

# Break-away

Break

Schofield House, Spar Road, Norwich, Norfolk NR6 6BX

Inspection under the social care common inspection framework

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

The residential holiday scheme for disabled children is run by a charity specifically for children and young people who may have complex needs, including learning and physical disability and related health needs. Places are organised and agreed through the local authority that contracts the charity to operate the scheme.

The suitably qualified and experienced manager provides high-quality leadership. She has been registered since April 2015.

**Inspection dates:** 20 to 21 August 2018

<b>Overall experience and progress of children and young people, taking into account:</b>	<b>outstanding</b>
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How well children, young people are helped and protected	outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
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The residential holiday scheme for disabled children provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the residential holiday scheme contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people.

**Date of previous inspection:** 22 August 2017

**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 outstanding because:

- The children receive exceptionally high-quality individualised care and support.
- The staff are insightful. They target timely help and support that is responsive to the children's emotional well-being.
- The children's views are absolutely central to the service. The staff, without fail, engage the children at every opportunity to make choices.
- Staff undertake exceptionally careful and child-centred assessment and planning before a child comes on their first holiday.
- The scheme provides a plethora of opportunities across its holidays for children who have complex needs to try new things which expand their horizons. Consequently, disability is no barrier to the children's achievements and experiences.
- There is excellent partnership between staff, parents and children.
- Children quickly build trusted relationships with the adults who look after them.
- Staff are exceptionally creative in their approach to managing risk.
- Exceedingly anxious children gain confidence in the group and their new surroundings.

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

- Children's case records do not consistently contain all of the required information.

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

### **Recommendations**

- Develop and implement a written policy that clarifies the purpose, format and content of information to be kept on the registered person's files and information to be kept on the child's files. (National Minimum Standards 15.1)

In particular, ensure that records of parental consent to administer non-prescribed medication are kept. Furthermore, ensure that children's case files contain all information required to be held in accordance with regulation 24 schedule three of The Residential Holiday Schemes for Disabled Children (England) Regulations 2013. In particular, ensure that a copy of any plan for the care of the child prepared by the placing authority is held on file.

## Inspection judgement

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

Children receive exceptionally high-quality individualised care and support. A parent said, 'They look after him [the child] really well. He has been getting very excited about coming on his holiday.' Children are able to enjoy their holiday and do things that they have not done before. Another parent said, 'He [the child] really looks forward to coming and has a major meltdown when going home because he's had such a good time.'

Staff undertake exceptionally careful and child-centred assessment and planning before a child comes on their first holiday. A parent said, 'It was so in-depth, I couldn't believe it.' The manager ensures that the information gained through this assessment process is carried through to a clear support plan that guides staff effectively to meet children's complex needs.

The member of staff who visited the child at their home as part of the planning process is always on the first holiday that the child attends. This helps children to feel secure and provides them with familiarity to help reduce their anxieties. Staff provide the children and their parents with the confidence to experience what is often the child's first independent night away from their family. The staff are insightful. They target timely help and support which is responsive to the children's emotional well-being. This helps the children to settle and very quickly build trusted relationships with the staff who look after them. On the rare occasion that children are highly anxious or do not settle at the scheme, the children can choose to visit for a day, with or without their parents.

The children's views are absolutely central to the service. The staff, without fail, engage the children at every opportunity to make choices. For example, staff changed the programme to provide relaxation time as the children were worn out from a morning of races and pond dipping. Some children relaxed with staff and watched a movie while others played cards.

The staff help the children play together and learn to cope with difficult situations, such as not winning. The scheme provides a plethora of opportunities across its holidays for children who have complex needs to try new things which expand their horizons. Consequently, disability is no barrier to the children's achievements and experiences. Most of the children come back time after time until they reach adulthood, because they know that they will have a great holiday. The children described their holiday as 'brilliant' and 'Pikachutastic' [amazing]. One child, who was initially very nervous as this was their first holiday, said that they 'definitely' wanted to come again on another more active break because they were 'loving it'.

Children's health needs are clearly identified and well met. The staff know critical information, such as any specific allergies and dietary requirements. Medication

storage and administration arrangements are appropriate. However, there is no record that parents have given consent for non-prescribed pain relief medication that has been provided to children. This is an administrative shortfall that means that there is potential for well-meaning staff to act outside of their delegated responsibility.

