

# **Quality Assurance in Children's Residential Care**

## **Service level summary report**

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Finally, we would like to extend our thanks to the small number of young people who completed and returned their own questionnaires and took part in consultations, providing insightful observations to add depth to the project.

# Quality Assurance in Children's Residential Care

## 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Background

Since 2007, an annual questionnaire-based survey of children's residential care has taken place in West Sussex. This year is the seventh year that the survey has taken place. The residential units involved were Cissbury Lodge, Orchard House, High Trees, 18 Teasel Close, Seaside, Beechfield Secure Children's Home and May House. The stakeholders involved were unit staff, agency staff, parents, professionals and children and young people.

### 1.2 Aim of the project

This project aimed to assess the quality of children's residential care in West Sussex and to identify where improvements might be made.

## 2 Methodology

Questionnaires were developed to capture the views of the various stakeholders. In the main, the questions used in the 2013 survey questionnaire were identical to those used in previous years, allowing changes to be identified over time. However, in 2012 some questions were changed or added to reflect the minimum standards (DfE, 2011) and Ofsted inspection guidance and annual reports (Ofsted, 2011; Ofsted 2010).

All units developed their own questionnaires or other methods to gain the views of children and young people. This ensured that both the age and understanding of those completing them were taken into account. Questionnaires to unit staff, agency staff, parents and professionals were also tailored to help respondents complete them. Additionally, the questionnaires were further tailored for each individual unit.

Each unit was supplied with a pack of questionnaires. These were then distributed to unit staff, agency staff, parents and professionals. Individual units monitored the number of questionnaires sent out in order to establish a response rate (see section 2.1).

The questionnaires related to children and young people who received either day care or were resident at the units between the 14<sup>th</sup> of January 2013 and the 11<sup>th</sup> of February 2013. The questionnaires asked respondents about their experiences of individual units over the past year.

The research findings are set out in seven separate reports – one for each unit. Individual unit reports are available directly from the units concerned.

The summary of each unit's findings identifies issues that may require further investigation. For individual units, these issues are detailed in each unit's own report. In this summary report, only issues that have been found in more than one unit are highlighted to reveal cross-unit issues (see page 8).

Something is considered to be an issue when a minimum of two negative responses have been made to a statement contained within the questionnaire (eg 'disagree' or 'strongly disagree'; 'poor' or 'very poor').

## 2.1 Response rate

The number of questionnaires sent out by units and the response rates are detailed in the table below.

Unit		Sent out by unit	Received	Response rate
<b>Cissbury Lodge</b>	Staff	40	24	60
	Professionals	30	18	60
	Agency staff	0	0	0
	Parents	34	15	44
	Children	34	5	14
<b>Orchard House</b>	Staff	53	19	35
	Professionals	7	3	42
	Agency staff	10	8	80
	Parents	30	9	30
	Children	7	7	100
<b>High Trees</b>	Staff	18	12	67
	Professionals	14	3	21
	Agency staff	3	0	0
	Parents	21	8	38
	Children	4	4	100
<b>May House</b>	Staff	14	9	64
	Professionals	6	4	67
	Agency staff	2	1	50
	Parents	4	0	0
	Children	-	-	-
<b>Teasel Close</b>	Staff	14	12	86
	Professionals	4	1	25
	Agency staff	1	1	100
	Parents	2	2	100
	Children	-	-	-
<b>Seaside</b>	Staff	17	11	65
	Professionals	18	4	22
	Agency staff	3	2	67
	Parents	5	0	0
	Children	5	5	100
<b>Beechfield</b>	Staff	16	15	94
	Ed.staff	8	2	25
	Professionals	14	5	36
	Agency staff	3	3	100
	Parents	5	1	20
	Children	4	4	100
<b>Total</b>	Staff	172	102	59
	Education staff	8	2	25
	Professionals	93	38	41
	Agency staff	22	15	68
	Parents	101	35	35
	Children	57	28	49

### 3 Service level summary of results

This project set out to assess the quality of care provided by seven of the county's residential units. This was achieved through the use of questionnaires designed to capture the views and experiences of stakeholders involved with individual units. A total of 220 questionnaires were completed and returned giving an overall response rate of 49%. The results were presented in seven separate reports to the seven units involved in the project. This service level summary report only presents an overview of the project and selected results; therefore, it is supplementary to the seven individual unit reports in which more detailed information can be found.

