

# Falkland House School

## School Care Accommodation Service

Falkland Estate  
Falkland  
Cupar  
KY15 7AE

Telephone: 01337 857268

**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
9 April 2024

**Service provided by:**  
House of Falkland Limited

**Service provider number:**  
SP2008009724

**Service no:**  
CS2008174055

## About the service

Falkland House School is registered as a school care accommodation service. It is an independent residential school for boys with additional support needs, including those with autism. The service provides 39 and 52 week placements for boys between primary school age and 18-years-old, from a number of local authorities.

The service is situated on the Falkland Estate, a short distance from the centre of the village of Falkland in Fife.

The premises consist of a large two storey country house built as a family home in the 19th century. The care accommodation consists of three houses; The Flat, Fife and Atholl, and has capacity for up to 30 boys. The service actively aims to reduce the number of boys sharing a bedroom and so at the time of this inspection, there were 23 boys living in the service.

Accommodation also includes shared bathrooms or shower rooms, a number of communal areas including a dedicated games room, dining room and access to extensive grounds.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 18 March 2024 between the hours of 11:00 and 22:00, and 19 March 2024 between 09:30 and 15:45. The inspection was carried out by two inspectors from the Care Inspectorate.

To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, registration information, information submitted by the service, and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with seven young people using the service and members of their family
- spoke with several members of staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents
- received feedback from visiting professionals.

## Key messages

- The school had effective child protection practices.
- A recently appointed Relations and Admissions Manager supported a more effective referral process.
- A range of health and wellbeing supports helped to create a therapeutic environment.
- Additional advocacy supports had been sourced by the provider.
- Outdoor learning provided substantial benefits to young people.
- New or refurbished kitchens were required in each of the houses.
- Communication with parents, carers and partners could be better.

## From this inspection we evaluated this service as:

In evaluating quality, we use a six point scale where 1 is unsatisfactory and 6 is excellent

How well do we support children and young people's rights and wellbeing?	5 - Very Good
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Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

## How well do we support children and young people's rights and wellbeing?

5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children and young people, therefore, we evaluated this key question as very good.

Positive approaches to child protection training offered assurance of a knowledgeable staff team and in instances where protection concerns were raised, the school took quick and decisive steps to determine any action required. Involvement of partners and families ensured transparency.

Working in partnership with other agencies formed part of the robust approach to broader safeguarding practices. However, in one instance, an inadequate matching process resulted in poor outcomes for a young person. The Care Inspectorate investigated a complaint relating to this and aspects of the complaint were upheld. The service in response, had made significant improvement to their matching process. This included employing a Relations and Admissions Manager to support the senior leadership team when considering the suitability of the service for any new young people referred to the school. The improved matching process was evidenced in the positive experiences of other young people for whom the school was assessed as a suitable provision.

Since the last inspection, the addition of occupational health and speech and language therapy complemented existing psychotherapy input to health and wellbeing supports. Training for staff, specific to meeting the sensory needs of young people, helped to create a therapeutic environment in which young people could thrive. The impact of this was augmented by the relationships between young people and members of staff, which were warm and good humoured. The compassion and affection with which staff cared for young people was apparent in their practice.

The school had been proactive in securing additional advocacy supports for young people. This commitment demonstrated the importance of young people's voices, informing decisions affecting their care. This ethos of inclusion was referenced by a partner involved with the school when they said, "They have a fantastic ethos and inclusive practice."

Continued development of the outdoor learning programme offered a range of outdoor adventures, and these created exciting opportunities for young people to grow in confidence and develop an improved sense of their abilities. These broader elements of experiential learning provided substantial benefits to young people, some of whom were attempting activities for the first time.

Personal attainment was fully encouraged. For some, this meant volunteering or securing paid work. Those interested in agriculture were part of the grounds team, and the gardening club offered some the chance to learn about the benefits of sustainability. Leadership opportunities meant that some young people were role models for others. While boxing group and guitar lessons further demonstrated the eclectic mix of experiences for young people. Young people told us that they were happier at the school than they had been previously, while others said they 'wouldn't have stayed if it wasn't a good experience.'

The school was well aware of the challenges brought about by an old building, and there was recognition of areas within young people's accommodation that had been identified for improvement. The standard of kitchens and dining areas, previously highlighted by an independent auditor, were poor and would benefit from being replaced or refurbished. **(See Area for Improvement 1)**

Parents provided information about their experiences, and we reviewed service feedback to assess the quality of care for young people. Comments included:

"I cannot speak highly enough about the school. It has been a lifeline for us."

"I really feel part of things with my son's care and that gives me confidence in the school."

We received some feedback which highlighted a recurring theme relating to communication and we have highlighted this as an area for improvement. **(See Area for improvement 2)**

## Areas for improvement

1. To ensure young people have access to good quality furnishings and fittings, the provider should replace or refurbish the kitchens in each of the houses as soon as is practicable.

This is to ensure that Care and Support is consistent with Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:

'I am able to access a range of good quality equipment and furnishings to meet my needs, wishes and choices' (HSCS, 5.21).

2. To ensure effective communication with parents, carers and partners, the provider should conduct a review of current practices and make any necessary changes for improvement.

This is to ensure that Care and Support is consistent with Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:

'I use a service and organisation that are well led and managed' (HSCS,4.23).

## What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection

### Areas for improvement

#### Previous area for improvement 1

To ensure that young people are kept safe, are respected and their dignity is protected, the service should ensure that any allegations of misconduct are investigated and the outcomes used to develop policy in a timely manner. All staff should be made aware of any changes or developments in policy.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that:

'I am protected from harm, neglect, abuse, bullying and exploitation by people who have a clear understanding of their responsibilities' (HSCS 3.20)

and

'I receive an apology if things go wrong with my care and support or my human rights are not respected, and the organisation takes responsibility for its actions' (HSCS 4.4).

**This area for improvement was made on 18 May 2023.**

#### Action taken since then

The provider acted quickly and decisively to protect young people when concerns regarding their safety had been raised. Aspects of protection policies had been updated, staff had received training and had been advised of key changes.

#### Previous area for improvement 2

To create a more confident, skilled and qualified staff group, the service should improve the consistency of training and emphasis on professional development.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that:

'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes' (HSCS 3.14).

**This area for improvement was made on 18 May 2023.**

#### Action taken since then

The provider had made significant progress with regard to various training events and professional qualifications for staff. There was an increased number of staff undertaking professional awards, and an increased commitment to delivering autism training.

Complaints

Please see Care Inspectorate website ([www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com)) for details of complaints about the service which have been upheld.

Detailed evaluations

How well do we support children and young people's rights and wellbeing?	5 - Very Good
7.1 Children and young people are safe, feel loved and get the most out of life	5 - Very Good

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