



Inspection report

Ochil Tower School School Care Accommodation Service

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Auchterarder
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Inspected by: Lorna Snaddon
(Care Commission officer)

Type of inspection: Unannounced

Inspection completed on: 19 March 2010

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Service provided by:

Ochil Tower School

Service provider number:

SP2003002133

Care service number:

CS2003009785

Contact details for the Care Commission officer who inspected this service:

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Easy read summary of this inspection report

We grade all the Quality Statements for a service at each inspection. Each grade describes how well we think the service is doing based on what we inspected.

We can choose from six grades:



We gave the service these grades

Quality of Care and Support	 6	Excellent
Quality of Environment		N/A
Quality of Staffing	 5	Very Good
Quality of Management and Leadership		N/A

This inspection report and grades are our assessment of the quality of how the service is performing in the areas we examined during this inspection.

Grades for this care service may change after this inspection due to other regulatory activity; for example, if we have to take enforcement action to improve the service, or if we investigate and agree with a complaint someone makes about the service.

What the service does well

Ochil Tower School is providing excellent care and support to the young people who live there. The living accommodation is homely and welcoming with the environment maintained to a high standard. The young people are actively involved in all areas of the service.

What the service could do better

The school should continue to build on the participation methods already in place. They should consider how they can increase the involvement of the young people and their families in assessing and improving the quality of staffing.

What the service has done since the last inspection

The school has continued to progress across all four Quality Themes. The school continues to be creative in providing the young people with opportunities to express themselves through written, oral and pictorial methods in a person centred manner.

Conclusion

The school is providing an excellent level of care, with the individual young people's needs being at the centre of the service provision. Staffing levels have been maintained and the staff team are motivated and know the young people very well. This has had a positive effect on the young people, who have benefited from their placements at Ochil Tower School.

Who did this inspection

Lead Care Commission Officer

Lorna Snaddon

Other Care Commission Officers

N/A

Lay Assessor

N/A

Please read all of this report so that you can understand the full findings of this inspection.

About the Care Commission

We were set up in April 2002 to regulate and improve care services in Scotland.

Regulation involves:

- registering new services
- inspecting services
- investigating complaints
- taking enforcement action, when necessary, to improve care services.

We regulate around 15,000 services each year. Many are childminders, children's daycare services such as nurseries, and care home services. We regulate many other kinds of services, ranging from nurse agencies to independent healthcare such as hospices and private hospitals.

We regulate services for the very young right through to those for the very old. Our work can, therefore, affect the lives of most people in Scotland.

All our work is about improving the quality of care services.

We produce thousands of inspection reports every year; all are published on our website: www.carecommission.com. Reports include any complaints we investigate and improvements that we ask services to make.

The "Care services" area of our website also:

- allows you to search for information, such as reports, about the services we regulate
- has information for the people and organisations who provide care services
- has guidance on looking for and using care services in Scotland.

You can also get in touch with us if you would like more detailed information.

About the National Care Standards

The National Care Standards (NCS) set out the standards that people who use care services in Scotland should expect. The aim is to make sure that you receive the same high quality of service no matter where you live.

Different types of service have different National Care Standards. When we inspect a care service we take into account the National Care Standards that the service should provide.

The Scottish Government publishes copies of the National Care Standards online at: www.scotland.gov.uk

You can get printed copies free from:

Booksource
50 Cambuslang Road
Cambuslang Investment Park
Glasgow
G32 8NB
Tel: 0845 370 0067
Fax: 0845 370 0068
Email: scottishgoverment@booksource.net

What is inspection?

Our inspectors, known as Care Commission Officers (CCOs), check care services regularly to make sure that they are meeting the needs of the people in their care.

One of the ways we check on services is to carry out inspections. We may turn up without telling the service's staff in advance. This is so we can see how good the care is on a normal day. We inspect some types of services more often than others.

When we inspect a service, typically we:

- talk to people who use the service, their carers and families, staff and managers
- talk to individuals and groups
- have a good look around and check what quality of care is being provided
- look at the activities happening on the day
- examine things like records and files, if we need to
- find out if people get choices, such as food, choosing a key worker and controlling their own spending money.