#### 3.1 Overall rating of the standard of care provided by units

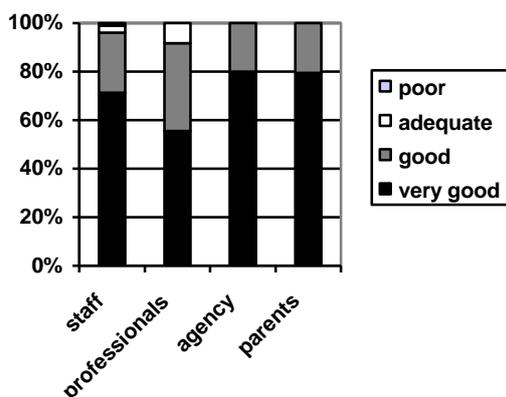
Unit staff, agency staff, professionals and parents were asked to rate the quality of care provided by the units. The table below shows that the care was rated very highly with more than nine in ten of respondents (96%) regarding it as either good or very good.

**Table 1: Quality of care: responses aggregated from all questionnaires for all units**

<b>Unit</b>	<b>Rating</b>				
	<b>Very good</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Adequate</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Very poor</b>
Beechfield	17	6	2	0	0
Cissbury Lodge	35	17	3	0	0
High Trees	15	7	0	0	0
May House	10	3	1	0	0
Orchard House	30	8	0	1	0
Seaside	11	6	0	0	0
Teasel Close	13	1	0	0	0
<b>Total (2013)</b>	<b>70%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>&lt;1%</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Total (2012)</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Total (2011)</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>&lt;1%</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Total (2010)</b>	<b>64%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>&lt;1%</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Total (2009)</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Total (2008)</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>

## Quality of care: comparison by respondent (all units aggregated)

The chart below shows that parents and agency staff were more likely to rate the quality of care as 'very good' than others.



## Quality of care: child disability homes, and looked after children and secure homes

The following two tables compare this year's results with last year's. As can be seen, results for the child disability homes show a similar proportion of stakeholders reporting the quality of care as 'very good' in 2013 compared with 2012 (Table 2). Meanwhile, for the looked after children and secure homes, a significantly higher proportion of stakeholders reported the quality of care as 'very good' in 2013 compared with 2012 (Table 3).

**Table 2: Quality of care: aggregated responses from all questionnaires for Cissbury Lodge, High Trees, Orchard House and May House (child disability homes)**

<b>2013</b> All responses from unit staff, agency staff, professionals and parents aggregated (130 of 133)	<b>Rating 2013</b>				
	<b>Very good</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Adequate</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Very poor</b>
Overall rating of the standard of child care provided by the four units	90 (69.2%)	35 (26.9%)	4 (3.1%)	1 (0.8%)	0 (0%)
<b>2012</b> All responses from unit staff, agency staff, professionals and parents aggregated (142 of 148)	<b>Rating 2012</b>				
	<b>Very good</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Adequate</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Very poor</b>
Overall rating of the standard of child care provided by the four units	100 (70.4%)	38 (26.8%)	4 (2.8%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

**Table 3: Quality of care: aggregated responses from all questionnaires for Seaside, Teasel and Beechfield (looked after children and secure homes)**

<b>2013</b> All responses from unit staff, agency staff, professionals and parents aggregated (56 of 59)	<b>Rating 2013</b>				
	<b>Very good</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Adequate</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Very poor</b>
Overall rating of the standard of child care provided by the three units	41 (73.2%)	13 (23.2%)	2 (3.6%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
<b>2012</b> All responses from unit staff, agency staff, professionals and parents aggregated (59)	<b>Rating 2012</b>				
	<b>Very good</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Adequate</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Very poor</b>
Overall rating of the standard of child care provided by the three units	27 (45.8%)	25 (42.4%)	7 (11.9%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

### 3.2 Selected outcome areas

The selected statements in the two following tables have been chosen to represent selected areas of the National Minimum Standards for children’s homes (DfE, 2011) and Ofsted inspection guidance (2011a, 2011b). The results are aggregated from all questionnaires returned from all units and from all stakeholders (unit staff, agency staff, professionals and parents).

*Note: discrepancies in percentages are due to rounding.*

**Table 4: Selected outcome areas: aggregated responses from all questionnaires for Cissbury Lodge, High Trees, Orchard House and May House**

All responses from unit staff, agency staff, professionals and parents aggregated	Rating				
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Children and young people’s health needs have been actively identified (129 responses)	49% (63)	44% (57)	5% (6)	2% (2)	1% (1)
Children and young people have been safe from bullying and discrimination (129 responses)	57% (74)	34% (44)	7% (9)	0% (0)	2% (2)
The education of children and young people has been actively promoted (125 responses)	42% (52)	45% (56)	13% (16)	0% (0)	1% (1)
Children and young people have been encouraged and supported in developing and maintaining positive relationships (130 responses)	45% (59)	45% (58)	10% (13)	0% (0)	0% (0)
The unit has provided a comfortable, well-maintained environment for the young people who live in the unit or visit for day care (130 responses)	47% (61)	45% (59)	5% (6)	2% (3)	1% (1)
The unit has promoted equality with regard to gender, ethnicity, culture, disability, faith and sexual orientation (128 responses)	48% (62)	40% (51)	12% (15)	0% (0)	0% (0)
The unit has placed the well-being of children and young people at the centre of its practice (130 responses)	58% (76)	37% (48)	4% (5)	1% (1)	0% (0)

