

## Residential holiday scheme for disabled children inspection

<b>Name</b>	Break-away
<b>Inspection date</b>	3 August 2016
<b>Unique reference number</b>	1027081
<b>Registered provider</b>	Break
<b>Registered provider address</b>	Schofield House, 1 Spar Road, Norwich, England, Norwich NR6 6BX

<b>Responsible individual</b>	Hilary Richards
<b>Registered manager</b>	Victoria Smith
<b>Inspector</b>	Fiona Littlefield

<b>Inspection date</b>	3 August 2016
<b>Previous inspection judgement</b>	Good
<b>Enforcement action since last inspection</b>	None
<b>This inspection</b>	
<b>The overall experiences of children and parents</b>	Good
The residential holiday scheme provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.	
<b>How well children and parents are helped and protected</b>	Good
<b>The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>	Outstanding

**1027081**

## **Summary of findings**

### **The residential holiday scheme for disabled children is good because:**

- Children enjoy their holidays and are happy and calm. They have access to a wide range of activities both inside the holiday scheme and in the community. Staff are highly skilled and make sure that all children participate in all activities.
- Parents confirm that their children benefit from their holidays and that they want to go back. Parents feel fully included in planning and preparation and confirm that their views are respected and acted on.
- Staff complete extremely thorough risk assessments prior to a child joining the holiday. Staff and managers make sure that they are familiar with any specialist needs that the child may have and that they have the training they need to provide good-quality care.
- Staff and managers promote positive behaviour by developing close and supportive relationships with each child. They are empathetic and understand the best ways to engage young people to relax and join in activities. Consequently, negative incidents are very rare.
- A highly skilled registered manager provides a highly professional and dynamic leadership for the service. She prioritises the welfare and safety of children extremely well. Partnership working with parents, social workers and outside agencies is excellent. Rigorous training and supervision support staff and give them the competencies to meet the changing needs of the children they look after. Consequently, young people are safe, have fun and gain confidence from their experiences while on the holiday.
- Some shortfalls were identified during this inspection. There was no risk assessment for a child who was administering his own medication. Records of children's progress while they are on the scheme did not identify their starting points or what staff had done to help them to maintain or improve on their goals. Research was not consistently used to inform and sustain developments in practice. There is no indication that a child is at risk as the result of any of these issues.

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

### **Recommendations**

To improve the quality and standards of care further, the service should take account of the following recommendations:

- Ensure that prescribed medication is only given to the child for whom it was prescribed, and in accordance with the prescription. Children who are able and wish to keep and take their own medication can do safely, with particular reference to ensuring that there is a risk assessment for any child who self-administers their medication. (National minimum standards 5.6)
- Ensure that employees receive high-quality training commensurate with the needs of the children using the scheme, with particular reference to consistently using up-to-date research to inform and improve practice. (National minimum standards 11)
- Ensure that information about individual children is recorded clearly and in a way that will be helpful to the child, with particular reference to identifying what actions staff are taking to sustain and build on progress that children make from their starting points. (National minimum standards 15.5)

## **Full report**

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

The residential holiday scheme for disabled children provides a holiday for up to 10 young people, for two nights during school holidays or weekends. The scheme is run specifically for children and young people who may have complex needs, including learning and physical disability and related health needs. Referrals are made either through Activities Unlimited or through Suffolk County Council children's services.

## Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
<b>The overall experiences of children and parents</b>	<b>Good</b>
<p>Young people benefit from their time at the holiday scheme because staff support them to participate in and enjoy a plethora of activities and pursuits both inside the centre and out in the community. Inside, there is ample room to run around and play indoor games, watch DVDs and listen to music. Children have some access to computer games, but staff are skilled at limiting this, taking children to the nearby beach, having picnics and going for walks. Staff interact naturally with all children, and no child is ever left unattended, with the result that they develop relationships of trust and confidence. Children are happy, calm and relaxed. When the inspector remarked on how happy a child looked, he said: 'That's because I am!'</p> <p>Staff are clear that all the children should be able to participate in all the activities, and this inclusive attitude is adopted by young people. For instance, when arranging a trip to the beach, one child was heard saying to another child who is wheelchair bound: 'You'll need your walker. Where is it?' and then he was observed going to get it for him. Activities in the community include meals out and the cinema. Children learn to know what to expect and how to behave. This greatly helps their sense of security.</p> <p>Staff are very effective in helping children build on independence skills. Children are encouraged to attend to their personal routines with support and reassurance from staff. They clear their plates after meals and assist staff with some cooking. In the community, children are helped to shop for the evening meal. They find the item in the shop and then staff help them to pay for it, thereby developing their social and budgeting skills. This encouragement and positive approach by staff have important consequences for children's sense of confidence about the future. One child, who has attended the scheme over many years, has recently applied to be a volunteer. One social worker of another child said: 'It has given me the chance to see what she is capable of. This has contributed to her long-term plan, now that I can see how she has coped with a different environment.'</p> <p>Staff are ambitious for children but want them to be comfortable and are knowledgeable about signs of tiredness or distress, particularly in non-verbal children. Staff and managers use research to inform their practice, but this is not a regular focus in staff discussions or team meetings, with the result that there is not a consistent building up of expertise and knowledge. The manager accepts this and is starting to include it as a regular item in staff meetings.</p> <p>Parents of young people confirm that they feel part of the team and that their opinions are valued and respected. If they want to raise a comment or concern, they</p>	

do so directly. The mother of one young person said: 'When he first started to go, I was super-anxious and wanted them to ring me twice a day. They did ring me, but now I don't worry at all. I know he is completely safe.'

Parents report that their children have enjoyed the break and want to go back. The parents of one child said: 'We know she enjoyed it because she hasn't stopped talking about it all year and was driving us mad this morning asking when she was coming.'

	Judgement grade
<b>How well children and parents are helped and protected</b>	<b>Good</b>
<p>Children feel safe and are safe as the result of extremely thorough preparation. Children who attend the scheme have complex needs so, before they join a scheme, staff and managers set out to acquire detailed knowledge about them, including making home visits to meet them and their families. On occasion, some children attend a specialist break with a smaller group to see how they manage and whether they have the potential for attending a scheme with a larger group. If a child has specific medical needs, staff and managers ensure that they have up-to-date training and are familiar with the protocols. One member of staff said: 'We do what it takes. One family wanted us to go again and be shown around his feeding so we went at dinner time and went through his evening routine.' This helps meet parents' concerns and builds up a relationship of trust between the family and staff at the scheme.</p> <p>Risk assessments are updated annually and after each holiday break, following feedback from children and their families. In addition, any information from outside agencies, such as schools, forms part of a regular exchange of information. For instance, staff from the scheme and teachers from a child's school liaised closely to resolve a concern that he was inclined to wandering away. This led to a very positive agreement on how to approach this and, consequently, the young person is safe.</p> <p>Staff and managers leave nothing to chance. All risk assessments are reviewed by the staff team shortly before the children arrive, when they reinforce details including allergies and managing behaviour. This highly professional approach means that, from the outset of the holiday, children benefit from a sense of security and consistency. They are supervised at all times by staff whom they respond to and settle into the holiday remarkably quickly.</p> <p>All staff have received up-to-date safeguarding training and are confident that, if they want to raise a child protection concern, they would know what to do. They are alert to the possibilities of internet abuse. Staff and managers undertake checks of the building to ensure that it is fit for purpose. Arrangements for storing and</p>	

dispensing medication during the holiday schemes are effective. Senior staff keep local records and ensure that only staff who have received up-to-date training can dispense medication. Staff and managers are clear that there is no room for error. One young person has started to self-administer his medication. He is supervised by staff, and this is an arrangement that he is already following at home with his family. However, there is no up-to-date risk assessment for this. The manager acknowledges this and is pursuing this as a matter of urgency. There is no indication that there is any risk to the young person.