We also use lay assessors during some inspections. These are volunteers who have used care services or have helped to care for someone who has used care services.

We write out an inspection report after gathering the information. The report describes how things are and whether anything needs to change.

Our work must reflect the following laws and guidelines:

- the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001
- regulations made under this Act
- the National Care Standards, which set out standards of care that people should be able to expect to receive from a care service.

This means that when we register or inspect a service we make sure it meets the requirements of the 2001 Act. We also take into account the National Care Standards that apply to it.

If we find a service is not meeting these standards, the 2001 Act gives us powers that require the service to improve.

Recommendations, requirements and complaints

If we are concerned about some aspect of a service, or think it could do more to improve its service, we may make a requirement or recommendation.

- A recommendation is a statement that sets out actions the care service provider should take to improve or develop the quality of the service but where failure to do so will not directly result in enforcement.
- A requirement is a statement which sets out what is required of a care service to comply with the Act and Regulations or Orders made under the Act, or a condition of registration. Where there are breaches of the Regulations, Orders or conditions, a requirement must be made. Requirements are legally enforceable at the discretion of the Care Commission.

Complaints: We have a complaints procedure for dealing with any complaint about a registered care service (or about us). Anyone can raise a concern with us - people using the service, their family and friends, carers and staff.

We investigate all complaints. Depending on how complex it is, a complaint may be:

- upheld - where we agree there is a problem to be resolved
- not upheld - where we don't find a problem
- partially upheld - where we agree with some elements of the complaint but not all of them.

How we decided what to inspect

Why we have different levels of inspection

We target our inspections. This means we spend less time with services we are satisfied are working hard to provide consistently high standards of care. We call these low-intensity inspections. Services where there is more concern receive more intense inspections. We call these medium or high intensity inspections.

How we decide the level of inspection

When planning an inspection, our inspectors, or Care Commission Officers (CCOs) carefully assess how intensively each service needs to be inspected. They do this by considering issues such as:

- complaints
- changes to how the service provides care
- any notifications the service has given us, such as the absence of a manager
- what action the service has taken in response to requirements we have made.

The CCO will also consider how the service responded to situations and issues: for example how it deals with complaints, or notifies us about incidents such as the death of someone using the service.

Our inspections take account of:

- areas of care that we are particularly interested in (these are called Inspection Focus Areas)
- the National Care Standards that the service should be providing
- recommendations and requirements that we made in earlier inspections
- any complaints and other regulatory activity, such as enforcement actions we have taken to improve the service.

What is grading?

We grade each service under Quality Themes which for most services are:

- **Quality of Care and support:** how the service meets the needs of each individual in its care
- **Quality of environment:** the environment within the service (for example, is the service clean, is it set out well, is it easy to access by people who use wheelchairs?);
- **Quality of staffing:** the quality of the care staff, including their qualifications and training
- **Quality of management and leadership:** how the service is managed and how it develops to meet the needs of the people it cares for
- **Quality of information:** this is how the service looks after information and manages record keeping safely.

Each of the Quality Themes has a number of Quality Statements in it, which we grade.

We grade each heading as follows:

6	5	4	3	2	1
excellent	very good	good	adequate	weak	unsatisfactory

We do not give one overall grade.

How grading works.

Services assess themselves using guidance that we given them. Our inspectors take this into account when they inspect and grade the service. We have the final say on grading.

The Quality Themes for this service type are explained in section 2 The Inspection.

About the service we inspected

Ochil Tower School is an independent, non-denominational school for children and young people with additional support needs, aged between 5 and 18 years. It provides education for day pupils and, since 1 April 2002, is also registered with the Care Commission to provide 28 residential places.

The 'curative education' approach, combining social care, education and therapy is based on the philosophy of Rudolf Steiner, adapted by Karl Konig, the founder of the world-wide Camphill movement. Day to day management is the responsibility of 4 Joint Co-ordinators who, with other experienced and permanent co-workers whose home is the school, form the core group members. Other co-workers, many from overseas, spend a year or more at Ochil Tower assisting with care and education. There is also a small number of paid care staff and ancillary workers.

