

**Donaldson's College at West Coates**

**Service name**

Donaldson's College at West Coates

**Service address**

Donaldson's College  
West Coates

Edinburgh EH12 5JJ

**Type of care service**

School Care Accommodation Service

**Provider name**

Donaldson's Trust

**Service number**

CS2003011207

**Date of inspection**

12 March 2007

**Type of inspection**

Announced

**Care Commission Office**

South East Region Stuart House Eskmills  
Musselburgh EH21 7PB Tel: 0131 653  
4100

**Period since last inspection**

6 Months

## **Introduction**

Donaldson's College provides education, accommodation and care to 29 children and young people of school age.

The property is situated to the west of Edinburgh and consists of a mix of old and new buildings surrounded by a large grassed area with sports fields. The location is convenient for access to shops and public transport links.

The college aims to 'Provide high quality education and care to those children and young people placed in Donaldson's College for their education and to provide a well trained highly motivated staff group and high quality employment practices in a bi lingual environment via a commitment to equal opportunities.

The service has been registered with the Care Commission since 1st April 2002.

## **Basis of Report**

Before the visit:-

The service submitted an electronic Annual Return. The Care Commission Officer wrote to the service telling them when the visit would take place.

This service was inspected after a Regulation Support Assessment (RSA) was carried out to determine what level of support was necessary. The RSA is an assessment undertaken by the CCO which considers: complaint activity, changes in the provision of the service, natures of notifications made to the Care Commission by the service, action taken upon requirements etc.

This service was required to have a high level of support that resulted in an inspection based on the regulations, standards, the national inspection themes and any recommendations and requirements from previous inspections, complaints or other regulatory activity.

The inspection visit took place on Monday 12th and Tuesday 13th March 2007, by Care

Commission Officer's Diane Stewart and Philip Hacking referred to in this report as the Officers.

The Officer's spoke with:-

the Convenor

the Principal

Head of Residential services

Senior residential staff

Care Staff

and Young People, through an independent external translator

The Care Commission Officers also looked at a range of policies, procedures and records including the following:

Incident records

Personal Plans

Child Protection Policy

Risk assessments

Personnel files

And spent time observing how staff members worked with the young people.

The Care Commission Officers took all of the above into account and reported on whether the service was meeting the following National Care Standards, School Care Accommodation Services.

Standard 3: Care and Protection

Standard 5: Comfort, Safety and Security

Standard 6: Support Arrangements

Standard 7: Management and staffing

Standard 11: Eating Well

The following themes were also examined; Safe Recruitment, Child Protection, Use of restraint of children and care planning.

The Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001 and associated Regulations were also taken into account.

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.

### **Action taken on requirements in last Inspection Reports**

There was one requirement made at the previous inspection visit in September 2006 regarding food provision, which had been satisfactorily addressed.

### **Comment on Self-Evaluation**

No self evaluation document was returned from this service.

### **View of Service Users**

The young people from the residency were spoken with through an independent translator. Young

people commented that they liked the residency and had good friends there. They felt safe in the residency and felt able to approach staff if they were not happy or were concerned about anything.

One group of young people commented that they were often 'bored' in the residency and had few peers to sign to. The Head of Care commented and evidenced that the young people have a wide variety of activities they can access but frequently choose not to. The residency is also making links with other organisations to involve more signing persons within the residency, including two mentoring pilots which are due to commence within the next few months.

Other young people recognised that there had been improvements to the food but they felt that it "still wasn't great". See National Care Standard 11. (Eating Well)

### **View of Carers**

Six placing social workers were contacted and asked their views regarding the care of the young people and their working relationship with Donaldson's College. All of the social workers commented very positively regarding the care the young people received within the residency. Comments included:

"There has been an increased language and socialisation skills, confidence has grown"

"Donaldsons provides an appropriate level of care and education"

"My young person's key worker is very good. I receive weekly communication from her and she holds a positive understanding of his needs and behaviour".

The social workers gave comments regarding the school which were fed back to the Principal and Convenor.

Six relatives/carers were spoken with by telephone to gauge their views of the service being provided to young people in the college. Topics for discussion related to communication, support, reviews and activities provided in the school. Comments included:

'I cannot fault them in the residence. I am always kept informed of what is going on with my son and I appreciate the support of key worker and senior staff there and that is reassuring.'

'The staff are wonderful. I am just so sorry that some of the really experienced staff have left and my son really misses them. Overall there is a good core group of staff and they do a great job!'

