

Inspection report

Falkland House School School Care Accommodation Service

Falkland Estate
Falkland
Cupar KY15 7AE

Inspected by: Marion Neil
(Care Commission Officer)

Type of inspection: Announced

Inspection completed on: 14 November 2008

Service Number

CS2008174055

Service name

Falkland House School

Service addressFalkland Estate
Falkland
Cupar KY15 7AE**Provider Number**

SP2008009724

Provider Name

House of Falkland Ltd

Inspected ByMarion Neil
Care Commission Officer**Inspection Type**

Announced

Inspection Completed

14 November 2008

Period since last inspection**Local Office Address**Largo House, South Suite, Carnegie Avenue,
Dunfermline, KY11 8PE

Introduction

Falkland House School is situated in Falkland in Fife. It is independently managed and provides care and education for 23 boys aged from 10 to 17 years who have been placed in the school by 12 local authorities. Falkland House School was deemed registered under the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001 in April 2002.

Care is provided on a 39 week basis. Education, care and support are provided to male pupils who have significant social, emotional and behavioural difficulties often arising from autism spectrum disorders. The property is located in the village of Falkland and Falkland House is situated on the outskirts of the village, within Falkland Estate. It is close to community facilities and easily accessible to residents and visitors. Parking facilities are available.

An excerpt from Falkland House School Mission Statement reads:

"Falkland House School's mission is to help children who have difficulties in their personal and family life, school and community.

The school's approach is comprehensive, designed to benefit the child, his family and the organisation with which they are involved."

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

Quality of Care and Support - 5 - Very Good

Quality of Environment - 5 - Very Good

Quality of Staffing - 5 - Very Good

Quality of Management and Leadership - 5 - Very Good

This inspection report and grades represent the Care Commission's 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. Please refer to the care services register on the Care Commission's website (www.carecommission.com) for the most up-to-date grades for this service.

Basis of Report

The school submitted a completed Annual Return and Self assessment form as requested by the Care Commission. Both these documents were returned to the Care Commission prior to the inspection.

Fourteen questionnaires were returned to the Care Commission. Three of these questionnaires were from Local Authority professionals, one was from a parent/carer and ten were from young people attending the school.

The inspection plan for this service was decided after a Regulation Support Assessment (RSA) was carried out to determine the intensity of inspection necessary. The RSA is an assessment undertaken by the Care Commission Officer (CCO) which considers complaints activity, changes in the provision of the service, nature of notifications made to the Care Commission by the service (such as absence of a manager) and action taken upon requirements. The CCO will also have considered how the service responded to situations

and issues as part of the RSA.

This assessment resulted in this service receiving a low RSA score and so a low intensity inspection was required. The inspection was based on the relevant Inspection Focus Areas (Protecting People, Physical Well-being and Notifications) and associated National Care Standards, recommendations and requirements from previous inspections and complaints or other regulatory activity.

The inspection was carried out over a period of two weeks. It consisted of a desk top review of the service's documents submitted to the Care Commission, along with 3 visits to the service. One of these visits took place in the evening to provide opportunities for the CCOs to speak to the young people outwith the school day. Throughout this inspection report the pupils are referred to as "young people."

Evidence was obtained from a number of sources:

Discussions with the young people, the staff and the Senior Management Team

Supporting evidence from the up to date Self Assessment

An update since the previous inspection visit, provided by the Director of the School, the Operations Manager and the Social Work Manager (referred to as the Senior Management Team.)