The five houses and three school buildings are set in grounds located unobtrusively off the main street of Auchterarder, 14 miles west of Perth, enabling the school to be part of the local community. The grounds also offer facilities for gardening, rearing animals and play activities as part of the curriculum.

According to Ochil Tower School, its three aims and objectives are realised in:

- A form of community life which recognises the universality of the human spirit as an essential element in its formation and working. Expression is given to this in the celebration of festivals, concern for the environment and mutual care.
- Developing shared living situations which recognise the needs of individuals. The staff/client relationship is replaced by mutual relationships based on sharing daily life in all its manifold aspects, including preparation and sharing of meals, caring for the household and surroundings, creating social events and so on.
- Operating financially so that there is a flexible relationship between work and payment for work done'.

Based on the findings of this inspection this service has been awarded the following grades:

Quality of Care and Support	6 - Excellent
Quality of Environment	N/A
Quality of Staffing	5 - Very Good
Quality of Management and Leadership	N/A

This inspection report and grades are our assessment of the quality of how the service is performing in the areas we examined during this inspection.

Grades for this care service may change after this inspection due to other regulatory activity; for example, if we have to take enforcement action to improve the service, or if we investigate and agree with a complaint someone makes about the service.

You can use the "Care services" area of our website (www.carecommission.com) to find the most up-to-date grades for this service.

How we inspected this service

What level of inspection did we make this service

In this service we carried out a low intensity inspection. We carry out these inspections when we are satisfied that services are working hard to provide consistently high standards of care.

What activities did we undertake during the inspection

This report was written following an unannounced inspection that took place between 9.45 am and 2.15 pm on 17 March 2010. The inspection was carried out by Care Commission Officer Lorna Snaddon.

In this inspection evidence was gathered from a variety of sources, including relevant sections of policies, procedures, records and other documents, including:

- Evidence from the schools most recent Self Assessment
- Training records
- Staff qualifications
- Registration with the SSSC
- Young people's weekly summary sheets
- Discussion with various people, including:
 - The Joint Co-ordinators
 - Staff
 - The young people using the service
- Observation of how the staff worked with the young people
- Examination of equipment and the environment

Inspection Focus Areas (IFAs)

Each year we identify an area, or areas, we want to focus on during our inspections. We still inspect all the normal areas of a care service; these are extra checks we make for a specific reason.

For 2009/10 we will focus on:

- Meaningful activity for all adult services
- How care services assess the health of people with learning disabilities
- Involving parents for children's services
- Medication for looked after children for residential accommodation for children
- How care services make sure they have safe recruitment procedures for staff for all services except childminders.

You can find out more about these from our website www.carecommission.com.

Fire safety issues

The Care Commission no longer reports on matters of fire safety as part of its regulatory function. Where significant fire safety issues become apparent, we will alert the relevant Fire and Rescue service to their existence in order that it may act as it considers appropriate. Care service providers can find more information about their legal responsibilities in this area at: www.infoscotland.com/firelaw

The annual return

We use annual returns (ARs) to:

- make sure we have up-to-date, accurate information about care services; and
- decide how we will inspect services.

By law every registered care service must send us an annual return and provide us with the information we have requested. The relevant law is the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001, Section 25(1). These forms must be returned to us between 6 January and 28 February 2009.

Annual Return Received

Yes

Comments on Self Assessment

The submitted self assessment was fully completed prior to the announced inspection. It provided relevant information relating to the Quality Themes and Quality Statements. Areas of strengths and good practice were clearly identified and examples of supporting evidence were provided.

Taking the views of people using the care service into account

Care Commission questionnaires were completed and returned by the young people prior to the previous announced inspection. Overall the comments were positive and the young people all felt safe and protected.

On the day of this inspection visit the young people who spoke informally with the Care Commission Officer were relaxed and open in their views about the care provided by the school.

