

Inspection report

Seamab School School Care Accommodation Service

Rumbling Bridge
Kinross
KY13 0PT

Inspected by: Lorna Snaddon
(Care Commission officer)

Type of inspection: Unannounced

Inspection completed on: 16 December 2010

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Service provided by:
Seamab Learning and Care Services Ltd

Service provider number:
SP2003002135

Care service number:
CS2003009787

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Easy read summary of this inspection report

There is a six point grading scale. Each of the Quality Themes we inspected, is graded using the following scale:

We can choose from six grades:



We gave the service these grades

Quality of Care and Support	 6	Excellent
Quality of Environment		N/A
Quality of Staffing		N/A
Quality of Management and Leadership		N/A

This inspection report and grades are our assessment of the quality of how the service is performing in the areas we examined during this inspection.

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

What the service does well

Seamab School is providing excellent care and support to the children who live there. The children's living accommodation is homely and welcoming with the environment maintained to a high standard. The children are actively involved in all areas of the service.

What the service could do better

The school is taking forward the improvements as identified in their service development plan.

What the service has done since the last inspection

The school has progressed with its participation strategy and has continued to work in partnership with parents. This active involvement with parents allows the school to evaluate and progress in a way that takes account of the views of the people using the service.

The school has been actively involved in the process of ensuring all staff meet the requirements for registration with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC).

Conclusion

Seamab school is providing an excellent level of care, with the individual children's needs being at the centre of the service provision. Staff continuity has been maintained and the staff team are motivated and know the children very well. This has had a positive effect on the children placed in the service who have benefited from long term placements in relation to their care and education at Seamab School.

Who did this inspection

Lead Care Commission Officer

Lorna Snaddon

Other Care Commission Officers

N/A

Lay Assessor

N/A

Please read all of this report so that you can understand the full findings of this inspection.

About the Care Commission

We were set up in April 2002 to regulate and improve care services in Scotland.

Regulation involves:

- registering new services
- inspecting services
- investigating complaints
- taking enforcement action, when necessary, to improve care services.

We regulate around 15,000 services each year. Many are childminders, children's daycare services such as nurseries, and care home services. We regulate many other kinds of services, ranging from nurse agencies to independent healthcare such as hospices and private hospitals.

We regulate services for the very young right through to those for the very old. Our work can, therefore, affect the lives of most people in Scotland.

All our work is about improving the quality of care services.

We produce thousands of inspection reports every year; all are published on our website: www.carecommission.com. Reports include any complaints we investigate and improvements that we ask services to make.

The "Care services" area of our website also:

- allows you to search for information, such as reports, about the services we regulate
- has information for the people and organisations who provide care services
- has guidance on looking for and using care services in Scotland.

You can also get in touch with us if you would like more detailed information.

About the National Care Standards

The National Care Standards (NCS) set out the standards that people who use care services in Scotland should expect. The aim is to make sure that you receive the same high quality of service no matter where you live.

Different types of service have different National Care Standards. When we inspect a care service we take into account the National Care Standards that the service should provide.

The Scottish Government publishes copies of the National Care Standards online at: www.scotland.gov.uk

You can get printed copies free from:

Booksource
50 Cambuslang Road
Cambuslang Investment Park
Glasgow
G32 8NB
Tel: 0845 370 0067
Fax: 0845 370 0068
Email: scottishgovernment@booksource.net

What is inspection?

Our inspectors, known as Care Commission Officers (CCOs), check care services regularly to make sure that they are meeting the needs of the people in their care.

One of the ways we check on services is to carry out inspections. We may turn up without telling the service's staff in advance. This is so we can see how good the care is on a normal day. We inspect some types of services more often than others.

When we inspect a service, typically we:

- talk to people who use the service, their carers and families, staff and managers
- talk to individuals and groups
- have a good look around and check what quality of care is being provided
- look at the activities happening on the day
- examine things like records and files, if we need to
- find out if people get choices, such as food, choosing a key worker and controlling their own spending money.

We also use lay assessors during some inspections. These are volunteers who have used care services or have helped to care for someone who has used care services.

We write out an inspection report after gathering the information. The report describes how things are and whether anything needs to change.

Our work must reflect the following laws and guidelines:

- the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001
- regulations made under this Act
- the National Care Standards, which set out standards of care that people should be able to expect to receive from a care service.

