

# Care service inspection report

## Phantassie Cottage

### Care Home Service Children and Young People

Standing Stane Road

Dysart

KY1 2YT

Telephone: 01592 655166

Inspected by: Morag Skinner

Linda Paterson

Type of inspection: Unannounced

Inspection completed on: 18 May 2011



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### **Service provided by:**

A Life Explored (Care) Limited

### **Service provider number:**

SP2010010854

### **Care service number:**

CS2010250415

### **Contact details for the inspector who inspected this service:**

Morag Skinner

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## Summary

This report and grades represent our assessment of the quality of the areas of performance which were examined during this inspection.

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

### We gave the service these grades

Quality of Care and Support	5	Very Good
Quality of Environment	0	N/A
Quality of Staffing	0	N/A
Quality of Management and Leadership	4	Good

### What the service does well

The service had a very good range of methods in place to seek the views of the young people and their parents/carers as well as social workers, teachers and other professionals involved in the lives of the young people. The service made exceptionally good use of the questionnaires to seek the views of others and influence practice.

### What the service could do better

The provider should ensure that staff undertake training directly associated with the difficulties experienced by the young people in their care.

### What the service has done since the last inspection

Young people's involvement in the recruitment process had significantly increased and had been seen to have a positive impact for the young people. Practice within the service has become much more consistent to the benefit of young people and staff alike.

### Conclusion

Staff are committed to providing a quality service. The provider should continue to build on the work which is currently being carried out in the service in order to meet the needs of the young people in their care.

**Who did this inspection**

Morag Skinner

Linda Paterson

**Lay assessor:**

# 1 About the service we inspected

The service was registered by the Care Commission on 29 September 2010 and was deemed registered by SCSWIS from 1 April 2011.

Phantassie Cottage is the first and currently the only service operated by A Life Explored (Care) Ltd. The service provides residential care for two young people aged from 12 years up to 18 years (6 year age span resident at any one time). It provides close support and care aimed to help vulnerable young people. Young people have their own single rooms, and public space consists of a large sitting room, a library/study and a separate dining room beside the kitchen. The service moved to the current premises in December 2010 and the move appeared to go smoothly with the resident and staff settling in quickly to the new surroundings.

The service is provided in a two storey stone built property located between Dysart and Leven. It is in a rural setting though close to a busy main road.

The house is decorated to a high standard and young people are cared for by an enthusiastic staff team.

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

**Quality of Care and Support - Grade 5 - Very Good**

**Quality of Environment - N/A**

**Quality of Staffing - N/A**

**Quality of Management and Leadership - Grade 4 - Good**

This report and grades represent our assessment of the quality of the areas of performance which were examined during this inspection.

Grades for this care service may change following other regulatory activity. You can find the most up-to-date grades for this service by visiting our website [www.scswis.com](http://www.scswis.com) or by calling us on 0845 600 9527 or visiting one of our offices.

## 2 How we inspected this service

### The level of inspection we carried out

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 we did during the inspection

This report was written following an unannounced inspection which took place on 17 May 2011.

The service complete an Annual Return as requested by SCSWIS.

The service submitted a self-assessment form as requested by SCSWIS. This contained information on what the service thought they did well, and how they thought some things could be further improved. It also included information on how young people participated in the process.

The Inspectors spoke to the young person in attendance during the inspection.

During the inspection evidence was gathered from a number of sources including:  
Discussions with the unit manager and both residential care workers on duty.

A review of a range of policies, procedures, records and other documentation included the following:

Supporting evidence from the self assessment

One care plan

Staff training records

Staff recruitment files

Communications records

Minutes of team meetings

Minutes of management meetings

Accident records

Incident records

Observation of practice

Observation of the premises and equipment

Interaction with the young person in residence

Social workers and relatives comments

### **Grading the service against quality themes and statements**

We inspect and grade elements of care that we call 'quality themes'. For example, one of the quality themes we might look at is 'Quality of care and support'. Under each quality theme are 'quality statements' which describe what a service should be doing well for that theme. We grade how the service performs against the quality themes and statements.