Child protection policy and procedure

Internet use policy and procedure

Training records

Newsletters

Health & Safety records

Accidents and Incident records

Complaints records

Care Plans

Audit calendar

Minutes of Meetings, including those of the Pupil Council

Observation of practice

The school's Development Plan

Details of the inspection focus and associated Quality Themes to be used in inspecting each type of care service in 2008/09 and supporting inspection guidance, can be found at:
<http://www.carecommission.com/>

The Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 introduced new regulatory arrangements in respect of fire safety, on 1 October 2006. In terms of those arrangements, responsibility for enforcing the statutory provisions in relation to fire safety now lies with the Fire and Rescue service for the area in which a care service is located. Accordingly, the Care Commission will no longer report on matters of fire safety as part of its regulatory function, but, where significant fire safety issues become apparent, will alert the relevant Fire and Rescue service to their existence in order that it may act as it considers appropriate. Further advice on your responsibilities is available at www.infoscotland.com/firelaw

Action taken on requirements since last Inspection

No Requirements or Recommendations had been made at the previous inspection visit.

Comments on Self Assessment

The Operations Manager had completed this form and submitted it to the Care Commission prior to the inspection visit. He had identified a number of areas for improvement. These are, where appropriate, reported in the body of this report.

View of Service Users

Comments from young people were obtained during the inspection visit and in the questionnaires returned to the Care Commission. Comments included:

Referring to the food:

"It's brilliant" and "Its amazing."

Young people confirmed to the CCOs that staff listened to them and took account of their views and preferences.

View of Carers

Parents/carers had expressed their views to the school staff at their last Open Day. The comments from this were very positive about the care and support their children received. Comments included in the questionnaire returned to the Care Commission included:

"We are really happy our son is now at Falkland House School."

"The Care Staff at Falkland House School are great to him"

Quality Theme 1: Quality of Care and Support

Overall CCO Theme Grading: 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 findings in this section are based on Quality Statement 1.1.

Following discussion with the Senior Management Team, Care staff and young people, along with an examination of records eg minutes of pupil council meetings and a review of the service's Self assessment form, the service was found to have a very good performance in relation to this quality statement.

Throughout the inspection visits the young people were observed to have very good relationships with care staff and the senior management team. The young people who spoke to the Care Commission Officers confirmed that staff listened to their views, made changes, where appropriate, following any suggestions or concerns, knew them very well and supported them during their time at Falkland School. Evidence to support this was obtained from a review of care plans (including Personal Learning Plans), minutes of unit meetings and the school's pupil council, along with discussions with young people.

Examples of best practice in this area were:

- 1) The involvement of the young people in designing the recent changes to the school uniform.
- 2) Re-naming the unit formerly known as "The Flat," at the young people's request
- 3) Pupil council auditing the school's Sanctions and Controls and the Pupils' Rights Policy
- 4) Young people's participation in review meetings eg reviews of Personal Learning Plans, Care Plans or Looked After Children (LAC) Reviews
- 5) Young people and staff questionnaires on food preferences - linked to the accreditation of the school as a Healthy Living Award

A key worker system was in place. The young people confirmed through discussion that generally if they had any concerns they would raise these with their key worker first. Young people who spoke with the CCOs knew about the school's Complaints Procedure. In all the questionnaires returned to the Care Commission by the young people, they indicated that they would be comfortable making a complaint. Young people had access to outside advocates eg Children's Rights Officers or "Who Cares?" worker. There was no evidence in the questionnaires returned to the Care Commission that the young people had been bullied. The school had established an extremely effective peer support system to deal with bullying. One of the "Peer support" young people explained to the CCO how the system works. He was enthusiastic about it, confirming that to date it had been helpful and effective in dealing with bullying issues.

The school encouraged the views of parents/carers and external agencies eg placing Local Authorities. Their views were collected by the service through the use of questionnaires and from feedback provided on the school's Open Days. When a young person had left school, feedback forms were used to seek their views and those of their parents/carers. In the Self assessment form a breakdown of the response to the questionnaires issued to placing

authorities and to parents/carers was given. Overall the responses from both groups was very positive.

Comments received in the Care Commission questionnaires included:

from a Local Authority:

"Children are supported with sensitivity and respect and their views are always taken seriously."

Comments from parents/carers, quoted in the Self assessment form included:

"..... always feel my concerns are taken seriously and are acted on."

"..... always feel that J..... voice is heard, respected and acted on."