This means that when we register or inspect a service we make sure it meets the requirements of the 2001 Act. We also take into account the National Care Standards that apply to it.

If we find a service is not meeting these standards, the 2001 Act gives us powers that require the service to improve.

Recommendations, requirements and complaints

If we are concerned about some aspect of a service, or think it could do more to improve its service, we may make a requirement or recommendation.

- A recommendation is a statement that sets out actions the care service provider should take to improve or develop the quality of the service but where failure to do so will not directly result in enforcement.
- A requirement is a statement which sets out what is required of a care service to comply with the Act and Regulations or Orders made under the Act, or a condition of registration. Where there are breaches of the Regulations, Orders or conditions, a requirement must be made. Requirements are legally enforceable at the discretion of the Care Commission.

Complaints: We have a complaints procedure for dealing with any complaint about a registered care service (or about us). Anyone can raise a concern with us - people using the service, their family and friends, carers and staff.

We investigate all complaints. Depending on how complex it is, a complaint may be:

- upheld - where we agree there is a problem to be resolved
- not upheld - where we don't find a problem
- partially upheld - where we agree with some elements of the complaint but not all of them.

How we decided what to inspect

Why we have different levels of inspection

We target our inspections. This means we spend less time with services we are satisfied are working hard to provide consistently high standards of care. We call these low-intensity inspections. Services where there is more concern receive more intense inspections. We call these medium or high intensity inspections.

How we decide the level of inspection

When planning an inspection, our inspectors, or Care Commission Officers (CCOs) carefully assess how intensively each service needs to be inspected. They do this by considering issues such as:

- complaints
- changes to how the service provides care
- any notifications the service has given us, such as the absence of a manager
- what action the service has taken in response to requirements we have made.

The CCO will also consider how the service responded to situations and issues: for example how it deals with complaints, or notifies us about incidents such as the death of someone using the service.

Our inspections take account of:

- areas of care that we are particularly interested in (these are called Inspection Focus Areas)
- the National Care Standards that the service should be providing
- recommendations and requirements that we made in earlier inspections
- any complaints and other regulatory activity, such as enforcement actions we have taken to improve the service.

What is grading?

We grade each service under Quality Themes which for most services are:

- **Quality of Care and Support:** how the service meets the needs of each individual in its care
- **Quality of Environment:** the environment within the service (for example, is the service clean, is it set out well, is it easy to access by people who use wheelchairs?);
- **Quality of Staffing:** the quality of the care staff, including their qualifications and training
- **Quality of Management and Leadership:** how the service is managed and how it develops to meet the needs of the people it cares for
- **Quality of Information:** this is how the service looks after information and manages record keeping safely.

Each of the Quality Themes has a number of Quality Statements in it, which we grade.

We grade each heading as follows:

6	5	4	3	2	1
excellent	very good	good	adequate	weak	unsatisfactory

We do not give one overall grade.

How grading works.

Services assess themselves using guidance that we given them. Our inspectors take this into account when they inspect and grade the service. We have the final say on grading.

The Quality Themes for this service type are explained in section 2 The Inspection.

About the service we inspected

Seamab School is an independent school, administered by the Board of Governors of the Seamab Learning and Care Services, which provides education and residential care for pupils, aged between 5 and 13 years, experiencing severe social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. Referrals are made from across Scotland and pupils are placed on a 52 week basis.

The education premises, situated in Rumbling Bridge near Kinross, consist of a four classrooms, arts and crafts room, family room, library and offices. There is an indoor swimming pool; basketball court and small football pitch within spacious grounds. Pupils live in three bungalows, each with five single bedrooms, two bathrooms, two public rooms and separate staff facilities, set in private woodland five minutes drive away from the school.

The school has been registered with the Care Commission as a school care accommodation service for 15 pupils since 1 April 2002. It is also registered with the Registrar of Independent Schools for day and residential provision.

The main purpose of Seamab School is "to provide an integrated, individualised programme of care, education and therapy which will encourage and enable the children to develop close, positive attachments and to live successfully in the community".

