



**Health
Information
and Quality
Authority**

An tÚdarás Um Fhaisnéis
agus Cáilíocht Sláinte

**Social Services
Inspectorate**

A

HIGH SUPPORT UNIT

IN THE

HSE South AREA

Follow up Inspection report

INSPECTION REPORT ID NUMBER: 306

Fieldwork Date: 24th April 2009

Publication Date: 11th May 2009.

SSI Inspection Period: 11

Centre ID Number: 66

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Contents

1. Introduction

2. Findings

3. Updated Action plan

1. Introduction

The Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA), Social Services Inspectorate (SSI) carried out an announced follow up inspection of a high support unit in the Health Services Executive (HSE), Dublin Mid-Leinster Area (DML) under Section 69 (2) of the Child Care Act 1991. Orla Murphy, inspector, and Patrick Bergin, Inspector Manager carried out the inspection on the 24th April 2009. The purpose of this inspection was to assess the HSE action plan in terms of compliance with the recommendations made in the last inspection (*see inspection report ID 243*).

As part of this follow up inspection the inspectors spoke with the unit manager, one staff member and one of the three young people resident. One young person chose not to be interviewed by the inspectors and the remaining young person was at school, outside of the area.

The unit's statement of purpose and function had It stated that the unit was for four boys aged between 12 and 15 on admission who were from the HSE South region. It offered high support on account of the special needs and vulnerability of the boys.

This entailed higher ratios of staff to children than would be found in a mainstream residential unit, and included therapeutic input.

At the time of this follow up inspection there were three boys living at the unit; two aged fourteen years and one boy aged ten. All three young people had social workers who visited them regularly. Only two young people were present for part of this follow up inspection as both were in school on site and the younger boy was attending school in the locality.

The admission of a boy aged ten years, in December 2008, is a concern as this age group is outside the unit's purpose and function and is contrary to good practice guidance. Children under twelve years should ideally be placed foster care. The report "***The placement of children aged 12 and under in residential care in Ireland***" (SSI 2007) states that " research and good practice overwhelmingly support the principle that young children in particular should experience stable parenting in families that meet their needs and promote their welfare and development". On discussion with the Manager, the inspectors learned that this boy will be moving on to a more suitable placement, as he does not require high support care.

Two of the boys had been resident in the unit at the time of the previous inspection and one boy had moved to the unit in late 2008. All three young people had plans to move on from the unit in the coming months. One boy was undertaking a transitional move back to the residential unit he was admitted from; another boy had been referred to another residential unit in the region and the other boy was being considered to move home. All of the three children had up to date care plan reviews in place. One boy attended a school in the local area and the two remaining boys attended the established school within the unit. The boy that spoke to the inspector stated that he liked the unit and felt safe there, but disliked its location as it was on the grounds of a psychiatric facility. He felt that this reflected badly on him; labelling him negatively to his peers, when describing where he lived. He had positive feelings towards his key workers and felt that staff had addressed issues he had raised in the previous inspection. This young person was aware of his rights and requested to

read his files and documentation. This request was passed to the Unit Manager during this visit and he stated he would look into the request.

This young person also expressed concern that he had not seen his social worker in a long time. Records examined in the unit supported this, indicating he had not seen his social worker in ten weeks. The unit manager has since confirmed this young person met with his social worker following the follow up inspection.

The inspectors observed positive and warm interactions between staff and the young people during the inspection and the young people appeared happy and relaxed at all times.

2. Acknowledgements

The inspectors would like to thank all those who took part in the inspection for their co-operation and hospitality.

3. Findings

The inspectors found that of the nineteen recommendations made at the previous inspection; thirteen were met, three were partly met and three were not met.

Details of each recommendation are provided in the action plan attached.

Recommendations not met

Recommendation thirteen: The recommendation of the serious incident review group regarding a senior case management review has still not been acted upon by the HSE.

Recommendation nineteen: The HSE has still not found alternative premises.

Recommendations met in part

Recommendation three: The HSE (SW) unit manager has undertaken training needs audit which was seen and fire safety training has been attended by staff. Some staff still need to attend Children's First training and course dates have been identified for coming months.

Recommendation seven: All young people's files now have a section for complaints and a draft service-wide policy is awaiting finalisation.

Recommendation eight: There was evidence that the unit manager has begun to address children's rights regarding this via the purpose and function document and is awaiting agreement from the Child Care Manager in respect of this.

Social Services Inspectorate

Action Plan for Inspection No. 243 / 306

Centre ID: 66
HSE Area: HSE South

Date Action Plan Dispatched: 22nd December 2008.
Date Action Plan Updated: 11th May 2009.