Based on the findings of this inspection, the service has been awarded the grade detailed below, for this Quality Statement.

Areas for Development

Ongoing areas for improvement identified in the Self assessment form included:

- 1) To provide a clearer audit trail of all questionnaire returns
- 2) To provide other forms of completing questionnaires eg e-mail/telephone
- 3) Developing a parental written contribution for reviews to further enhance the contribution given by parents/carers

CCO Grading

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

The findings in this section are based on Quality Statement 1.3.

The service was found to have an excellent performance in relation to this quality statement. Evidence for this was gathered from discussion with the Senior Management Team, Care staff and young people, along with an examination of records eg care plans and a review of the service's Self assessment form. This Quality Statement also took account of the evidence collected for the Inspection Focus Area - Physical Well-being.

The care plans reviewed showed that each young person was receiving a comprehensive

health assessment. Robust risk assessments were in place. Young people had excellent access to health professionals as appropriate to their needs eg Looked After Children's (LAC) Nurse, dentist, optician, child psychiatry, speech therapist and clinical psychologist. The model health assessment included an action record. All care plans, including health assessment were audited regularly. Health plans were updated for each review. This ensured that the health needs of each young person were being met. Staff and pupils had access to a monthly "Drop In" clinic, run by Fife Primary Healthcare Trust.

Staff confirmed that they had outstanding opportunities for training in health related topics. Specific training, identified by the Operations Manager in the Self assessment form had included:

- 1) Diabetes
- 2) Asthma
- 3) Handling of Medication
- 4) Drug and Alcohol Awareness (also offered to young people)
- 5) First Aid

The school had recently, following best practice guidance on the administration of medication, started using MAR sheets, to improve the accuracy of their medication record keeping.

Young people confirmed that there were excellent opportunities to take part in a range of physical activities, as part of the curriculum and after school. In addition to sports, the young people and staff had, they stated, benefited from the school's new fitness room.

The Self assessment form stated that the school had a strict no smoking policy for both staff and young people. This was confirmed on the day by young people who spoke to the CCOs. Personal and Social Education (PSE) continued to include smoking as part of the curriculum. The exceptional commitment by staff in promoting the no smoking policy meant that currently there was no issue of smoking amongst young people.

The school has actively been promoting healthy living and healthy eating. It has attained accreditation in a Healthy Living Award. Young people confirmed that they had played an active part in these initiatives. Healthy eating had been greatly enhanced by the appointment of a Chef. His knowledge and understanding, along with his enthusiasm and commitment to providing healthy food, had transformed and improved the school's menu. On the day of the inspection visit a competition was running to "name different fruit/vegetables" through a tasting session. Chef knew the young people's preferences well. The young people and staff were enthusiastic about the changes to the menus and confirmed that they had been consulted. (See Quality Statement 1.1) The commitment of staff and young people to these initiatives has been outstanding. The many posters, displays and photographs throughout the school ensured that health promotion was embedded in the school's ethos.

Comments from parents/carers, from the questionnaires submitted to the Care Commission, included:

"..... we sometimes feel he is fed better there than at home!"

Based on the findings of this inspection, the service has been awarded the grade detailed below, for this Quality Statement.

Areas for Development

The Operations Manager identified the following area for improvement in the Self assessment form:

To introduce "Keeping Myself Safe - Personal Safety for Teenagers" (Learning Curve Education) into the curriculum.

CCO Grading

6 - Excellent

Number of Requirements

0

Number of Recommendations

0

Quality Theme 2: Quality of Environment

Overall CCO Theme Grading: 5 - Very Good

Statement 1: We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of the environment within the service.

Service Strengths

The findings in this section are based on Quality Statement 2.1.

Following discussion with the young people, Senior Management Team, Care staff along with an examination of records eg minutes of unit meeting and pupil council meetings and a review of the service's Self assessment form, the service was found to have a very good performance in relation to this quality statement.