In achieving this, the service aims are to:

- Provide a stable, structured and caring environment, with a familiar routine which promotes a sense of security in the children;
- Build and develop the children's confidence and self esteem;
- Encourage their ability to make relationships with other children and adults to help them cope more effectively in the wider community;
- Provide an environment where children feel safe enough to learn and express themselves and where they are not afraid to try;
- Make sure that the children meet adults who provide safe and positive care and understand the individual child's needs;
- Provide, where necessary, individual therapy to help children overcome their difficulties;
- Develop each child's social and emotional skills through education, therapy and play.

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

Quality of Care and Support	6 - Excellent
Quality of Environment	N/A
Quality of Staffing	N/A
Quality of Management and Leadership	N/A

This inspection report and grades are our assessment of the quality of how the service is performing in the areas we examined during this inspection.

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

You can use the "Care services" area of our website (www.carecommission.com) to find the most up-to-date grades for this service.

How we inspected this service

What level of inspection did we make this service

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 activities did we undertake during the inspection

This report was written following an unannounced inspection that took place between 10.00pm and 4.00pm on 16 December 2010. The inspection was carried out by Care Commission Officer Lorna Snaddon.

From October 2010 the Care Commission has temporarily introduced an additional, less intense inspection approach for services which have previously reached a good level of performance. This service qualified for this reduced inspection approach and was therefore inspected only against one quality theme at this inspection.

This inspection focused on progress made following the last inspection where a more detailed sampling of evidence was undertaken.

This report should be read in conjunction with the inspection report dated 22 September 2010.

In this inspection we gathered evidence from a variety of sources, including relevant sections of policies, procedures, records and other documents, including evidence from the school's self assessment document.

Discussion took place with various people, including the children, care staff and the Depute Principal.

Inspection Focus Areas (IFAs)

Each year we identify an area, or areas, we want to focus on during our inspections. We still inspect all the normal areas of a care service; these are extra checks we make for a specific reason.

For 2010/11 we will focus on:

- Quality assurance for care at home and combined care at home and housing support services.

You can find out more about these from our website www.carecommission.com.

Fire safety issues

The Care Commission no longer reports on matters of fire safety as part of its regulatory function. Where significant fire safety issues become apparent, we will alert the relevant Fire and Rescue service to their existence in order that it may act as it considers appropriate. Care service providers can find more information about their legal responsibilities in this area at: www.infoscotland.com/firelaw

The annual return

We use annual returns (ARs) to:

- make sure we have up-to-date, accurate information about care services; and
- decide how we will inspect services.

By law every registered care service must send us an annual return and provide us with the information we have requested. The relevant law is the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001, Section 25(1). These forms must be returned to us between 6 January and 15 February.

Annual Return Received

Yes - Electronic

Comments on Self Assessment

We received a fully completed self assessment document from the service provider prior to the announced inspection. We were satisfied with the way the service provider had completed this and with the relevant information they had given for each of the headings that we grade them under.

The service provider identified what they thought they did well, some areas for development and any changes they had planned. The service provider also gave us information on how service users and families participated in the improvement process.

Taking the views of people using the care service into account

On the day of the inspection visit the children were having their Christmas lunch at the school. The CCO joined the children and staff. The children were all relaxed and thoroughly enjoyed the whole experience. The children spoke informally with the CCO throughout the day.

Individual comments from the children are detailed in the previous report dated 22 September 2010.

Taking carers' views into account

No parents or carers were spoken to as part of this inspection. The views of parents, carers and local authority social workers were included in the previous report dated 22 September 2010.

Quality Theme 1: Quality of Care and Support

Grade awarded for this theme: 6 - Excellent

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 school had in place a wide range of methods to ensure that the children and their parents and carers could participate freely in assessing and improving the quality of the care and support provided. Opportunities for giving feedback included:

- Care and education plans
- Regular one to one discussions
- Service questionnaires
- Meetings, formal and informal
- Having your Say forms
- A positive comments book
- Participation meetings
- Complaints procedures
- Care Commission questionnaires

Informal discussions with the children were used effectively to allow them to share their thoughts about the quality of care and support. The views, ideas and suggestions of the children were gathered routinely throughout the day and influenced the daily plans and deployment of staff. Children's requests also determined the activity plans for each bungalow.

There was a strong ethos whereby the children were encouraged to express themselves openly and staff were seen to spend time with each child listening and answering them appropriately. This approach allowed the children to feel valued, respected and confident about sharing their thoughts. One the day of the inspection visit the children were observed to be relaxed in staff company and open with their views about the school.

