

Strathallan School

School Care Accommodation Service

Forgandenny
Perth
PH2 9EG

Telephone: 01738 815000

Type of inspection:

Unannounced

Completed on:

8 March 2019

Service provided by:

Strathallan School

Service provider number:

SP2006008030

Service no:

CS2006114915

About the service

Strathallan School is an independent co-educational school providing education for young people aged between 9 and 18 years. It serves a wide geographical area, and young people come from across the world and board during term time. The school is set in its own extensive grounds in a rural setting in Perthshire. The school has a wide range of facilities to ensure that it meets boarders' academic, sporting and health and well-being development needs. The school's conditions of registration are as follows:

1) To provide a school care accommodation service to a maximum of 482 pupils:

- Riley will provide accommodation to a maximum of 48 boarding pupils.
- Thornbank will provide accommodation to a maximum of 60 boarding pupils.
- Woodland will provide accommodation to a maximum of 60 boarding pupils.
- Freeland will provide accommodation to a maximum of 61 boarding pupils.
- Ruthven will provide accommodation to a maximum of 62 boarding pupils.
- Nicol will provide accommodation to a maximum of 63 boarding pupils.
- Simpson will provide accommodation to a maximum of 68 boarding pupils.
- Glenbrae will provide accommodation to a maximum of 60 boarding pupils.

2) To comply with the current staffing schedules attached, dated 31 August 2006, which must be displayed together with the certificate.

3) The school care accommodation service will be provided during the school terms.

Strathallan's website contains the following:

"With around two-thirds of our pupils spending all day, every day with us during term times, Strathallan's a busy place at any time of the day. We welcome boarders from here in Scotland, the rest of the UK and, of course, from all over the world. No matter where they come from, they're welcomed into a thriving and supportive community."

What people told us

Students were happy to speak to us during our inspection visit and most of their comments were very positive about their quality of life as a boarder at Strathallan. Some of their comments were:

"Staff care for you".

"People are very nice, open and friendly".

"We look after each other well".

"Food is not the best".

"WiFi should be unlocked for pupils in 6th form".

"When I arrived I was welcomed into a friendly community".

We contacted parents by email and some of their comments included:

"The school keeps me updated regularly with regards to my child and my views".

"My child would say that the range of food available could be better".

"I am particularly impressed by the level of care provided by the house staff and tutor".

"The school is very good at keeping my husband and I updated regarding our child. They do not often consult us for our views but we know that we can contact them at any point to discuss anything."

Self assessment

The Care Inspectorate is not requesting submission of self assessments at this time.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	6 - Excellent
Quality of environment	not assessed
Quality of staffing	not assessed
Quality of management and leadership	5 - Very Good

What the service does well

At this inspection we assessed the quality of care and support for boarding students and the quality of management and leadership of the service.

During our inspection we spoke with a large number of students from all of the boarding houses. We consistently found students to be pleasant and respectful and happy to talk about their lives as boarders at Strathallan. Whilst the individual boarding houses differed in character, there was evidence of a very good and constantly positive culture in all houses. We saw examples of warm and nurturing relationships between students and staff. Students were well supported at times of stress and if they were feeling pressure from demands of aspects of their academic life. We concluded that staff had a very good understanding of the needs of boarding pupils and feeling confident about being able to meet them.

Students told us they felt safe at Strathallan across the whole campus and very comfortable in their boarding houses. We heard that there was a very supportive ethos across the student body aided by senior students receiving training to provide practical help and care when this was needed. Students spoke positively about the peer mentoring scheme which they could access if they wished.

The school health centre provided day to day health support for students and provided access to allied health professionals who could make appointments when they needed. Well established links with a variety of organisations and health professionals provided advice and information for staff and students in relation to healthy living.

There was an excellent range of opportunities for students to develop skills and interests across a wide range of activities, sports and hobbies. Students told us that they were offered as much information, practical help and coaching as they wanted and needed. There was easy access across the campus to different resources and facilities and staff were always available and accessible.