The fabric of the school building, along with resources used by young people, continued to be in outstanding order. Young people and staff had respect for the building and were keen to improve it. An example of this was a recent suggestion from the pupil council that photographs of the current staff team and cohort of young people was displayed in the entrance hall. This has now been done. The enthusiastic and highly motivated Art teacher has encouraged the young people to display their art work throughout the school. These attractive displays were viewed during the inspection. The Operations Manager confirmed the young people's involvement in improving the environment when he stated in the Self assessment form:

"Pupils are extremely eager to help out on projects which enhance the environment and are proud of the school when showing visitors around or discussing the school with their families."

The views of parents/carers and of young people were regularly sought through the use of questionnaires - see Quality Statement 1.1. Minutes of unit meetings and pupil council meetings confirmed that the young people were consulted about any changes and that their suggestions and views were taken seriously by staff.

Young people make very good use of the local environment. The daily choices of activities available to them included in school - games, karaoke, Wii, pool and the fitness room. Further afield choices included trips and outings to ice skating, swimming and walks in local parks. Comments from young people who spoke to the CCO included:

"..... walking in Beveridge Park was very good."

Other areas contributing to the very good performance for this Quality Statement included:

- 1) One pupil had developed his own garden area and was growing his own vegetables
- 2) Young people sold their woodworking projects locally in Falkland Village fete
- 3) Links were in place with Fife Countryside Ranger Service and joint projects with this service included red squirrel conservation in Falkland Estate
- 4) Links with the local primary school had resulted in young people assisting in the development of a nature garden

Based on the findings of this inspection, the service has been awarded the grade detailed

below, for this Quality Statement.

Areas for Development

A recent development was involving staff in Area evaluation and self assessment sheets. In the Self assessment form the Operations Manager identified that once this is established, it is intended that young people will have the opportunity to participate in area evaluation sheets. This will develop a robust audit of the environment.

CCO Grading

5 - Very Good

Number of Requirements

0

Number of Recommendations

0

Statement 2: We make sure that the environment is safe and service users are protected

Service Strengths

The findings in this section are based on Quality Statement 2.2.

Following an examination of the school's newsletters, displays throughout the school, appropriate records eg accidents and incidents, along with discussions with the Senior Management Team, staff and young people, the school was found to have an excellent performance in relation to this quality statement. Evidence was also gathered for the Inspection Focus Area - Protecting People.

An example of best practice was the recently run Internet Safety course - for all classes at the school. In one of the school's newsletters it stated - "The course is designed to make the Internet user aware of potential threats while working online and the precautions that can be taken to minimise these." In addition the school had appropriate software in place to minimise the risk to young people using the internet.

A review of care plans (see Quality Statement 1.3) showed that comprehensive and robust risk assessments were in place for each young person. These were reviewed regularly with the young person and in addition, the Social Work Manager audited the care plans.

The inspection visits confirmed, through an examination of records, that there were very low rates of absconding, critical incidents and complaints. Training records reviewed showed that all staff had received appropriate training in the use of restraint. Developments over the last year had included care and education staff working more closely together so that there was a holistic approach to each young person's care. One member of staff commented that a spin off from this approach had been the reduction in incidents of restraint. Comments from parents/carers, received by the Care Commission included:

"The staff maintain regular contact with myself and all of the outside agencies involved with his care. This ensures a multi-disciplinary approach that ensures the highest level of care possible."

As previously mentioned, (see Quality Statement 1.1), the young people were exceptionally well supported by staff to look at concerns and issues raised by their peers. All young people involved in the peer mediation scheme received appropriate training before taking part. This was confirmed by staff and by two of the young people who were "peer supporters."

Other areas of note, which promoted an ideal approach to the safety and security of the young people, included:

- 1) Health and Safety Policy and procedure
- 2) Training for staff in all aspects of health and safety
- 3) The very good maintenance of the building and transport, supported by detailed policies and procedures and a robust audit system
- 4) The school's high-level commitment to Child Protection - exemplified by the exemplary training opportunities staff have in this area

Staff who spoke to the CCOs confirmed that they had a very good understanding of Child Protection issues. The school had clear procedures in place and had copies of the child protection procedures from all placing Local Authorities. This is an example of best practice. Staff, young people and parents/carers had been made aware of the Framework Standards for Child protection and of the Children's Charter. This was confirmed by staff.

