
SOCIAL SERVICES STATEMENT

ADULT SERVICES

Inspection of Community Resource and Internal Supported Living Homecare Services

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) recently carried out an inspection of the Community Resource and Internal Supported Living homecare services. The inspection comprised of a review of records, feedback surveys provided by staff working in the service and telephone discussions and face-to-face visits with service users. The Inspector tested compliance with regulations and achievement of outcomes.

I am pleased to say that the inspection found that, overall, regulatory compliance was good. Whilst the inspection identified some areas where improvement is required, these were areas where plans for change are already in place. The report found that robust organisational and governance arrangements ensure that the service runs smoothly and delivers good quality support with a strong focus on development and improvement.

Most importantly, the report highlighted that people appear happy with the support they receive, and their physical, mental, and social needs are recognised and supported. The inspection found that services showed commitment to achieving positive outcomes for their service users. The Inspector also described interactions between people and staff as warm and positive, and recognised that staff are familiar with the needs and likes of the individuals they support.

I am very pleased with the outcome of the inspection and wish to express my thanks to staff for their dedication and commitment to achieving good outcomes for all individuals receiving services.

Recruitment & Retention Initiatives

While the availability of home care has improved in recent months, concerns remain about the fragility of the care market and issues also remain with the assessment of social work cases. Recruiting qualified social workers and occupational therapists remains a real issue for Adult Services and, unfortunately, this continues to impact on how quickly assessments can be carried out. To address ongoing issues with the recruitment and retention of staff within Adult Services, the service is working closely with colleagues from the Council's Communications Team to raise the profile of Adult Services vacancies by refreshing the branding and marketing activity, and improving web and social media presence. The service firmly believes that current social workers are the best advocates to encourage others to make a positive career choice to join Adult Services in Cardiff.

Work also continues with Cardiff Cares Academy, which is supporting the service to recruit new care workers. Since it was set up in 2021, a large-scale recruitment campaign has been organised, including adverts on buses, train stations and billboards. In addition, an animated television advertisement, radio advertisements and social media were used to promote opportunities within the care sector. To date, 256 people have been supported by the Academy and 86 have found jobs within the sector.

Dementia Friendly Ambassador Volunteer Scheme

World Alzheimer's Day takes place on 21 September each year. This year, the day was marked in Cardiff by the launch of a new Dementia Friendly Ambassador Volunteer scheme. The scheme encourages people to give their time to help the city on its journey to becoming a more dementia friendly city.

Ambassador volunteers will raise awareness of the small changes local shops, businesses, and organisations can make to become more dementia friendly and enhance the experience of people living with dementia using their services. The role is flexible and would suit anyone who is willing to connect with the community and is passionate about making Cardiff more dementia friendly. Appropriate training, support, and supervision will be provided to all volunteers.

With the number of people living with dementia in Cardiff estimated to increase by 30.1% by 2030, the scheme is the latest initiative from Dementia Friendly Cardiff to ensure people with dementia can live better, more fulfilled lives, remaining active and part of their community.

Supporting Unpaid Carers

A review of services for unpaid carers is currently underway, taking a cross-directorate, joined-up approach to providing much needed support. A new regional Carers Charter is due to be launched later in the autumn, which details a set of commitments to unpaid carers and young carers. The new Charter will aim to improve support, identify new ways of working and increase accessibility to information, advice, and assistance for unpaid carers. Work will now take place on the development of detailed action plans related to each of the commitments within the Charter. The action plans will include what will be done to support unpaid carers in their caring role as well as how they will be supported to have a life alongside caring.

The Charter complements commitments already made in our Ageing Well Strategy. This includes the refurbishment of our Older Persons Day Centres and improvement in the services offered in the Centres; the delivery of an innovative respite grant scheme working with the Care Collective; and the creation of carers' groups.

A full review of support for carers will start with the launch of a respite mapping consultation to identify the support that carers would value and what is currently available. Plans also include the development of an Adult Carers card, offering discounts at local businesses. There are also plans to include specialist support on site through a "Hubs For All" approach; this will make activities in the Hubs accessible to those with care and support needs and their carers. A Carers Champion officer has been recruited to take forward this work in the community to better understand the needs of unpaid carers and ensure that they feel valued and listened to.

Creative Listening Course

I am pleased to announce that Ty Canna, our Mental Health Day Centre, recently launched its 12-week Creative Listening Course, in partnership with Breathe Creative. The course has been designed to help attendees, many of whom have significant mental health challenges, improve their listening skills, which will in turn improve their confidence and relationships with others. The new course will offer access to creative wellbeing for its participants, and the skills will be taught through different art and creative activities, and mindfulness. Positive feedback has been received from previous attendees of the course, evidencing the positive impact on their mental health. It is hoped that more such courses will take place in the future.