Promotion of self esteem was evident within an overall ethos of achievement and success. We heard examples where individual and group achievements were celebrated and praised. The school chaplain was a prominent figurehead and spiritual wellbeing of all kinds was nurtured and fostered by all staff.

Students came from a variety of locations and around one fifth were from overseas. A range of supports were in place to enable students to fully understand school life and access all resources and opportunities. Very high quality systems were in place to promote and support learning for all students.

The Headmaster had taken up his post since the last inspection. Students and staff spoke very highly of his integration into the life of Strathallan. He was accessible to all and his involvement in the daily life of the school encouraged students to voice their opinions and views and meet with him personally if they wished. Staff told us they appreciated his 'can do' attitude and his willingness to meet with them to discuss all aspects of the care of the students.

There were clear areas of responsibility across the senior staff team which had been developed since the Headmaster's arrival. Work was in progress to ensure that the roles of senior staff were positive and achievable and where needed, additional input was being put in place to support pastoral care across the campus.

Senior staff routinely met and communicated about a range of issues and aspects of school life. We saw that health and safety audits were carried out and identified different areas of practice which received oversight from managers and leaders.

The Board of Governors met regularly and were in the school routinely. They visited the boarding houses and used opportunities to speak with boarding students and gather their views on different aspects of their boarding experience. Among the Governors there was a range of skills and professional backgrounds which informed their work. They also met in smaller groups to look at ways in which different parts of the school functioned.

What the service could do better

While we saw consistent examples of very high quality outcomes for students, there was inconsistency in the methods used across the campus to record individual needs and how they could best be met. Work to improve care planning was underway to tackle the development of best practice and we will assess this in future inspections. Recording systems and sharing of information across the whole staff team needed to be improved and we discussed the benefits of having an electronic information sharing system which would enhance access to information for all staff. This would include the content of care plans and risk assessments. It would also be used to record the use and content of sanctions.

We spoke with health centre and house staff about the storage and security of medication. They committed to putting processes in place to address this. Boarding house staff should maintain confidentiality about medical appointments to safeguard the dignity and privacy of their students.

Some pupils told us that having to clear and reinstate their rooms around holidays could be stressful when this was near exam time.

While staff we met told us they felt supported in their day to day work and were able to consult senior staff, there was a need to maintain records of the content of formal supervision sessions for all house staff. These records should include training and practice development needs as well as improved skills and achievements.

New staff were recruited safely and relevant references and checks were carried out. There was a need for PVG checks to be repeated at regular intervals and this was discussed with relevant staff with examples of good practice signposted.

Throughout our inspection visit we heard a range of comments about the meals provided in the school dining hall, most of these comments were negative. While students were not left feeling hungry, they consistently told us that the quality of meals varied and were often not attractive to them. They also said that the portion size was variable. As cooking facilities in the boarding houses were very limited due to safety, most of the nutritional intake for boarding students was from main meals in the dining hall. There was a need for this important aspect of life for students to be examined by senior staff and Governors.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at www.careinspectorate.com.

What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at or since the last inspection

Previous requirements

There are no outstanding requirements.

What the service has done to meet any recommendations we made at or since the last inspection

Previous recommendations

There are no outstanding recommendations.

Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings								
11 Feb 2016	Unannounced	<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>5 - Very good</td> </tr> </table>	Care and support	5 - Very good	Environment	5 - Very good	Staffing	5 - Very good	Management and leadership	5 - Very good
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25 Feb 2013	Unannounced	<table> <tr> <td>Care and support</td> <td>6 - Excellent</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Environment</td> <td>5 - Very good</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Staffing</td> <td>6 - Excellent</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Management and leadership</td> <td>5 - Very good</td> </tr> </table>	Care and support	6 - Excellent	Environment	5 - Very good	Staffing	6 - Excellent	Management and leadership	5 - Very good
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26 Jun 2009	Unannounced	<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>Not assessed</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Management and leadership</td> <td>Not assessed</td> </tr> </table>	Care and support	5 - Very good	Environment	5 - Very good	Staffing	Not assessed	Management and leadership	Not assessed
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