Details of what we found are in Section 3: The inspection

### **Inspection Focus Areas (IFAs)**

In any year we may decide on specific aspects of care to focus on during our inspections. These are extra checks we make on top of all the normal ones we make during inspection. We do this to gather information about the quality of these aspects of care on a national basis. Where we have examined an inspection focus area we will clearly identify it under the relevant quality statement.

### **Fire safety issues**

We do not regulate fire safety. Local fire and rescue services are responsible for checking services. However, where significant fire safety issues become apparent, we will alert the relevant fire and rescue services so they may consider what action to take. You can find out more about care services' responsibilities for fire safety at [www.firelawscotland.org](http://www.firelawscotland.org)

## What the service has done to meet any recommendations we made at our last inspection

There were six recommendations on the last inspection report. All have been met satisfactorily.

## The annual return

Every year all care services must complete an 'annual return' form to make sure the information we hold is up to date. We also use annual returns to decide how we will inspect the service.

**Annual Return Received:** Yes - Electronic

## Comments on Self Assessment

Every year all care services must complete a 'self assessment' form telling us how their service is performing. We check to make sure this assessment is accurate.

The self assessment requested by SCSWIS was completed and highlighted the services strengths as well as areas where they felt they could make further developments.

## Taking the views of people using the care service into account

Both young people living at Phantassie Cottage completed the SCSWIS questionnaire. Comments included:

"The placement I am in is great because I have changed and they have been nice to me and the staff are really nice here and there's nothing bad about here and don't want anything to change."

"It's a really good place because the staff talk to you about 'we'll be honest with you.'

"I feel supported, listened to, involved in discussions and treat both young people fairly."

"I feel it unsettles me when other young people kick off."

"If other young person in placement is misbehaving this takes up the staff time."

"I meet with staff before they start."

"I'm involved in decision making."

Comments from young people during the inspection included:

"My bed's a bit uncomfortable for sleeping. It gives me a sore back and neck. I told the staff but they don't believe me."

"I've got a children's rights worker and a social worker and a psychologist. I've got loads of folk to help me."

## **Taking carers' views into account**

Comments from stakeholders included:

"Since working in partnership with A Life Explored (Phantassie Cottage) I have found them very easy to approach and prepared to positively discuss the situation with regards to young people in their care."

Comments from parents included:

"X has settled in really well."

"I have a really good relationship with all staff."

"The keyworker's nice."

"Staff are so warm and pleasant and welcoming."

"X feels x is at home there."

## 3 The inspection

We looked at how the service performs against the following quality themes and statements. Here are the details of what we found.

### Quality Theme 1: Quality of Care and Support

Overall 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 the care and support provided by the service.

#### Service strengths

The inspectors talked with one of the young people, the manager, childcare practitioner and a relief childcare practitioner and looked at both young people's care plans and supporting documentation. The service was found to have a very good performance in relation to this statement.

There was a holistic approach at Phantassie Cottage to consulting with young people on a very regular basis. They had a very good range of methods in place to seek the views of the young people and their parents/carers as well as social workers, teachers and other professionals involved in the lives of the young people. This meant that young people were involved in decisions about their day to day care. It also resulted in parents/carers and professionals appreciating that their views were taken into account.

The focussed family work had the direct result of enabling one young person to plan her forthcoming birthday party. She described to the inspectors how her mother, sibling, former carers, friends and extended family had all been included in the invitation and how they were going to be enabled to join in the fun. Documentation examined by the Inspectors supported this and it was noted in the minutes of staff meetings and management meetings that arrangements were at an advanced stage.