Supporting Hospital Discharge

The First Point of Contact Officers at the University Hospital of Wales, affectionately known as the Pink Army, and the Community Occupational Therapists are part of an exciting new Integrated Discharge Team alongside social care and health colleagues. The aim is to ensure that all community solutions are considered, care packages are right-sized at the point of discharge and the correct pathway is determined to expedite a safe and timely discharge.

Tai Chi Class at the Powerhouse Hub

Finally, I wanted to share with you an example of the excellent work that our Wellbeing Support Service is doing to really change people's lives. June moved to Cardiff to be closer to her family following an illness. She was referred to our Independent Living Services as she needed support to build her confidence and help her to connect to her local community. June was supported to join online groups which she enjoyed but was keen for there to be more choice of activities in her local area. She was supported to start a new lunch club at The Village Inn in Pentwyn, where up to 12 people are now welcomed every week to the club.

June really enjoys Tai Chi, so she was also referred to the Cardiff Wellbeing Support Service to train to be a Tai Chi instructor. The service funded the training course that she attended, and she is now helping others stay active and involved in their community by running her own class every Friday at the Powerhouse Hub in Llanedeyrn. I was delighted to be interviewed alongside June and her class members by ITV News over the summer, highlighting the success of the classes. There are now over 20 people attending June's Tai Chi class every week, all of whom thoroughly enjoy the classes and find that they are hugely beneficial to their sense of wellbeing.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Fostering Promotion

The Fostering and Supported Lodgings Team is back out working again in the community and able to attend events to promote fostering for Cardiff. During the summer, the team, along with Councillor Singh and myself, joined residents in Riverside to mark the Eid Mela 2022 celebration. The event at Despenser Gardens brought together people from different backgrounds and religions to learn more about the celebrations and Muslim culture. More than 500 residents attended the festival, enjoying various activities and food donated by local sponsors. The Fostering and

Supported Lodgings Team embraced the opportunity to be involved in the celebration and to talk to residents about the opportunities for fostering for Cardiff and the contribution that fostering makes to building better futures for local children.

It was also great to see the Fostering Service at Pride Cymru 2022 last month where representatives from the Foster Wales Cardiff and Supported Lodgings Teams were available to speak with people attending the event. There were many positive conversations held where the Foster Wales Cardiff Team was able to answer questions in relation to fostering and the team was pleased to have the opportunity to answer queries that many attendees had in relation to pursuing their own fostering journey. The event was well attended and enjoyed by all.

Cardiff City Kicks Foundation Mentoring Scheme Celebration Day

Two young people known to Cardiff Youth Justice Services (YJS) took part in the Cardiff City Kicks Foundation Mentoring Scheme that culminated in a celebration day in July 2022. The young people worked on a one-to-one basis with a Cardiff City Football Club (CCFC) mentor around issues such as peer pressure, anger management, emotional wellbeing, and positive relationships. This was followed by a session of football and then planning for next steps, which could be reintegration into school, college or looking for a football club. Cardiff YJS also worked with CCFC to run a weekly programme over the summer holiday period that saw 11 young people sign up for a variety of subjects, including awareness of anti-social behaviour (ASB) and crime, and emotional resilience; all followed by sporting activities. The CCFC Kicks Foundation Mentoring Scheme has been a really positive and productive partnership link, and the Council has asked them to be part of our SAFE (safeguarding adolescents from exploitation) network of partners to help with disrupting ASB/exploitation and increasing support in areas.

Summer Activities

Over the course of the summer holidays there have been lots of opportunities for our children and young people to take part in fun activities – here are some examples:

- The YMCA put together a full programme of activities for young carers to take part in during their summer break. This included going to the Aqua Park and trips to the Pontypridd Lido and Margam Park. These activities provided young carers with the opportunity to have a break from their caring duties and make the most of their holidays.
- Cardiff YJS provided a programme of activities that also included the Aqua Park, along with boxing, kayaking, cricket, pottery classes, mindfulness, and a trip to the Big Pit Mining Museum. One of the young people who took part said that “it’s been the best summer I have ever had”. A member of staff who has worked for Cardiff YJS for 12 years also said that it was the best programme that YJS have ever put on.
- The Personal Adviser Service arranged a pony trekking day for care leavers. The young people enjoyed being outdoors, commenting that it was exciting and fun, and that they enjoyed doing the activity as a group. They also said that they learned discipline from having to do things the correct way to stay on the horse, and communication skills through meeting new people and having to talk with the

workers to make sure they understood what they were doing and that they were doing things right.