Taking carers' views into account

Parents and carers were not spoken to as part of this inspection. However, the school had evidence to show that parents and carers were regularly consulted with and overall their views were positive.

Quality Theme 1: Quality of Care and Support

Grade awarded for this theme: 6 - Excellent

Statement 1

We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of the care and support provided by the service.

Service Strengths

This inspection focused on progress made since the last inspection which took place on 2 October 2009, where a more detailed sampling of evidence was undertaken.

The school had continued to develop the excellent range of approaches to enable the young people's views to be gathered; these include verbal discussions, one to one key worker sessions, meetings and reviews. Consultation with the young people had taken place on all aspects of their care and support.

There was a clear process of consultation being directly linked to improving the outcomes for the young people and their families. Information gained by the school, on all levels, fed into the ongoing review of the schools aims and functions.

Observation showed natural, relaxed and open communication between the young people and staff. The young people confirmed they had opportunities to give their views formally through meetings and reviews and informally by way of one to one discussions with the staff. Evidence showed the staff being creative in seeking the views of the young people and the young people were confident about sharing their views with visitors to the school.

The school was found to be maintaining excellent standards in relation to this statement and the grade awarded at the previous inspection is reconfirmed.

Areas for Improvement

There were no areas for improvement identified during this inspection. The school is making excellent progress in this area. They should continue to be creative in seeking the views of the young people and their families in assessing and improving the quality of the care and support provided.

Grade awarded for this statement

6 - Excellent

Number of Requirements

0

Number of Recommendations

0

Statement 3

We ensure that service user's health and wellbeing needs are met.

Service Strengths

This inspection focused on progress made since the last inspection which took place on 2 October 2009, where a more detailed sampling of evidence was undertaken.

The school had continued to gather excellent information relevant to the health and well being needs of the young people. Care plans highlighted individual information, likes, dislikes, health and dietary information. Targets in the young people's individual plans were made jointly with care and education linked to personal progress.

Policies and procedures were in line with best practice guidance and were reviewed and updated regularly to ensure they continue to meet the needs of the school. Regular monitoring of practice was undertaken to ensure the care being provided continued to meet the needs of the young people. This was done both formally and informally through the nature of the close working relationships the school encouraged.

The school had continued to work in partnership with other professionals to ensure positive outcomes for the young people.

Young people were encouraged to follow active and healthy lifestyles. Needs led activities reflected individual interests and staff supported a wide range of opportunities to ensure healthy options were available to them.

The school remained creative and forward thinking in relation to ensuring the young people's health and well being needs were being addressed. They had extended the use of how young people add to the weekly summary information recorded and shared with families and other professionals. The young people were seen to be actively involved in this and were eager to share this with the Care Commission Officer on the day of inspection.

The school was taking forward an identified area of work with the young people in relation to internet safety. The young people were observed to be engaged pro-actively and their ideas and comments on using the internet formed the basis of the rules within the school.

The school was found to be maintaining excellent standards in relation to this statement and the grade awarded in the previous inspection report is reconfirmed.

Areas for Improvement

There were no areas for improvement identified during this inspection. The school is making excellent progress in this area. They should continue to progress with the areas of development to enhance the service as identified in their Self Assessment document.

Grade awarded for this statement

6 - Excellent

Number of Requirements

0

Number of Recommendations

0

Quality Theme 3: Quality of Staffing

Grade awarded for this theme: 5 - Very Good

Statement 1

We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of staffing in the service.

Service Strengths

This inspection focused on progress made since the last inspection which took place on 2 October 2009, where a more detailed sampling of evidence was undertaken.

As previously mentioned in Quality Theme 1, Statement 1, the school has continued to ensure that the young people's views, ideas and suggestions were gathered. Information gained through the wide range of feedback opportunities was used to inform decisions about change and development of the school.

Formal and informal discussions with the young people were used effectively to allow them to share their thoughts about the quality of staffing. Meetings and reviews allowed the young people an additional means to give their views on all aspects of the service.

