal mail mean that the opportunities for privacy have been enhanced.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

Education

The provision was not judged

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

Welfare

The provision was not judged

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision was not judged

Helping children achieve economic wellbeing

The provision was not judged

Management

The provision was not judged

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made to the Director of the secure training centre unless otherwise stated.

- ensure the telephone system is sufficiently robust to cope with the expectations of families and friends of young people who may contact them during evenings and weekends. (Positive contribution - Standard 19)