'I am looking forward to all the opportunities that will emerge from moving to a brand new purpose built school in West Lothian. I just hope that all the links with other schools and agencies in West Lothian is being continued. I also hope the school will not lose any staff with their invaluable 'signing' skills.'

'Communication is excellent. I am always kept updated with what is going on with my son in the school. I know they have a huge choice of activities to participate in- but he is just interested in football.'

'We really value the attention to detail in relation to reviews. We are always involved and our views as parents are always taken into consideration and any issues are always discussed.'

'My son really enjoys life in Donaldson's and feels well supported by both residential and teaching staff.'

## **Regulations / Principles**

### **National Care Standards**

#### **National Care Standard Number 3: School Care Accommodation Services - Care and Protection**

##### **Strengths**

The school gave good attention to young people's care and protection and all young people had an identified key worker. Parents spoken with commented positively about the role of key workers in the college and advised that communication with staff was always helpful and that staff were approachable.

The college had clear policies and procedures for child protection, anti-bullying and restraint. Appropriate arrangements were in place to supervise young people's access to internet, DVD's or videos. Young people had access to information on other sources of support, such as Childline.

All staff spoken with recognised their duty to keep any information about young people confidential. All records of physical intervention were clearly recorded and updated by a member of the Senior Management Team when this was appropriate. All staff had received child protection training and Crisis and Aggression Limitation and Management (CALM) and were re-accredited annually.

Members of the Senior Management team played a significant role in fostering and maintaining a positive atmosphere through the school. On occasions when young people had difficulties in managing their behaviour, care and teaching staff worked well together to handle such situations sensitively.

##### **Areas for Development**

No areas of development were identified at this inspection.

#### **National Care Standard Number 5: School Care Accommodation Services - Comfort, Safety and Security**

##### **Strengths**

Aspects of this standard relating to fire safety were not inspected (See basis of report).

The accommodation was clean and included home comforts within the lounge areas. Young people

had opportunity to personalise their bedrooms, if they chose to, and the young people commented that they liked the residence.

The school had a security policy in place, security door entry system and security cameras. Staff were aware of procedures to follow out of hours. Young people commented that they felt safe in the residence.

Some young people had been given the opportunity to experience off site activities. Staff commented that risk assessments were performed for all activities. Staff underwent a driving test to ensure they were safe to transport the young people around in the school cars and commented that seat belts were worn at all times.

Incident and accident forms were completed by staff, and parents commented that staff informed them of these promptly. The Head of Care audited the forms on a monthly basis.

### **Areas for Development**

The overall environment of the school buildings and grounds was discussed in terms of maintaining security. It was agreed that the school would continue to review the security of the grounds and take appropriate measures to reduce any risks.

### **National Care Standard Number 6: School Care Accommodation Services - Support Arrangements (for those schools which provide specialist education and care)**

#### **Strengths**

Each young person had an individual care plan. A sample of six of these were examined by the Officers. Young peoples' health, education and care needs were assessed on admission. Staff gave good attention by involving young people and their families (where appropriate) in the care planning process. They also involved other agencies to support individuals' care needs. It was noted that risk assessments were all updated and a significant amount of detailed information was incorporated in each of the young people's files. Plans were easy to follow.

It was apparent that the school gave considerable attention to promoting pupils' personal and social development. Effective strategies were in place to support young people in managing their behaviour.

### **Areas for Development**

No areas of development were identified at this inspection.

## **National Care Standard Number 7: School Care Accommodation Services - Management and Staffing**

### **Strengths**

The school had appropriate policies and procedures in place, including a whistle blowing policy and accident/incident recording system. All accidents and incidents were audited on a monthly basis by senior staff.

Care staff commented that they received regular supervision, usually every two weeks, and had opportunity to attend courses as part of their continued professional development. Staff felt supported by the Head of Care.

Parents were encouraged to contact the school and visit the residency. Parents were invited to and involved in review meetings regarding their child. They were also invited to attend other school events.

Within the residency there was a suggestion/complaints box for the young people to express their views. All the young people spoken with expressed that they enjoyed their time within the residence and could approach staff if they were not happy.

The school had a robust safe recruitment system in place. A system was currently being developed to regularly update staff's Disclosure Scotland check which the Officers regarded as good practice within the organisation. Staff were aware of the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) and the Codes of Practice.

The Head of Care had in place a training plan. Evidence of training attended was within staff personnel files. Staff commented that they were involved with the evaluation of their work and discussed this as part of a team meeting. An improvement plan had been produced.