Based on the findings of this inspection, the service has been awarded the grade detailed below, for this Quality Statement

Areas for Development

An ongoing area for improvement was the assessment by the school of which form of communication was best for parents/carers - specifically to complement and/or replace questionnaires.

CCO Grading

6 - Excellent

Number of Requirements

0

Number of Recommendations

0

Quality Theme 3: Quality of Staffing

Overall CCO Theme Grading: 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

The findings in this section are based on Quality Statement 3.1.

The service was found to have a very good performance in relation to this quality statement. Evidence to support this was obtained from discussion with staff, the Senior Management Team and young people. Consideration was also given to the evidence obtained to support quality statement 1.1 and 2.1, along with observation of practice and a review of relevant documents eg minutes of meetings and questionnaires.

Commendably, the Senior Management Team had carried out a quality and standards audit in 2008, which included staffing. Views of parents/carers and of placing authorities were gathered through questionnaires and at the school's Open Day. These included many positive comments about the school staff.

Comments included:

"Every member of staff is dedicated to the well-being of the pupils."

and

"..... always had regular input from staff and have found the key workers to be very helpful."

Staff who spoke to the CCOs confirmed that they had been involved in the school's evaluation processes, including the completion of the Self assessment form for the Care Commission. Staff confirmed that participating in this process helped them to evaluate their own role and care practice.

A decision making forum has been established which promotes joint working between care and education staff. An example of this delegation of responsibilities to middle management was the working group for the school's promotional brochure. In the Self assessment form, regular meetings between Senior Management and ancillary staff were also highlighted. During the inspection visits, discussions with staff and observation of practice confirmed that the school staff team was very strong.

The robust complaints procedure, along with the very good relationships observed between young people and staff, also contributed to the assessment of the effectiveness of staff. The school provided parents/carers with comprehensive information about their child's progress. This was confirmed by them through:

- 1) Parents/carers comments in the school's questionnaires
- 2) Care Commission questionnaires completed by parents/carers
- 3) Comments displayed in the school from the Open day

Other areas which contributed to the grade for this quality statement, reported in more detail under Quality Statement 3.3, included:

- 1) Support and supervision system for staff
- 2) Annual training audit
- 3) Comprehensive induction programme
- 4) Comprehensive training programme
- 5) Young people's involvement in the recruitment process

Based on the findings of this inspection, the service has been awarded the grade detailed below, for this Quality Statement.

Areas for Development

The involvement of the young people in the school's recruitment of new staff was currently limited. However, in the Self assessment form, the Operations Manager had identified this as an area for improvement:

"Discussions to take place regarding pupil participation in part of interview eg representative from the Pupils' Council or Peer Supporters."

CCO Grading

5 - Very Good

Number of Requirements

0

Number of Recommendations

0

Statement 3: We have a professional, trained and motivated workforce which operates to National Care Standards, legislation and best practice.

Service Strengths

The findings in this section are based on Quality Statement 3.3.

Following discussion with staff, the Senior Management Team and young people, along with an examination of appropriate records and observation of staff practice, the service was found to have an excellent performance in relation to this quality statement.

Throughout the visits by the CCOs, the staff were observed to be enthusiastic, motivated, committed and caring. In discussion with the CCOs, staff presented as knowledgeable, with an excellent understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Staff's knowledge and understanding was enhanced by the service's very strong commitment to training. Most care staff had the appropriate qualifications for registration with the Scottish Social Service Council (SSSC), or were working towards qualifications and registration. Staff confirmed in discussions with the CCOs that their views were sought on training needs. They stated that an effective support and supervision scheme was in place, that senior managers listened to them and that they were encouraged to review their practice through support and supervision sessions.