- Children supported by the Child Health & Disability (CHAD) Team enjoyed a fantastic trip to Storey Arms. The CHAD Teams embraced the opportunity for children supported by their teams to visit the Storey Arms Outdoor Education Centre. The day trips took place over two days in early September and were enjoyed by children with a range of additional needs. During the trips, the children and young people were supported by Children's Services staff with the option of parents and carers also joining them. The children and young people thoroughly enjoyed a range of activities which included a mountain hike, rock climbing and canoeing. Children, parents, carers, and staff all had a great time and thoroughly enjoyed themselves. The trip provided opportunities for the children and young people to meet new friends, work as a team, develop confidence in outdoor activities and build new skills. The CHAD teams hope to make this an annual opportunity.
- The Starfish Kids Camp, under the Starfish Alliance Charity, is a residential summer camp for children aged 6-12 who have been impacted by abuse. The intention is to provide children with opportunities to develop their self-esteem and self-worth, learn new skills and have lots of fun. Children who attended the camp enjoyed a five-day break where they engaged in lots of activities including swimming, arts and crafts, sensory activities, water games, singing and dancing. This year's theme for the camp was Knights and Jesters, so there was a Royal Fete, and the children built castles and made shields. The camp was a wonderful experience for all the children who attended.

Children's Services Strategy Review

The review of the Children's Services Strategy is well underway following a series of workshops in September. I was pleased to attend the events and meet so many staff face-to-face. It was really encouraging to see so many staff in attendance, taking part in rich discussions and hearing their views. It was particularly good to hear that staff who are new to the service feel welcomed and that morale in teams is high despite the high levels of demand and complexity that they are managing. The outcome of these workshops will be used to inform the direction going forward, alongside the views of young people, who have also been consulted as part of the review process.

Cardiff Family Advice and Support (CFAS)

Calls to the Family Gateway have remained at a consistent level throughout the summer period, averaging between 700 and 800 calls per month. This relates to more than 1,000 children and young people each month receiving information and advice on a range of issues which are affecting the wellbeing of their families.

Family Help and Family Help Disability Team caseloads remain consistently high. Waiting lists are now 10 weeks for the generic teams and 12 weeks for the Disability Team. This increase is linked to the complexity of issues facing families, which means that intervention periods are often extended. Five new Family Help Advisors have recently joined the team, which will see the waiting times reduce in the coming months. A training needs analysis has also been undertaken, in conjunction with the Workforce Development Team, to ensure that the team has the skills and knowledge needed to support the variety of issues experienced by families accessing support from service.

Cardiff Parenting

Over July and August 2022, Cardiff Parenting received 52% more referrals than the same period last year. Referrals for Flying Start Parenting have also increased in this period.

Large family fun days attracting over 200 parents and their children were held at leisure centres and hubs across Cardiff. Organisations such as the Family Information Service, Dietetics Team, Museum of Wales staff and Shiny Happy People came along to support and offer families advice and access to services. Coach trips to Puxton Park in Somerset also took place during the school holidays.

Families residing in hostels were supported to attend the trips. Entry fees and transport was fully funded so that the whole family could afford to attend together. Drop-in refresher groups were also provided for the formal parenting programmes that had taken place in the summer term. Parents could come along and refresh the strategies they had learned and discuss with staff any problems they were having implementing techniques.

A fun day was set up for 20 Afghan families at their bridging accommodation and other families were supported with a trip to Parc Play. Springwood Primary School in Llanedeyrn opened its doors to provide a Story Trail.

Stay and Play sessions continued to run across all Flying Start areas, where an extension was implemented on the age cap – from 4 years to 8 years – to overcome the barrier of childcare in the holidays and improve accessibility. In total through the summer's holiday provision, over 600 parent contacts and over a thousand child contacts were made, with the age of children ranging from 6 weeks to 15 years.

Paused to Play

Parents Plus is currently collaborating with Save the Children in a project called 'Paused to Play'. The aim of the project is to explore whether alleviating financial pressure helps families to focus more on interacting and playing with their children. Consequently, the project involves providing 10 families with £350 of vouchers to spend in a shop of their choice and £50 worth of learning resources, such as toys, games, or craft materials.

Flying Start Expansion

I am pleased to announce that the expansion of Flying Start is in progress, with some postcodes going live over September and October 2022. Phase 2 of the expansion programme will focus on the roll out of Flying Start Childcare only, rather than all core elements of the Flying Start programme. Further guidance on how this is to be implemented and indicative allocations for local authorities are expected in the next few weeks.

Councillors Norma Mackie & Ash Lister
Cabinet Members for Social Services (Job Share)
23 September 2022