Each child has an individual bespoke plan in which risks are matched with management strategies and with identified goals and objectives. Staff and managers all want them to feel secure, and the risk assessments and care plans reflect the best way to encourage good behaviour, with an emphasis on encouragement and praise. However, currently plans do not reflect what actions staff are taking to sustain and build on progress that children make from their starting points. This could be used in feedback to children and their families to reassure them.

Nevertheless, staff's success is reflected in the fact that, while children are sometimes irritated or rebellious, this does not escalate into a negative incident. No child has gone missing or been the subject of physical restraint or a sanction. On the contrary, staff and managers are willing to take considered risks. For instance, two children shared a room. This passed peacefully, and they were observed to be sitting together throughout the holiday, talking amiably. This was remarkable progress for children who had been anxious about coming, had not shared a room previously and whose self-confidence improved as a result of this confident approach.

	Judgement grade
<b>The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
<p>The registered manager has an extensive history in residential work. She gained her national vocational qualification (NVQ) level 5 in August 2015. The management team places a high value on professional development. Of the current group of staff, workers are either already qualified to NVQ level 3 or currently on the course. The registered manager is a qualified course assessor and is monitoring their progress closely, to avoid any drift. Young people benefit from being looked after by staff who are highly valued by their own managers.</p> <p>All staff have completed an induction programme, and records for subsequent training are maintained at the head office. However, a senior member of the team keeps her own records of staff training with her. This means that she can verify any queries and knows that all staff are up to date with mandatory courses. This is practical and effective and reflects the sense of personal responsibility held by staff</p>	



and managers to maintain standards of professional development.

Staff confirm that they have regular supervision, and notes of individual sessions provide evidence that sessions are a balance of discussions about individual children, the impact that these have on them personally and a reflection on the values embedded in the statement of purpose, which guides their practice. One member of staff said: 'Inclusion is particularly important for us. We make sure that they can all participate in all the activities.' This applies to both games inside, walks on the beach or trips to the circus. Children benefit from being looked after by staff and managers who demonstrate such clear values.

The registered manager consistently and vigorously reviews the service. Feedback is meticulously gathered from young people and their families after each break, along with comments from social workers, placing authorities and schools. She monitors referrals, individual care plans and assessments to make sure that they are full and up to date. One professional said about the manager: 'Her main strength is her openness and drive for improvement.' External monitoring can provide an extra layer of scrutiny. An independent visitor said: 'Feedback from parents isn't uniformly glowing: they are not shy to raise issues and wouldn't be averse to saying what they mean.' For instance, following requests from parents for more information about the staff who were looking after their children, a booklet was produced with photos of all staff working on the scheme and giving details of their experience and qualifications. This is sent out to parents along with a feedback form after each holiday break. This is an imaginative response and helps to maintain purposeful relationships between staff and families. One parent said: 'My wishes are being taken care of and respected.'

This rigorous approach to review and adjustment of the service means that the manager is able to both promote the strengths of the service and plan for improvements. Staff and managers are realistic but ambitious for the service and balance upbeat creativity with an awareness of the need to use resources well. For instance, along with members of staff, the manager has participated in raising awareness about the service in information days at a local hospital and spoken at a parents' forum at a nearby community school. In addition, she has led on producing both a DVD and attractive books of photos of activities and sports undertaken by children. Parents are immensely reassured by this direct evidence that their children are having such an interesting and enjoyable time.

## **What the inspection judgements mean**

The experiences of children are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against 'Inspection of residential holiday schemes for disabled children: framework for inspection'.

The inspection judgements:

**Outstanding**

**Good**

**Requires improvement**

**Inadequate**

## **Information about this inspection**

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences of children attending the residential holiday scheme. Inspectors considered whether the work of residential holiday scheme is founded on safe care and individualised support. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with children and each other and discussed the effectiveness of care given to children. Wherever possible, they talked to children and parents. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the residential holiday scheme knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children.

This 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 residential holiday schemes for disabled children (England) regulations 2013 and the national minimum standards.

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