In the school's Self assessment form the Operations Manager identified the low rate of staff turnover and the low rate of staff absence as a strength. This was confirmed on the inspection visits. A number of staff who spoke to the CCO had been with the service for many years. They acknowledged the ongoing changes to the service, which they stated were for the better. They also confirmed that the service's commitment to training had developed their skills and knowledge in meeting the needs of the young people who use the service.

Ancillary staff, in discussion, also stated that recent changes had contributed to them feeling that they were an integral part of the Falkland House staff team. They stated that they were very well supported by Senior Managers and that their views were listened to and suggestions, where practical, were taken forward.

Other areas that contributed to this quality statement being excellent were:

- 1) 5 designated training days
- 2) Use of external consultants or agencies
- 3) Opportunities to attend training outwith the school
- 4) Care and education staff working together in decision making forums
- 5) The school's questionnaires for staff, seeking their views
- 6) The school moving towards being more open about the future direction of the service

Care staff, speaking to the CCOs confirmed that the recent move to include "middle management" in decision making had increased their confidence as a staff team. Additional responsibility had included Senior Care workers being on call, as part of the on call rota system, contributing to the audit of the building and working closely with education staff on the development of young people's Personal Learning Plans. The positive ethos in the school with all staff teams working together provided an exceptional example of effective joint working. One parent/carer commented in the Care Commission questionnaire:

"The staff maintain regular contact with myself and all of the outside agencies involved with his care. This ensures a multi-disciplinary approach that ensure the highest level of care possible. My son is a confident, happy young man who is fulfilling his potential"

Based on the findings of this inspection, the service has been awarded the grade detailed below, for this Quality Statement.

Areas for Development

The following area for improvement was identified in the school's Self assessment form:

"Continue to improve the staff development strategy and audit the existing training plan to ensure time scales for formal training, qualifications and registration in accordance with the SSSC."

CCO Grading

6 - Excellent

Number of Requirements

0

Number of Recommendations

0

Quality Theme 4: Quality of Management and Leadership

Overall CCO Theme Grading: 5 - Very 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

The findings in this section are based on Quality Statement 4.1.

The service was found to have a very good performance in relation to this quality statement. Evidence to support this was obtained from discussion with staff, the Senior Management Team and young people. Consideration was also given to the evidence obtained to support quality statement 1.1, 2.1, and 3.1 along with observation of practice and a review of relevant documents eg minutes of meetings and questionnaires.

Much of the evidence to support this quality statement has been already reported under Quality Statements 1.1, 2.1, and 3.1. However, there was very good supporting evidence that the Senior Management Team and staff were now actively seeking the views of the young people, parents/carers and representatives from Local Authorities. These views were sought informally through ongoing daily discussions with the young people and from opinions expressed by parents/carers at review meetings. Formally views were collated from written questionnaires and from verbal comments made to staff EGA at the school's open day. An example of changes as a result of views expressed is the current 5th and 6th year programme offered by the school. Previously the school only catered for pupils up to the age of 16 years. However, following requests from parents and from Local Authorities, the school has extended the service to include 5th and 6th year pupils, in order to meet their educational and care needs.

The school has improved the effective communication it has with parents/carers and young people through the development of regular newsletters, the updated and improved school website and the school's "blog." Young people who spoke to the CCOs confirmed that they had very good opportunities to express their views to Senior Management and staff through:

- 1) Key workers
- 2) Review Meetings
- 3) Unit meetings
- 4) Pupil Council
- 5) Suggestion boxes

The school's Senior Management Team had taken a number of steps to ensure that the work of the school was audited in a systematic way, involving all staff. This included Care Workers visiting different units to audit the environment; staff In-set days involving all staff in the Self-evaluation process; using quality assurance tools eg "How good is Our School?" An audit calendar had been established, establishing audits and reviews as an ongoing process - this is an example of best practice.

Based on the findings of this inspection, the service has been awarded the grade detailed below, for this Quality Statement.

