

Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales

Care Standards Act 2000

Inspection Report

Amberleigh Care Limited
Golfa Hall

Welshpool
SY21 9AF

Type of Inspection – Focussed
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Summary

About the service

Amberleigh Care Limited is registered with the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) to provide a children's home. The home provides long term specialist therapeutic care and education for up to 12 young males who have displayed inappropriate or harmful sexualised behaviours. At the time of the inspection 11 young males were resident. The home is a detached property in a rural setting. The Registered Manager is Karen Hopkins and the Responsible Individual is Pat Pritz.

What type of inspection was carried out?

The inspection of Amberleigh was a scheduled focussed inspection carried out by two inspectors on the 3rd of March between the hours of 13:30 and 15:30.

The methodology used:

- Discussion with several of the young people as it was half-term
- Discussions with members of staff
- Discussion with the Registered Manager
- Observation of interactions between staff and young people
- Examination of two young people's files
- Medication audit
- Examination of 11 young people's questionnaires
- Examination of 2 staff questionnaires
- Telephone discussion with one Social Worker

What does the service do well?

The service provides a therapeutic environment for young males to address their behavioural issues.

What has improved since the last inspection?

All recommendations issued following the previous inspection had been fully met apart from one suggesting the removal of alarms from bedroom doors for young people leaving the home to prepare them for independence. However further consideration had been given to providing independence and as a result bedroom keys had on occasion been issued after a risk assessment.

What needs to be done to improve the service?

No non-compliance notices were issued following this inspection however the following recommendations were made:

- Hand written medication administration recording (MAR) charts, which are only needed for one-off medications, must be signed by whoever writes the MAR chart and checked and signed by a second person.
- Further consideration should be given to preparing young people to adjust to leaving Amberleigh to live in the community

Quality Of Life

Overall, we (CSSIW) found that young people are supported to deal with difficult feelings and are helped to develop coping strategies where necessary. Through the examination of files, observation of practice and discussion with professionals it was evident that young people have positive relationships with the psychotherapist, link worker and members of staff involved in their care. Young people were involved in individual and group therapy.

Young people are positively occupied and stimulated. It was half-term when we visited and we observed young people playing pool in one communal area and another young person watching a film in another communal area. We also observed another young person in another lounge engrossed in a televised parliamentary debate. The young people mentioned that the previous day they had visited Jump Nation which is a large trampoline facility in Manchester. They also mentioned that during the previous half term holiday they had visited Alton Towers and Blackpool. A social worker commented on how a young person's confidence and self esteem were enhanced through involvement in productions delivered every summer and Christmas for professionals involved in the home. However in the questionnaires returned one young person had identified lack of activities as an issue.

Young people have the opportunity to develop links within their community. For some of the young people, involvement in a local youth club was seen to be encouraged. On the day of the inspection small groups were being organised to visit the local community on various activities.

Young people have a voice and are encouraged to express an opinion. The home had regular community meetings as well as group therapy. Questionnaires returned evidenced that young people were supported in attending and preparing for their review meetings. Young people also had access to advocates.

Young people remain healthy because good health and hygiene is practised and promoted. The young people were seen to be registered with a local GP with dental care and eye care regularly checked as evidenced on file. We completed a medication audit and reviewed all of the medication administration charts in use. We found that the system for ordering, storing and administering medication was safe. We recommended that hand-written administration recording (MAR) charts, which are only needed for one-off medications, must be signed by whoever writes the MAR chart and checked and signed by a second person.

Young people experience appropriate responsive care from staff who have an up to date understanding of their individual needs and preferences. We noted staff accessing young people's care files and a thorough handover was delivered during the changeover in shift. Daily records were detailed and identified how the young people had spent their time. Any behavioural issues were noted and addressed.

Young people are supported to develop independent living skills such as cooking and dealing with their own laundry. All questionnaires returned reflected this. There was evidence on the two files examined of preparation for independence with references to transition / pathway planning. One young person was assisting the maintenance staff with external work in the grounds of the home as work experience which he said he was thoroughly enjoying.