### **Areas for Development**

While staff had regular supervision meetings, there was no appraisal system in place for staff. In addition the Head of Care did not receive formal supervision from the Principal. The Principal confirmed that an appraisal system had been developed by the organisation and it was planned to roll this out to staff after Easter in addition this had also been identified within the school's Business

Plan. The Officers will review the implementation of this system at the next inspection visit.

There was no infection control policy in place. The school had identified within their improvement and business plan the need for an infection control policy and had started work towards its development. (See Requirement 1)

Care staff have received no formal training on the administration of medicines. The school had sourced external training on the administration of medication for care staff. (See Requirement 2)

One young person's condition necessitated his self administration of emergency medication. Care staff had no training in the administration technique to be prepared for the possibility that the young person may require support with this. During feedback the principal commented that she would arrange the training for staff. (See Requirement 3)

Staff commented to the Officers that there was reduced involvement from the principal within the residency. The Officers discussed this with the Convenor of the organisation who confirmed that the Board required the Principal to have a more strategic role within the organisation and manage the relocation of the school. The Head of Care and Principal were working to enable staff to adjust to the changes in their respective roles and to develop new staff expectations of the Principal and Head of care. (See Recommendation 1)

Staff managed some of the young people's pocket money. There was no checking system in place to monitor cash balances between each shift. (See Recommendation 2)

## **National Care Standard Number 11: School Care Accommodation Services - Eating Well**

### **Strengths**

Staff commented that the new Head Chef had made huge improvements to the meals and menus offered. In discussion the Head Chef advised that he had started a 'Hungry for Success' group which had two children representatives. This group reviewed menus and there were plans to introduce a new 6 week menu rota after Easter. This would include 'take-away' lunchtime meals for young people who wished to play sport outdoors over the lunchtime period. There were plans to ensure that future menus would also be pictorial.

The Head Chef involved Primary School children in cooking meals and trying different dishes once

a week. He planned to involve local suppliers in bringing in different produce to show and discuss with the children. The Head Chef had engaged the young people through a "Ready, Steady, Cook" competition, feedback questionnaires and becoming involved in the residency.

The Head Chef was aware of which young people had special dietary needs or needed assistance/adaptions at mealtimes and was able to cater for these. He confirmed that all staff working in the kitchen held basic food hygiene certificates.

Staff confirmed that the dentist visited the school every year.

### **Areas for Development**

One member of staff commented that she had observed staff in the dining room communicating to each other without using sign language in front of the children. The Principal agreed to remind staff to sign in front of the children.

It was agreed that the school would continue to further improve the food choices and involvement of young people.

It was observed that tooth brushes within the residency were stored inappropriately. (See Recommendation 3)

## **Enforcement**

There has been no enforcement action taken by the Care Commission in respect of this service.

## **Other Information**

The Principal and Head of Care were informed about the new Fire Safety Guidance from the Scottish Executive.

## **Requirements**

1. The school must develop and implement an infection control policy and procedure within the residency.

This is in order to comply with:

SSI 2002/114 Regulation 4(1)(d) - Welfare of Service Users

Timescale: within 3 months from the publication of this report.

2. The school must ensure that all care staff involved in the administration of medication receive appropriate training in order to carry out this task.

This is in order to comply with:

SSI 2002/114 Regulation 13(c)(i) - Staffing

SSI 2002/114 Regulation 4 (10(a) - Welfare of Service Users

Timescale: within 2 months from the publication of this report.

3. The school must ensure that any young person who requires specific emergency medication has a written management plan completed in conjunction with the child's GP and parents, and in addition staff receive any appropriate training.

This is in order to comply with:

SSI 2002/114 Regulation 13(c)(i) - Staffing

SSI 2002/114 Regulation 4 (10(a) - Welfare of Service Users

Timescale: within 1 months from the publication of this report.

## **Recommendations**

1. The school should maintain a continuous review of the effectiveness of how it communicates within the whole staff group during this period of major change for all involved in the service.

National Care Standards for School Care Accommodation Services, Standard 7 - Management and Staffing

2. The school should implement a system within the residency to monitor and check pocket money stored on behalf of some young people.

National Care Standards for School Care Accommodation Services, Standard 7 - Management and Staffing

3. The school should ensure that tooth brushes within the residency are stored appropriately.

National Care Standards for School Care Accommodation Services, Standard 11 - Eating Well

**Diane Stewart**  
**Care Commission Officer**