Areas for Development

The following areas for improvement had been identified in the school's Self assessment form:

- 1) Participation strategy to be developed
- 2) Pupils, parents and professionals to be given a wider role in the self-evaluation process
- 3) Two Senior managers were booked to attend a Scottish Council for Independent Schools' workshop on Self evaluation

The Care Commission Officer acknowledges that, at the time of writing this report, the school had made a very good start to these areas for improvement.

CCO Grading

5 - Very 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

The findings in this section are based on Quality Statement 4.4.

Following discussions with staff and the Senior Management Team, along with a review of relevant documents, eg risk assessments in young people's care plans, accidents, incidents and audits of these, the service was found to have a very good performance in relation to this quality statement.

The school was making very good use of quality assurance systems. Models used to assess the school's performance included - "How Good is Our School" (Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education), the Care Commission's National Care Standards and Self assessment form and Investors in People. The school obtained an Investors in People Award in 2006. Commendably, the quality assurance systems used were being developed to include staff involvement eg all staff had participated in the Care Commission Self assessment.

The school had, as previously stated, developed an ongoing audit calendar. This contributed to the quality assurance system, leading to the school's quality assurance report and the school development plan. The school development plan had clear links with recommendations made by regulatory bodies eg Care Commission and Fife Fire and Rescue. It also took account of best practice advice from HMIE.

A robust audit system was in place. This included:

- 1) Regular staff support and supervision
- 2) A staff appraisal system

- 3) Observation of staff practice
- 4) Audits of accidents, incidents, risk assessments and care plans

Reviews of the questionnaires used to gather information about the service from parents/carers, staff and young people showed that their views had been taken into account, as reflected in this report under the other quality statements. A review of minutes of meetings eg Unit meetings and Pupil Council meetings provided very good evidence that where action was required, it was taken, followed through and reported back to the young people at the next meeting. This is an example of first rate practice.

The school now carried out an individual audit of training needs with each member of staff. This assisted in the process of developing an overall staff training programme for the year. The Social Work Manager confirmed in discussion with the CCOs that a review of the effectiveness of training was being carried out. The school intended to use, where appropriate, a cascade model, to disseminate training information to all staff. This would, she stated, improve the staff's knowledge and understanding of a range of training. Improved training would also contribute to staff meeting the needs of the young people.

Comments made in May 2008, by a referring agency included:

"The school is outstanding in the sensitivity to meet each child's need and in the flexibility of staff."

and from parents/carers:

"I think it is because all staff (care and teaching) work together and we are working towards the same thing."

It was observed throughout the inspection visit that the recent changes to the Senior Management Team, along with their "open door" policy for staff and young people, had a positive effect on the school. All staff who spoke to the CCOs clearly identified themselves as a member of Falkland House staff team; they were enthusiastic about their work; they stated that they had been listened to; that they were involved in new initiatives; they were aware of the decision making processes and actively involved in decisions about the strategic direction of the school.

Comments received in the Care Commission questionnaires supported the positive changes:

"Thanks to Falkland House School he will grow into a respectful, confident and pleasant young man."

and

"I know that this could not have been achieved without the input of Falkland House School"

Based on the evidence from this inspection, the service has been awarded the grade detailed below, for this Quality Statement.

Areas for Development

In discussion with the CCOs the Senior Management Team identified ongoing work to ensure that the school has an effective quality assurance system embedded in its management of the service.

CCO Grading

5 - Very Good

Number of Requirements

0

Number of Recommendations

0

Regulations / Principles

National Care Standards

Enforcement

There has been no enforcement action against this service since the last inspection.

Other Information

The school had recently had a change of owner. The new Director was the former Head of Education, providing continuity for both staff and young people. Throughout the inspection visits it was clear that his leadership of the school had provided a very good start to the development and management of the school, ably supported by the Senior Management Team and the newly introduced Middle Management Team.

Requirements**Recommendations**

Marion Neil
Care Commission Officer