No.	Recommendation	Action to be taken	Person Responsible	Implementation Date	SSI Response
1	The HSE should ensure that maximum attendance at staff meetings is achieved.	The Unit Manager will review the roster and present his findings to the Unit's Management Advisory Group.	Unit Manager	27/2/2008	Recommendation met.
2	The HSE should ensure that practice in vetting and the maintenance of personnel files is changed in order to bring them up to standard.	From now on all recruitment will be carried out centrally by HSE South's HR Dept.	Personnel Dept, HSE South	With immediate effect	Recommendation met.
3	The HSE should arrange for a training needs audit for the unit, and provide staff with training in fire safety and <i>Children First</i> .	The Unit Manager is carrying out an audit of training needs and arranging fire safety and Children First Training.	Unit Manager	27/02/09	Recommendation met in part.
4	The HSE should review the unit's system of supervision, and ensure that it becomes regular and conforms in all respects to the policy, and that the unit manager co-ordinates and evaluates the system.	A review is to be undertaken by Unit Manager & Co-ordinator Children's Residential Care Services. As per revised policy the Unit Manager will be responsible for the evaluation of supervision	Unit Manager & Co-ordinator Children's Res. Care Services Unit Manager	Feb 2009	Recommendation met.

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5	The HSE should ensure that the monitoring officer is notified of any threats of self harm, and of any incident in which a child is separated from his peers.	Any threat of self-harm or any incident in which a child is separated from his peers will be reported to the monitoring officer.	Unit Manager	With immediate effect	Recommendation met.
6	The HSE should ensure that the unit's register contains all the information required by regulations, and that where information has been amended a new entry is made in the register clearly indicating which one it replaces.	The Unit Manager will ensure that all information required is properly recorded and any amendments appropriately noted.	Unit Manager	With immediate effect	Recommendation met.
7	The HSE should arrange for practice in the unit on complaints to be reviewed and brought up to standard.	The Service is currently developing a service-wide policy which will be implemented in this unit.	Co-ordinator Children's Residential Care Services	April 2009	Recommendation met in part. The HSE should finalise by 30/6/09.
8	The HSE should arrange for practice in the unit on children's access to records be reviewed and brought up to standard.	The Unit Manager to review the practice with the care team with a view to ensuring children's rights in this regard is respected.	Unit Manager	01/02/09	Recommendation met in part. The HSE should finalise by 30/6/09.

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9	The HSE should arrange for the social work department and the unit manager to review the supervision of access in one case.	Ongoing review at placement meetings and statutory reviews.	Principal Social Worker & Unit Manager	Ongoing	Recommendation met.
10	The HSE should ensure that practice in the provision of food is discussed with the children.	The matter of the provision of food is to be discussed with the children at a house meeting and the matter will subsequently be discussed at a team meeting.	Unit Manager	26/1/2009	Recommendation met.
11	The HSE should review the practice of separating children from their peers, and should ensure that each incident where this measure is used is notified to the supervising social worker and monitoring officer, as it occurs, as a significant event.	The Unit Manager to review the practice with the team, discuss with monitoring officer and bring findings to the attention of Unit Management Advisory group. The Unit Manager to ensure that supervising social worker and monitoring officer to be informed.	Unit Manager	By 27/2/2009 Effective immediately	Recommendation met.

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12	The HSE should arrange for the policy on unauthorised absence to be revised.	The Unit's Management Advisory group will review the policy.	Childcare Manager	By 27/2/2009	Recommendation met.
	The HSE should ensure that the recommendation of the serious incident review group regarding a senior case management review receives an appropriate response without further delay.	The Unit Manager has written to the PSW in this regard. A meeting is to be organized by Child Care Manager in this regard.	Childcare Manager	27/2/2009	Recommendation not met. HSE to address by 30 th June 2009.
14	The HSE should ensure that the unit manager reviews practice in respect of keeping children's property safe.	The matter of the keeping children's property safe is to be discussed with the children at a house meeting and the matter will subsequently be discussed at a team meeting.	Unit Manager	26/1/2009	Recommendation met.
15	The HSE should arrange for the bedtime routine in the unit to be reviewed by unit staff in consultation with the senior clinical psychologist, and ensure that staff receive refresher training on safeguarding.	Some discussion on this matter has already taken place and a consultation with the senior clinical psychologist will be scheduled for 30/1/2009. Safeguarding training to be provided to staff.	Unit Manager	30/1/2009 27/02/09	Recommendation met.

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16	The HSE should ensure that the complaint of one child about his education is responded to formally without delay.	The Deputy Unit Manager wrote to the school and the original number of teaching hours were restored on 17 th Nov 2008. In response she was informed as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Student studying for Junior Cert has 10 subjects. Music teacher, left, was not replaced, no-one else on staff can teach music therefore subject not available to student. ➤ Timetable changed due to staff changes and reconfiguration to cover vacant posts. 	Deputy Unit Manager and Education Co-ordinator	Oct 2008	Recommendation met.
17	The HSE should arrange for a comprehensive up-to-date health and safety assessment to be made once the building work required for fire safety is complete.	The review has been undertaken and the Unit has been certified as compliant.	HSE Technical Services and Unit Manager	Nov 2008	Recommendation met.
18	The HSE should provide the inspectors with written confirmation of compliance with fire safety and building control regulations in accordance with standard 10.19 once the works required for fire safety are carried out.	Please find letter attached.	HSE Technical Services and Unit Manager	Nov 2008	Recommendation met.

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19	The HSE should find alternative premises that are appropriate for looking after children in care.	This matter will be discussed with senior HSE Management	Childcare Manager	Immediately.	Recommendation not met.