**Table 5: Selected outcome areas: aggregated responses from all questionnaires for Seaside, Teasel and Beechfield**

All responses from unit staff, agency staff, professionals and parents aggregated	Rating				
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Children and young people’s health needs have been actively identified (59 responses)	49% (29)	49% (29)	2% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Children and young people have been safe from bullying and discrimination (59 responses)	29% (17)	51% (30)	17% (10)	3% (2)	0% (0)
The education of children and young people has been actively promoted (58 responses)	48% (28)	41% (24)	9% (5)	2% (1)	0% (0)
Children and young people have been encouraged and supported in developing and maintaining positive relationships (59 responses)	56% (33)	42% (25)	3% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)
The unit has provided a comfortable, well-maintained environment for the young people who live in the unit or visit for day care (59 responses)	36% (21)	54% (32)	7% (4)	3% (2)	0% (0)
The unit has promoted equality with regard to gender, ethnicity, culture, disability, faith and sexual orientation (59 responses)	51% (30)	46% (27)	3% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)
The unit has placed the well-being of children and young people at the centre of its practice (59 responses)	64% (38)	30% (18)	5% (3)	0% (0)	0% (0)

### **3.3 Issues identified for further investigation**

#### **3.3.1 Issues identified for 2013**

Individual reports identified issues requiring investigation that were particular to individual units. In some units more issues were identified than in others. Although it is tempting to compare the results of one unit against another, it must be remembered that, in general, the units have differing remits associated with the children and young people using these facilities.

Managers and staff at the units should investigate these issues, draw their own informed conclusions, and consider whether and how any identified issues might be tackled. Units may wish to develop their own action or improvement plans based on their own survey reports (and inspection reports). Additionally, it is recommended that a service level improvement plan is developed to consider how cross-unit issues can be responded to.

In addition to the local issues identified in individual unit reports, a number of issues were found across units. These are shown below.

1. The following issue was found across three units:
  - Children and young people have had healthy, balanced diets (Beechfield, Orchard House, Seaside).
2. The following issues were found across two units:
  - Staff have had a good quality learning and development programme to update their skills (Orchard House, Beechfield).
  - The unit has provided a comfortable, well-maintained environment for the young people who live in the unit or visit for day care (Seaside, May House).

## 4 Related documentation

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*Statement of Purpose: High Trees*. (2013). West Sussex County Council.

*Statement of Purpose: May House*. (2012). West Sussex County Council.

*Statement of Purpose: Orchard House*. (2011). West Sussex County Council.

*Statement of Purpose: Seaside*. (2012). West Sussex County Council.

*Statement of Purpose: Teasel Close*. (2012). West Sussex County Council.

## **5 Key points from Ofsted annual report 2010/2011**

The following includes the main points relating to children's residential care from Ofsted's annual report 2010/2011 (Ofsted, 2011c).

### **Outstanding homes**

Leadership was identified as a key element in the success of outstanding homes. In these homes managers tended to be visible, involved in the day-to-day running of the homes and interacted frequently with both staff and young people.

#### ***Management and staffing***

- Leaders in these homes set the vision and priorities for improvement.
- Set expectations for the home.
- These homes had a strong sense of common purpose.
- Staff were involved in the improvement process, their ideas were invited and their professional contribution respected.
- Managers in these homes were characterised by the openness and honesty of their leadership style.
- Staff could expect frequent and honest feedback.
- Homes were committed to learning from their mistakes and there was a 'no blame' culture.
- Any issues were dealt with quickly.
- The best homes had a committed, caring and effective staff team.
- The team provided a nurturing, supportive environment with clear and consistent boundaries.
- Staff worked with young people to build their resilience and self-confidence.
- Staff managed behaviour consistently.
- The best homes demonstrated excellent partnership working with a wide range of services and agencies.
- The best homes were fully part of their community, involving the young people in positive ways.
- These homes had robust procedures to deal with unauthorised absences and had strong links with the police.

#### ***Education***

- The most effective homes had a close working relationship with schools and colleges.
- Staff in the most effective homes recognised the importance of attending school events such as parents' evenings and personal education planning meetings.
- In the most effective homes staff demonstrated a pro-active approach to young people's education.
- Staff were often actively involved in homework projects.
- Educational attainment and attendance were encouraged and celebrated.
- Placement plans set clear educational objectives and identified how these would be supported.
- The most effective homes were well resourced to support young people outside of schools hours.
- Young people were supplied with facilities that were conducive to study.

## **5.2 Secure children's homes**

### **Good and outstanding homes**

- In the best homes young people received highly individualised care and support.
- The young people were fully involved in discussions about their future.
- Staff helped young people prepare for adulthood and develop their confidence and self-esteem.