Regular contact with external professionals continued to ensure opportunities for the young people to express their views on all areas of the service, including staffing. The school was seen to work in close partnership with such agencies ensuring very good levels of communication. This effective procedure of partnership working ensured regular information sharing took place.

The young people were observed to be open and honest with staff about their likes and dislikes and staff were responsive to their suggestions. Young people spoken to shared their thoughts with the Care Commission Officer and said they felt safe and protected in Ochil Tower. They also said that there were lots of ways that they could raise issues about staff if they needed to do so.

The school was found to be maintaining very good standards in relation to this statement and the grade awarded at the previous inspection report is reconfirmed.

Areas for Improvement

The school is encouraged to continue to develop the more formal involvement of the young people, parents and carers in the recruitment process.

Grade awarded for this statement

5 - Very Good

Number of Requirements

0

Number of Recommendations

0

Statement 2

We are confident that our staff have been recruited, and inducted, in a safe and robust manner to protect service users and staff.

Service Strengths

This inspection focused on progress made since the last inspection which took place on 2 October 2009, where a more detailed sampling of evidence was undertaken.

The Care Commission Officer carried out an inspection of the school's recruitment procedures at the last inspection and this was reported on fully in the previous inspection report. There were no recommendations or requirements made as a result of the safer recruitment exercise.

The school had been proactive in their discussions with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) to ensure appropriate clarity was gained in relation to short term, voluntary staff working at Ochil Tower. At the time of this inspection all staff who were eligible to register had met the time scales set out by the SSSC.

Regular formal supervision took place and an annual staff development plan was in place for all staff. Informal supervision took place on a regular basis with all staff being actively involved in the day to day running of the service.

The school was found to be maintaining very good standards in relation to this statement and the grade awarded at the previous inspection is reconfirmed.

Areas for Improvement

The school should continue to build on their very good practice in maintaining a motivated staff team and ensuring safe practice. They have identified the need to continue to develop and support opportunities for staff training and professional development and to ensure staff are experienced in the work they do and are qualified to meet the requirements and time scales set out in their registration with the SSSC.

Grade awarded for this statement

5 - Very Good

Number of Requirements

0

Number of Recommendations

0

Other Information

Complaints

No complaints have been upheld, or partially upheld, since the last inspection.

Enforcements

We have taken no enforcement action against this care service since the last inspection.

Additional Information

The school operates with a mixed staff group which includes Joint Co-ordinators, Houseparent's, and Co-workers. Reference to these roles will come under the term staff within this report.

Action Plan

Failure to submit an appropriate action plan within the required timescale, including any agreed extension, where requirements and recommendations have been made, will result in the Care Commission re-grading the Quality Statement within the Management and Leadership Theme as unsatisfactory (1). This will result in the Quality Theme for Management and Leadership being re-graded as Unsatisfactory (1).

Summary of Grades

Quality of Care and Support - 6 - Excellent	
Statement 1	6 - Excellent
Statement 3	6 - Excellent
Quality of Environment - Not Assessed	
Quality of Staffing - 5 - Very Good	
Statement 1	5 - Very Good
Statement 2	5 - Very Good
Quality of Management and Leadership - Not Assessed	

Inspection and Grading History

Date	Type	Gradings								
2 Oct 2009	Announced	<table> <tr> <td>Care and support</td> <td>6 - Excellent</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Environment</td> <td>6 - Excellent</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Staffing</td> <td>5 - Very Good</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Management and Leadership</td> <td>5 - Very Good</td> </tr> </table>	Care and support	6 - Excellent	Environment	6 - Excellent	Staffing	5 - Very Good	Management and Leadership	5 - Very Good
Care and support	6 - Excellent									
Environment	6 - Excellent									
Staffing	5 - Very Good									
Management and Leadership	5 - Very Good									
4 Sep 2008		<table> <tr> <td>Care and support</td> <td>5 - Very Good</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Environment</td> <td>5 - Very Good</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Staffing</td> <td>5 - Very Good</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Management and Leadership</td> <td>4 - Good</td> </tr> </table>	Care and support	5 - Very Good	Environment	5 - Very Good	Staffing	5 - Very Good	Management and Leadership	4 - Good
Care and support	5 - Very Good									
Environment	5 - Very Good									
Staffing	5 - Very Good									
Management and Leadership	4 - Good									

Terms we use in our report and what they mean

Action Plan - When we inspect a service, or investigate a complaint and the inspection report highlights an area for improvement; either through recommendations or requirements, the action plan sets out the actions the service will take in response.