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

The children settle quickly due to the extremely sensitive support of staff. Exceedingly anxious children gain confidence in the group and their new surroundings. One child described the staff as 'lovely'. The committed staff ensure that even the most vulnerable children feel safe and secure. One child, who doesn't speak, gave a double thumbs up when asked by the inspector their views on the holiday scheme.

The staff ensure that the children are well occupied and supervised. Staff are exceptionally creative in their approach to managing risk. For example, one child, who has a history of going missing at home, was given the role of door security officer. The child was delighted and strictly fulfilled their role. This tired child would not go to bed until they had signed the inspector out of the building. As a result of the high levels of supervision and the highly effective approach of staff, there have been no incidents of children going missing. This is despite many of the children having previously gone missing from home or school.

The manager meticulously assesses and resolves any risks that are related to the various venues used and activities undertaken. This enables the children to safely experience different environments and confidently participate in a wide variety of stimulating and challenging activities.

The scheme is thorough in its recruitment processes, ensuring that only enthusiastic and suitable people work with the vulnerable children. Staff receive comprehensive training in safeguarding children who have disabilities.

The manager has developed unusually positive partnerships with the police to develop a comprehensive understanding of local risk factors. This means that the local police understand the needs of the children using the scheme and are able to provide targeted response should it be required.

Many of the children display behaviours at home that parents describe as challenging and aggressive. However, due to the exceptional care and support that the staff provide, these behaviours are very rarely seen during the children's holiday break.

The staff consult the children and their families to understand potential behavioural triggers and how best to respond. The staff plan activities to prevent potentially difficult situations. The staff are highly skilled at applying redirection and de-escalation techniques when required. The staff ensure that the children feel safe and

listened to. As a result, the children calm without the need for further interventions from staff.

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

The suitably qualified and experienced manager provides superior leadership. She has meticulous oversight of each break and the strategic management of the scheme. The manager is confident and ambitious for the children, however complex their needs.

The manager meticulously plans all of the breaks to ensure that the children have fun together in a safe environment. She shares her vision effectively with the staff team, leading by example. As a result, staff are enthusiastic, responsive and imaginative in their work with the children. Parents and children consistently refer positively to the staff. A parent said, 'The staff are always great; they do love him.'

The manager provides comprehensive training and support to staff. She ensures that they are highly competent and clear about their roles and responsibilities. Consequently, there is little change in the staff group, and the children and staff get to know each other well and positive relationships flourish.

On occasion, children's case records do not contain all of the required information. For example, a copy of a child's local authority care plan was not held on file. This means that there is potential for staff to not be aware of relevant particular legal and care arrangements for that particular child. However, this did not place the child at risk nor did it negatively affect their enjoyment of their holiday.

The staff work exceptionally well in partnership with the children, their parents and partner agencies. This ensures that the children consistently enjoy their holiday and receive the care and support that they need. The parents particularly enjoy the lovely reports that they get after every holiday, with photos of their child telling them what they have been doing. This provides the family with a further opportunity to talk about the child's holiday and relive the happy memories.

The manager and registered provider have comprehensive quality assurance systems in place. These systems help them to develop strong understanding of the strengths and potential areas for improvement in the scheme. After each break, feedback is sought from children and their families. There are team debriefing sessions with staff after every scheme to consider what went well and what could be done better next time. This shows that the manager understands the quality of service both at local and strategic level.

The manager has addressed the requirements set at the previous inspection, demonstrating strong commitment to developing the service. The one recommendation set at this inspection relates to improving specific administration practice. The shortfall does not negatively affect the children's experiences or their

well-being. One child said, 'I really like it and have lots of fun.' Parents described the holiday scheme as 'brilliant' and as an 'amazing five-star service.'

## **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:** 1027081

**Registered provider:** Break

**Registered provider address:** Schofield House, Spar Road, Norwich, Norfolk NR6 6BX

**Responsible individual:** Mrs Hilary Richards

**Registered manager:** Mrs Victoria Smith

**Telephone number:** 01263 822161

**Email address:** hilary.richards@break-charity.org

### **Inspector**

Joanna Heller: Social Care Inspector





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