Formal meetings and reviews allowed the children to give their views on all aspects of the service. The children were supported to prepare for meetings and reviews, helping them to present their views in a way that was comfortable for them. Staff were attentive and creative in their interactions with the children, gentle prompts and supportive gestures assisted the children to express themselves more confidently.

The school had developed a range of questionnaires which they use to gain feedback from the children, parents, carers, staff and social workers. Information gained through the wide range of feedback opportunities was used to inform decisions about any changes or developments to the service.

Communication with parents and carers was a key strength of the school. The school's participation strategy includes a working group of parents and external professionals. This has added to the excellent range of opportunities for encouraging active involvement and meaningful feedback from parents and carers.

A recent participation strategy meeting involved staff and parents. The focus of this meeting was to discuss the school from a parent's perspective. The minutes showed that an in-depth discussion took place and action points from the meeting were followed up. This involvement with parents allows the school to evaluate and progress in a way that takes account of the views of the people using the service.

The school was found to be maintaining excellent standards in relation to this statement.

Areas for Improvement

The school is taking forward the improvements as identified in their service development plan. They should continue to build on the excellent practice demonstrated at this inspection.

Grade awarded for this statement

6 - Excellent

Number of Requirements

0

Number of Recommendations

0

Statement 6

People who use, or would like to use the service, and those who are ceasing the service, are fully informed as to what the service provides.

Service Strengths

The well designed website allows easy access to all the information about the school. It contains an overview of the care and education provision and details the therapeutic services that Seamab offers. It displays links to partner agencies, published reports and best practice guidance. This wealth of information allows for an assessment to be made of the provision at the initial enquiry stage.

Written information about the school is provided to children, parents and carers. This includes the school brochure, a statement of functions and objectives and a copy of the admissions policy.

The school has recently evaluated their admissions procedures and have consulted with parents and carers about how this felt for them. They now plan to include an induction pack for parents to enhance the process. This is to allow parents to feel more empowered during the early stages of their child arriving at Seamab.

The children's handbook covers all the relevant things that a child coming to stay at Seamab would want to know. A child who previously lived at the school developed this. The handbook is colourful and easy to follow, explaining things such as bedtimes, pocket money, rules and routines. This information gives children coming to Seamab a picture of what things are like.

Parents and other professionals were encouraged to visit the school prior to a referral being made. Clear procedures were in place to ensure a thorough assessment of a child's needs was carried out before they visit. This was to ensure that children are not introduced to the school then informed that they will not be offered a place. This sometimes involves external meetings prior to the school assessing the suitability of a placement.

Only once a full assessment had been undertaken and a decision made to offer a place were arrangements made for the child to visit. Admission procedures allowed for a very individual approach. Some children were seen to have a gradual settling in period and for others it was much quicker. This was very much dependant on the individual needs and circumstances at the point of admission.

Evidence showed that the careful planning of appropriate admission procedures is a key strength of the school. There is a strong commitment to making sure this is carried out in a planned and sensitive manner. This then ensures that the best opportunities and outcomes are achieved for the children.

Service questionnaires given to parents, carers and other professionals cover transitions to and from the service and were evaluated to improve future practice. Exit questionnaires and end of placement reviews also feed into this process.

Seamab have identified some difficulties in finding a similar, therapeutic resource for some children who need to move on due to their age. They have considered a variety of options to help manage this. The School Development Plan identifies areas where they could expand their service to encompass specific work in relation to children's transitions to and from the service.

The school was found to be maintaining excellent standards in relation to this statement.

Areas for Improvement

The school should continue to build on the excellent practice demonstrated at this inspection. They are encouraged to continue to progress with their plans in relation to children's transitions to and from the school.

Grade awarded for this statement

6 - Excellent

Number of Requirements

0

Number of Recommendations

0

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

The CCO spoke with an external student supervisor who was visiting the school on the day of the inspection. The feedback received about the opportunities Seamab provides students with when on placement was extremely positive.

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 the Care Commission 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).