Best practice statements/guidelines - This describes practices that have been shown to work best and to be achievable in specific areas of care. They are intended to guide practice and promote a consistent and cohesive approach to care.

Care Service - A service that provides care and is registered with us.

Complaints - We have a complaints procedure for dealing with any complaint about a registered care service or about us. Anyone can raise a concern with us - people using the service, their family and friends, carers and staff.

We investigate all complaints which can have more than one outcome. Depending on how complex the complaint is, the outcomes can be:

- upheld - where we agree there is a problem to be resolved
- not upheld - where we don't find a problem
- partially upheld - where we agree with some elements of the complaint but not all of them.

Enforcement - To protect people who use care services, the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001 gives the Care Commission powers to enforce the law. This means we can vary or impose new conditions of registration, which may restrict how a service operates. We can also serve an improvement notice on a service provider to make them improve their service within a set timescale. If they do not make these improvements we could issue a cancellation notice and cancel their registration.

Disclosure Scotland- Disclosure Scotland provides an accurate and responsive disclosure service to enhance security, public safety and protect the vulnerable in society. There are three types or levels of disclosure (i.e. criminal record check) available from Disclosure Scotland; basic, standard and enhanced. An enhanced check is required for people whose work regularly involves caring for, training, supervising or being in sole charge of children or adults at risk; or to register for child minding, day care and to act as foster parents or carers.

Participation - This describes processes that allow individuals and groups to develop and agree programmes, policy and procedures.

Personal Plan - This is a plan of how support and care will be provided. The plan is agreed between the person using the service (or their representative, or both of them) and the service provider. It is sometimes called a care plan mostly by local authorities or health boards when they commission care for people.

How you can use this report

Our inspection reports give care services detailed information about what they are doing well and not so well. We want them to use our reports to improve the services they provide if they need to.

Care services should share our inspection reports with the people who use their service, their families and carers. They can do this in many ways, for example by discussing with them what they plan to do next or by making sure our report is easily available.

People who use care services, their relatives and carers

We encourage you to read this report and hope that you find the information helpful when making a decision on whether or not to use the care service we have inspected. If you, or a family member or friend, are already using a care service, it is important that you know we have inspected that service and what we found. You may find it helpful to read previous inspection reports about his service.

The Care Commission

We use the information we gather from all our inspections to report to Scottish Ministers on how well Scotland's care services are performing. This information helps us to influence important changes they may make about how care services are provided.

Reader Information

This inspection report is published by the Care Commission. It is for use by the general public. You can get more copies of this report and others by downloading it from our website www.carecommission.com or by telephoning 0845 603 0890.

Translations and alternative formats

This publication is available in other formats and other languages on request.

Tha am foillseachadh seo ri fhaighinn ann an cruthannan is cànan eile ma nithear iarrtas.

অনুরোধসাপেক্ষে এই প্রকাশনাটি অন্য ফরম্যাট এবং অন্যান্য ভাষায় পাওয়া যায়।

هذه بایتسد یم وونابز رگید روا رولکش رگید رپ شرازگ تعاشا هی

ਬੈਨੜੀ 'ਤੇ ਇਹ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਨ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰਨਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਉਪਲਬਧ ਹੈ।

یرخأ تاغل بو تاقيسينت تب بلطلا دن ع رفاوتم روشنملا اذه

本出版品有其他格式和其他語言備索。

Na życzenie niniejsza publikacja dostępna jest także w innych formatach oraz językach.

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Improving care in Scotland