One young person had needed to find a way to express her/himself so the manager introduced a notebook for the young person to write personal thoughts or messages to adults or the other young person living at Phantassie Cottage. This was seen to have a very positive impact on the young person and staff used it to help the person's self esteem and to ensure good communication responding to any fears or concerns expressed. This enabled staff to know some of the young person's thoughts which may have been difficult to express verbally.

The service made exceptionally good use of the questionnaires to seek the views of others. These were all well logged and audited and were seen to influence practice. Questionnaires were in abundance and sought the views of a very wide range of professional stakeholders. Each indicated a high level of satisfaction and professionalism.

Police comments on risk management included:

"Staff were fully engaged in conversation and used their extensive knowledge of the young person to provide detailed factual updates." Input from staff was said to be "excellent."

Psychologist comments included:

"The reason that x has done so well is because you have been able to provide the 'caring boundaries' that x so badly needed. By that I meant keeping boundaries clear and consistent but doing this in a way that still makes x feel nurtured and cared for thus making sure that it is the behaviour that is labelled as negative at these times rather than x as a whole. Consistent and in depth communication between myself and the team has helped immensely in co-ordinating the work we do."

Comments from the school included: Always available for discussion and help school in any way. Always at meetings on time and with helpful proposals etc. The young person is fully supported in all aspects e.g. homework, completion of punishments, presence in school, support at meetings, encouraging youngsters to do well.

Young person comments from the questionnaires included: "Care is brilliant. Even with shortage of staff it's still good. I have always had a part to play in choices." Recent consultation with one young person had resulted in him trying to set up his own work experience locally and linking this to the school's recognised scheme. This meant that he took the lead but felt supported throughout by staff from Phantassie Cottage.

Verbal feedback to families was offered in addition to telephone contact and views were sought less formally than on their questionnaires. Planned family work had led to improved consultation with the parents. External consultation was seen to be responsive to comments made by families in order to further improve the service offered.

There were very good communications systems in place to ensure that social workers were kept up to date with regular communications.

The care plans were well written and meaningful, updated and reviewed regularly and formed part of the auditing system in place. Staff updated the care plans appropriately with the young people fully involved in discussions in relation to them.. This meant that young people's views were valued as part of this process.

It was noted that there had been contact with Children's Rights officers and the service had been working closely with him in order to re introduce one of the new residents to education. Until this could be arranged the service was seen to be supporting the young person to use BBC Bitesize to access maths and problem solving online during part of the day as she awaited a school placement.

### **Areas for improvement**

The provider has identified a challenge for the service to involve adults and stakeholders more in some of the processes such as attending Board meetings without overwhelming them when working within such a small organisation.

**Grade awarded for this statement:** 5 - Very Good

**Number of requirements:** 0

**Number of recommendations:** 0

### **Statement 3**

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

#### **Service strengths**

Opportunities for the young people to take part in activities and clubs within the community were encouraged. Young people were seen to enjoy a wide range of activities which included watching television, playing computer games, the playstation and Wii. Active engagement by staff in the promotion of physical activities was encouraged and they provided positive role models to the young people. One young person particularly enjoyed football both at club level and just for fun whilst another enjoyed horse riding and had recently joined the local cadets stating: "It was my idea to go. I get bored. I hang about with staff. I've been measured for my uniform. If we're too noisy we get sent outside to do a drill."

The young people were actively encouraged to retain their friendships within the community and one young person had arranged to bring friends to Phantassie Cottage. Young people's increasing independence in the community was supported as they grew up, with supervision where deemed necessary. This meant that they were being encouraged to enjoy time with their friends. If the young people had made inappropriate choices there was evidence that staff had taken time to discuss the issues with them increasing their knowledge of the dangers which they could have faced. Young people have been involved in reviewing the new 'sanctions' policy - consequences and incentives. It demonstrated sound, clear expectations for the young people. This meant that they knew what was expected of them.

Only one complaint from a young person had been received since the last inspection. She stated that she didn't have any complaints so the complaint cards weren't necessary!