Summary of Grades

Quality of Care and Support - 6 - Excellent	
Statement 1	6 - Excellent
Statement 6	6 - Excellent
Quality of Environment - Not Assessed	
Quality of Staffing - Not Assessed	
Quality of Management and Leadership - Not Assessed	

Inspection and Grading History

Date	Type	Gradings
22 Sep 2010	Announced	Care and support 6 - Excellent Environment <i>Not Assessed</i> Staffing 6 - Excellent Management and Leadership <i>Not Assessed</i>
17 Mar 2010	Unannounced	Care and support 6 - Excellent Environment <i>Not Assessed</i> Staffing 5 - Very Good Management and Leadership <i>Not Assessed</i>
16 Sep 2009	Announced	Care and support 6 - Excellent Environment 6 - Excellent Staffing 5 - Very Good Management and Leadership 5 - Very Good
7 May 2008	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very Good Environment 5 - Very Good Staffing 4 - Good

		Management and Leadership	4 - Good
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Terms we use in our report and what they mean

Action Plan - When we inspect a service, or investigate a complaint and the inspection report highlights an area for improvement; either through recommendations or requirements, the action plan sets out the actions the service will take in response.

Best practice statements/guidelines - This describes practices that have been shown to work best and to be achievable in specific areas of care. They are intended to guide practice and promote a consistent and cohesive approach to care.

Care Service - A service that provides care and is registered with us.

Complaints - We have a complaints procedure for dealing with any complaint about a registered care service or about us. Anyone can raise a concern with us - people using the service, their family and friends, carers and staff.

We investigate all complaints which can have more than one outcome. Depending on how complex the complaint is, the outcomes can be:

- upheld - where we agree there is a problem to be resolved
- not upheld - where we don't find a problem
- partially upheld - where we agree with some elements of the complaint but not all of them.

Enforcement - To protect people who use care services, the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001 gives the Care Commission powers to enforce the law. This means we can vary or impose new conditions of registration, which may restrict how a service operates. We can also serve an improvement notice on a service provider to make them improve their service within a set timescale. If they do not make these improvements we could issue a cancellation notice and cancel their registration.

Disclosure Scotland- Disclosure Scotland provides an accurate and responsive disclosure service to enhance security, public safety and protect the vulnerable in society. There are three types or levels of disclosure (i.e. criminal record check) available from Disclosure Scotland; basic, standard and enhanced. An enhanced check is required for people whose work regularly involves caring for, training, supervising or being in sole charge of children or adults at risk; or to register for child minding, day care and to act as foster parents or carers.

Participation - This describes processes that allow individuals and groups to develop and agree programmes, policy and procedures.

Personal Plan - This is a plan of how support and care will be provided. The plan is agreed between the person using the service (or their representative, or both of them) and the service provider. It is sometimes called a care plan mostly by local authorities or health boards when they commission care for people.

How you can use this report

Our inspection reports give care services detailed information about what they are doing well and not so well. We want them to use our reports to improve the services they provide if they need to.

Care services should share our inspection reports with the people who use their service, their families and carers. They can do this in many ways, for example by discussing with them what they plan to do next or by making sure our report is easily available.

People who use care services, their relatives and carers

We encourage you to read this report and hope that you find the information helpful when making a decision on whether or not to use the care service we have inspected. If you, or a family member or friend, are already using a care service, it is important that you know we have inspected that service and what we found. You may find it helpful to read previous inspection reports about his service.

The Care Commission

We use the information we gather from all our inspections to report to Scottish Ministers on how well Scotland's care services are performing. This information helps us to influence important changes they may make about how care services are provided.

Reader Information

This inspection report is published by the Care Commission. It is for use by the general public. You can get more copies of this report and others by downloading it from our website www.carecommission.com or by telephoning 0845 603 0890.

Translations and alternative formats

This publication is available in other formats and other languages on request.

Tha am foillseachadh seo ri fhaighinn ann an cruthannan is cànan eile ma nithear iarrtas.

অনুরোধসাপেক্ষে এই প্রকাশনাটি অন্য ফরম্যাট এবং অন্যান্য ভাষায় পাওয়া যায়।

هه بایتسد یم وونابز رگید روا رولکش رگید رپ شرازگ تعاشا هی

ਬੇਨਤੀ 'ਤੇ ਇਹ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਨ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰਨਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਉਪਲਬਧ ਹੈ।

یرخأ تاغل بو تاقيسينت تب بلطلا دن ع رفاوتم روشنملا اذه

本出版品有其他格式和其他語言備索。

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