

## Carolina House Trust - Fostering Fostering Service

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Type of inspection: Announced (short notice)  
Inspection completed on: 18 August 2017

**Service provided by:**  
Carolina House Trust

**Service provider number:**  
SP2003001613

**Care service number:**  
CS2004084075

## About the service

Carolina House Trust - Fostering Service is provided by Carolina House Trust, a charitable organisation which provides a range of services for children and young people. The organisation works in partnership with other agencies responsible for delivering services for looked after children.

The fostering service recruits, approves and supports foster carers across a number of local authority areas. At the time of inspection there were 24 foster care households and 27 children and young people were being supported in placements.

The strategic plan states:

"Our vision is that all children and young people irrespective of their background can grow up to be the best they can be.

This is achieved through the values and principles of:

"Community: an inclusive community involving everyone associated with Carolina House Trust from the Board to the children and young people all having a voice and encouraging participation.

Respect: mutual respect is the basis to all interaction within the CHT community.

Leadership: the principles of leadership practiced and encouraged at all levels within the CHT community."

## What people told us

"I am doing the Life Skills stuff, you learn stuff you didn't know."

"The placement support worker is good to talk with. She cares about all the children she works with."

"I like working for CHT, they are there when you need them."

"I had an issue recently and everyone got on board to sort it out."

"The activities are good, I have been to different days and really enjoyed them. I get to meet different people who work at Carolina and that's good because then they know who you are and you know them better too."

"There should be more activities for older kids."

"They always answer the phone, always available and they give good advice that makes sense."

"(the manager) is good. She listens to you and knows her stuff, she has a professional approach but also feels more informal when that is ok."

"It is really good working here, we all get on well."

"This is a good service, the values are right."

"It is like a family, that's what I like about it. Everybody knows you and how things are and you don't have to spend time going through it all with someone new."

## Self assessment

We did not ask the service to submit a self assessment.

## From this inspection we graded this service as:

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

## What the service does well

We wrote this report following a short notice announced inspection that took place between 27 July 2017 and 18 August 2017.

During our visit we considered a range of information gathered through our discussion with children and young people, foster carers, social workers and staff members and managers within the service. We also looked at records including children and young people's records and sample of records and documents kept by the service. We used this information to assess the quality of the service provided and to award grades.

Overall, our findings showed improving outcomes for children and young people. Compassionate and quality relationships were supporting stable placements. For most children and young people this was increasing their experience of being safe, healthy, nurtured and of achieving positive outcomes.

We found a clear focus on growth and achievement for children and young people and foster carers. The service was building on strong practice in this area with an initiative to introduce dynamic youth awards. We saw that foster carers' portfolios had been improved and that young people and foster carers were routinely and meaningfully involved in recruitment for the organisation.

The service was continuing to raise awareness and knowledge of GIRFEC (Getting It Right For Every Child a Scottish Government policy framework) and the SHANARRI well-being indicators which were being used effectively with a growing number of children and young people to measure progress and outcomes in the areas of safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included. Young people we spoke with told us they felt safe and respected, they said that they lead healthier lives and told us about their achievements in school or college or within their communities.

When we looked at records kept by the service, we saw these were overall sufficiently detailed and included information regarding person specific risk assessment and risk management. This supported careful matching arrangements and led to children, young people and foster carers having safer experiences. We noted there were low numbers of accidents and incidents reported to us by the service.

The organisational training programme was relevant to the service aims and objectives. People we spoke to confirmed that training was leading to improved experiences and outcomes and particularly noted work on attachment, permanence and mental health.

Our discussions with staff and foster carers demonstrated a stable and committed staff team. The team had been recruited through safer recruitment procedures and had embraced systems to support their development as reflective and critical practitioners; for example, within one to one supervision and within group supervision. This provided opportunity for them to further enhance skills and to offer an increased range of supports for foster carers and children and young people.

Our findings showed that the management team were skilled and knowledgeable about fostering services. This meant they were supporting development and improving quality in the service. We saw examples of effective quality assurance and quality improvement systems including analysis and strategic planning, which took into account the views of a wide range of stakeholders including foster carers and children.

Overall, we found there were very good outcomes for most children and young people and that areas for improvement had mostly already been identified by the service. This led us to assess quality of care and support and management and leadership as very good.

## What the service could do better

Within the information we gathered we found two examples where more supports could have been offered to foster carers and children during periods of transition. We discussed this with the managers of the service and noted that perhaps initial agreed levels of support to be provided by the service could have been better communicated with the foster carers.

When we looked at records, we saw improvements could have been made in planning and allocating additional supportive resources needed at specific times for an agreed period of time for some individuals. For the most part we could see that positive outcomes for children had been achieved, however, in one case this may have contributed to an unplanned ending and subsequent move for a child.

The service planned to continue to develop a rights based approach through raising awareness of continuing care and corporate parenting in relation to after care for children and young people. We agreed that this would enhance the quality of the service and promote improved outcomes for young people and young adults. We signposted the service to Scottish Government and CELCIS information about continuing care to be shared with young people.

In addition, the service had some early plans for raising awareness of the newly published Health and Social Care Standards with children and young people, foster carers and staff. The new standards are rights based and set out what we should expect when using health, social care or social work services in Scotland.

<http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2017/06/1327>

Managers and staff told us about plans to offer a more therapeutic approach within the service. We heard about plans to extend training on the Secure Base Model for staff and foster carers. This will ensure more consistent trauma informed practice and develop attachments through compassionate and nurturing relationships. We agreed that this would enhance the quality of the service and promote improved outcomes for children, young people and young adults.

In keeping with the service strategic plan to increase leadership capacity at all levels, we encouraged the service to consider how to further embed adaptive leadership at all levels. For example, to support more creativity and to reduce delays in testing out new ways of working, the service could review delegated decision making to allow the service manager to take more responsibility and be more accountable for service development and delivery. We thought that this may also provide greater opportunity for the leaders to be more involved in raising the profile of the organisation with partners and in contributing more to the national improvement agenda.

## 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](http://www.careinspectorate.com).

## Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings
23 Apr 2015	Announced (short notice)	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment Not assessed Staffing 5 - Very good Management and leadership 4 - Good
14 Apr 2014	Announced	Care and support 4 - Good Environment Not assessed Staffing 4 - Good Management and leadership 4 - Good
18 Apr 2013	Announced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment Not assessed Staffing 5 - Very good Management and leadership 4 - Good
27 Jul 2012	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment Not assessed Staffing 4 - Good Management and leadership 4 - Good
22 Oct 2010	Announced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment Not assessed Staffing Not assessed Management and leadership Not assessed
24 Nov 2009	Announced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment Not assessed Staffing 4 - Good Management and leadership Not assessed
12 Jan 2009	Announced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment Not assessed Staffing 4 - Good Management and leadership 4 - Good

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