Staff ensured children were supported to visit the doctor, dentist, optician and any other appropriate professionals. A range of professionals met regularly with the young people to help support their development. Documentation confirmed that staff were kept well informed of the work undertaken and how they could help support the young people in their daily lives. The service paid attention to the young people's emotional and mental wellbeing as much as their physical wellbeing ensuring that all areas of their development were nurtured.

Young people were encouraged to help with shopping and cooking. This meant that they also learned about budgeting in preparation for moving on. They expressed satisfaction with the meals provided ("brilliant food") and discussed their menu choices and activity plans at the recently introduced "Phantastico" house meetings."

These meetings were introduced as soon as there was more than one young person living in the house. This meant that the views of each was taken into account and each young person was given equal importance. Notes taken at these meetings showed that young people felt confident to raise issues and that their voices would be heard. One reminded staff that a radiator still needed a second coat of paint and this was acted upon by staff within the next few days. One young person stated that she liked cooking and said:

"I make cheesy pasta, chicken curry, fajitas - loads of things."

### **Areas for improvement**

Few staff had yet undertaken training directly related to the behaviours exhibited or experienced by the young people in their care. This should be addressed as soon as possible.

**Grade awarded for this statement:** 5 - Very Good

**Number of requirements:** 0

**Number of recommendations:** 0

**Quality Theme 2: Quality of Environment - NOT ASSESSED**

**Quality Theme 3: Quality of Staffing - NOT ASSESSED**

## Quality Theme 4: Quality of Management and Leadership

Grade awarded for this theme: 4 - Good

### Statement 1

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

#### Service strengths

Following discussion with the manager, two childcare practitioners and one young person, examination of questionnaires returned to SCSWIS and the services own questionnaires, and examination of care plans, the service was found to have a good performance in relation to this statement.

Young people's views about the quality of management and leadership were sought both formally and informally. Views were expressed through the service's questionnaires and evidenced in the minuted of the young people's "Phantastico house meetings." This illustrated that their views were important to the service.

The young people's care plans, discussion with the young person in attendance during the inspection and associated records confirmed that they received help when they needed it from staff, felt listened to, knew who to go to if they had concerns and were supported well by staff.

The service had feedback forms from young people, parents/carers, schools attended by the young people and young people's social workers. It was confirmed verbally that feedback forms were scrutinised and that any areas of concern were then addressed within the service, so that improvements were ongoing. Management told us that the information from all the feedback forms was used by the service as part of business plan presented to staff at the development day.

All of the above contributed to the opportunities that the young people had to participate in assessing and improving the quality of the management and leadership of the service.

#### Areas for improvement

The service intends to look at ways to involve young people and adults in the overall strategic direction of the company once it has gained more stability as time goes on.

**Grade awarded for this statement:** 4 - Good

**Number of requirements:** 0

**Number of recommendations:** 0

## **Statement 4**

We use quality assurance systems and processes which involve service users, carers, staff and stakeholders to assess the quality of service we provide

### **Service strengths**

Following discussion with the manager, childcare practitioner and one young person, review of quality assurance systems and observations during the inspection the service was found to have a very good performance in relation to this statement.

A detailed induction training was seen to be in place and was partially taking place in the evenings with new staff. This meant that staff would be fully informed on key topics such as child protection prior to commencing work with the young people.

The manager audited staff paperwork on an informal ongoing basis as part of the company's quality assurance process. As the documentation was found to be of a consistently high standard the outcome was that the monitoring process was working well.

A comprehensive training plan was seen to be in place and a good range of training opportunities, both internal and external, were available to staff. The effect of this was that staff were given opportunities to extend their skills and experiences highlighted in their supervision sessions or identified during the course of their work. They shared their learning with the rest of the staff team at subsequent staff meetings. This meant that all staff benefited whether or not they attended the training. Topics such as infection control and first aid had been included.