However, we again raised the issue of how young people could fully exercise independence before moving into the community. One questionnaire in answer to the question about other ways staff could help said that the young person would like “.....more space and time on my own and by having more trust in me.” There was also evidence of some anxiety about the future in some questionnaires. The Registered Manager mentioned that the organisation may be purchasing a house in the community to which young people could be moved in preparation for independent living. The keys issued were a step in the right direction but we felt that issuing these did not fully promote independence because of certain restrictions in place. We acknowledge that this is a challenging area for the home.

Quality Of Staffing

This inspection focused on the experience of young people using the service and their quality of life at the setting. CSSIW did not consider it necessary to look in depth at the quality of staff on this occasion because:

- The service has a good history of compliance
- There are good probation / induction systems in place
- Regular supervision was in place

Overall young people are cared for by a competent and motivated staff group. It was noted that there were 26 members of staff on the care team and 21 of those staff had QCF Diploma in working with Children & Young People or equivalent. This met the regulatory requirement of 80% of staff being qualified to a suitable level.

Staff questionnaires suggested that there may be a benefit in having an annual team building event.

A social worker commented on how there was good communication between staff.

Quality Of Leadership and Management

This inspection focused on the experience of young people using the service and their quality of life at the setting. CSSIW did not consider it necessary to look in depth at the quality of leadership and management on this occasion because:

- There was a registered manager in post
- The organisation had internal quality assurance mechanisms in place

This theme may be considered during future inspections.

However, we observed the Registered Manager to be approachable and professional in her interactions with young people and staff.

Some serious incidents had taken place during the year which required the compilation of detailed risk assessments. Updated policies and procedures were submitted to CSSIW evidencing a constant review of practices and procedures following the incidents.

During the inspection the company's Finance Director provided us with a letter from a Bank which stated that Amberleigh Care Ltd. "have always conducted their financial affairs in an entirely satisfactory manner."

Quality Of The Environment

This inspection focused on the experience of young people using the service and their quality of life at the setting. CSSIW did not consider it necessary to look in depth at the quality of the environment on this occasion because:

- Overall, the home was clean and well furnished
- The furniture and fittings created a homely environment.

This theme will be looked at during future inspection.

However questionnaires suggested that the young people would benefit from more gym equipment and other activities within the home. It was also suggested that floodlights could be provided in the external area.

At the time of the inspection the boiler had broken down. We observed that electric radiators had been bought to compensate but several young people commented on how cold it had been. The boiler was repaired on the day of the inspection.

How we inspect and report on services

We conduct two types of inspection; baseline and focussed. Both consider the experience of people using services.

- **Baseline inspections** assess whether the registration of a service is justified and whether the conditions of registration are appropriate. For most services, we carry out these inspections every three years. Exceptions are registered child minders, out of school care, sessional care, crèches and open access provision, which are every four years.

At these inspections we check whether the service has a clear, effective Statement of Purpose and whether the service delivers on the commitments set out in its Statement of Purpose. In assessing whether registration is justified inspectors check that the service can demonstrate a history of compliance with regulations.

- **Focused inspections** consider the experience of people using services and we will look at compliance with regulations when poor outcomes for people using services are identified. We carry out these inspections in between baseline inspections. Focussed inspections will always consider the quality of life of people using services and may look at other areas.

Baseline and focused inspections may be scheduled or carried out in response to concerns.

Inspectors use a variety of methods to gather information during inspections. These may include;

- Talking with people who use services and their representatives
- Talking to staff and the manager
- Looking at documentation
- Observation of staff interactions with people and of the environment
- Comments made within questionnaires returned from people who use services, staff and health and social care professionals

We inspect and report our findings under 'Quality Themes'. Those relevant to each type of service are referred to within our inspection reports.

Further information about what we do can be found in our leaflet 'Improving Care and Social Services in Wales'. You can download this from our website, [Improving Care and Social Services in Wales](#) or ask us to send you a copy by telephoning your local CSSIW regional office.