Child protection training had been undertaken by all staff and it was part of an ongoing annual programme. It formed part of supervision sessions and staff meetings to ensure staff were kept abreast of any changes or updates as necessary. As a consequence of this the service felt confident that staff knew what to do if any concerns arose.

The manager undertook regular, constructive and professional supervision sessions with staff and a good structure was seen to be in place with each staff member. This contributed to their confidence and self esteem and helped identify future goals.

The manager took each opportunity to value her staff, praising good practice and passing on comments from others. A comment from an educational psychologist received by email stated:

"It was a pleasure to see x so settled and happy at Phantassie Cottage. A power of effective work has clearly been done here." This was included in the communications book with a message to all staff from the manager highlighting the importance of the recognition for their good work. This meant that staff were aware that their work was not going unnoticed.

All staff took part in reading current practice guidelines such as topical case histories and recent enquiries in order to keep up to date with findings from high profile cases. They made very good use of the information by reflecting on their reading and using it to discuss their thoughts and feelings at staff meetings to help develop practice.

Information from social workers, parents, young people and other stakeholders was used to improve practice and contributed to the quality assurance processes. This had a direct impact on quality management within the service. As a consequence the positive feedback contributed well to a positive quality assurance process.

All staff had been directly involved in the self evaluation sent out to the service by SCSWIS and this meant that they were all actively involved in the improvement of the service. Evaluation was a standard agenda item for team meetings demonstrating the importance placed on this issue within the service.

Young people had for some time, been involved in the interviewing and induction process of staff. They had devised interview questions which they asked the candidates when they attended the early part of the interview. If dissatisfied with the candidates responses the young people sought further clarification or more accurate replies to questions such as 'But why did you really want to work with young people?' They then logged the responses and discussed their thoughts directly with the Directors at the end of the interview process. The young people then took part in one element of the induction process telling the new staff about themselves and their backgrounds if they felt comfortable in doing so. This meant that they were aware of what new staff knew about them and it helped them confront some difficult issues.

One complaint had been received from a parent who felt that the roadway leading to the service had caused damage to her car due to the potholes. The service responded quickly with a respectful and helpful suggestion stating that staff would collect her from the end of the long driveway and that the landlord would be contacted to seek repairs to the potholes. This meant that the service responded well to meet the needs of the parent and to provide an improved service for all families and visitors attending.

Staff were aware of their responsibilities to undertake further training under the terms of their registration with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) and had had been issued with copies of the SSSC Codes of Practice.

The manager had managed to inspire a team of motivated individuals to deliver a quality service to young people during a difficult period for the service due to the providers sudden illness. Staff had worked very hard to support one another and to minimise disruption to the young people.

## Areas for improvement

Some of the new staff were yet to register with Scottish Social Services Council. This should be rectified as soon as possible in order for the registration to be completed within the six month timescale.

The employment of an assistant manager to help with the management of the service should be a positive step in adding to the quality assurance systems already in place.

It was noted that an evaluation meeting had been planned for all staff to attend in a few weeks time in order to seek the views of all and to see how the service could learn and continue to improve.

**Grade awarded for this statement:** 5 - Very Good

**Number of requirements:** 0

**Number of recommendations:** 0

## 4 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

#### 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 SCSWIS 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).

## 5 Summary of grades

<b>Quality of Care and Support - 5 - Very Good</b>	
Statement 1	5 - Very Good
Statement 3	5 - Very Good
<b>Quality of Environment - Not Assessed</b>	
<b>Quality of Staffing - Not Assessed</b>	
<b>Quality of Management and Leadership - 4 - Good</b>	
Statement 1	4 - Good
Statement 4	5 - Very Good

## 6 Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings
15 Nov 2010	Unannounced	Care and support      4 - Good Environment          4 - Good Staffing                4 - Good Management and Leadership   3 - Adequate

All inspections and grades before 1 April 2011 are those reported by the former regulator of care services, the Care Commission.

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## Translations and alternative formats

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