

# Willow House Care Home Service

2 Dundonald Place  
KILMARNOCK  
KA1 1UR

Telephone: 01563 521954

**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
26 April 2024

**Service provided by:**  
The Community Connections  
Education & Wellbeing Group Ltd

**Service provider number:**  
SP2023000149

**Service no:**  
CS2023000230

## About the service

Willow House is a care home service registered to care for four children / young people. The home is located close to the centre of the East Ayrshire town of Kilmarnock and has local transport routes and retail facilities nearby. The home is a detached building with a walled garden to the front and secluded garden area to the rear.

The home consists of individual bedrooms for the young people with shared toilet facilities, a communal lounge and second smaller room utilised as a sensory room for the young people.

At the time of the inspection the home accommodated four young people.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 24th (13:15 until 20:30) and 25th (10:00 until 12:00) April. The inspection was carried out by one inspector from the Care Inspectorate. To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- Spoke with three people using the service and one of their representatives
- Spoke with four staff and two management
- Observed practice and daily life
- Reviewed documents

**Key messages**

- Staff had built strong nurturing relationships with the young people.
- Young people were achieving well in relation to education outcomes.
- Young people were engaging well in the community and positively involved in activities of their choice.
- Young people's individual interests and skills were fully promoted and supported.
- Relationships of importance to the young people were supported to be maintained and facilitated.
- Young people's safety was maintained within a settled environment.

**From this inspection we evaluated this service as:**

In evaluating quality, we use a six point scale where 1 is unsatisfactory and 6 is excellent

How well do we support children and young people's rights and wellbeing?	5 - Very Good
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Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

## How well do we support children and young people's rights and wellbeing?

5 - Very Good

During our inspection year 2024-2025, we are inspecting against a focus area which looks at how regulated services use legislation and guidance to promote children's right to continuing care and how children and young people are being helped to understand what their right to continuing care means for them. Any areas for improvement will be highlighted in this report.

We evaluated this key question as very good. This was because we found major strengths in supporting positive outcomes for people whilst finding very few areas for improvement. Those that did exist we considered would have minimal adverse impact on people's experiences and outcomes.

The young people we spoke with told us they were happy and felt safe in the service. They enjoyed positive nurturing relationships with staff. They trusted staff and confirmed that staff treated them with respect. Any issues that had arisen were openly discussed with young people and staff to seek solutions. Young people were therefore assured that they could rely on the staff and that staff had young people's best interests as priority.

Staff evidenced a very good understanding of the best approaches to take in supporting the young people's individual needs. Through this understanding and knowledge young people were being encouraged to engage with their care plan and were making very good individual progress. Staff were also alert to changes in young people and took measured responses to support any emotional challenges. This considered approach to young people's care was further shown by staff's ability to successfully de-escalate potentially difficult situations. This was in line with the service policy on supporting young people without resort to restrictive practices.

Young people were supported to engage positively with one another and with friends in the community. Where this presented difficulties, due to location for example, the staff facilitated transport and support for young people to meet with friends. This provided the young people with positive social interactions and the opportunity to nurture positive peer relationships.

Education was successfully promoted, and all young people were attending school regularly. The young people's individual skills and interests were also promoted and supported, and they were enjoying engaging in activities of their choosing as well as engaging with staff in trying new experiences in the community. The young people's physical and emotional health and wellbeing was therefore being positively promoted together with their sense of self-worth and identity being nurtured.

Young people were enjoying continuing care in the service. Through this stable commitment to care, some had been encouraged to apply for and successfully gain placement at university and employment. Young people were also encouraged to develop more independent living skills and were making very good progress in several areas. This had resulted in positive transitions for some young people to their chosen next steps.

Some young people had arrived at the service on emergency placement. Admissions records were available, however the impact assessment for young people currently in the service was limited. Whilst there had been positive outcomes for these placements and the house remained settled, the service should ensure the matching and admission processes include fully considered impact assessments.

The service had successfully supported and were supporting young people on continuing care. The service should, however, ensure it's policies are explicit on this and that young people have clear guidance available to them. We have therefore recognised an area for improvement within the services policies.

### Areas for improvement

1. The service provider should review the policy documents to ensure they provide:

- a) clear explicit advice and guidance to young people regarding continuing care,
- and
- b) a clear assessment on the impact of admissions on young people currently on the service.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards, which state:

'I have time and any necessary assistance to understand the planned care, support, therapy or intervention I will receive, including any costs, before deciding what is right for me' (HSCS 1.18), 'I am confident that the right people are fully informed about my past, including my health and care experience, and any impact this has on me' and (HSCS3.4) 'I experience high quality care and support because people have the necessary information and resources'. (HSCS 4.27).

## What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection

### Areas for improvement

#### Previous area for improvement 1

The service provider must ensure that all staff receive sufficient and regular training. This should include at the earliest opportunity training in child and adult protection and in the services chosen model of crisis intervention. The service provider should ensure an appropriate record of training is maintained and regularly reviewed.

**This area for improvement was made on 28 August 2023.**

#### Action taken since then

Staff were in receipt of attendance dates or had completed the required training. A training tracker had been introduced to identify what staff had completed what training and what training was planned. **This area for improvement has been met.**

#### Previous area for improvement 2

The service provider should notify the Care Inspectorate of incidents as described within the Care Inspectorate publication, "Records that all registered children and young people's services must keep and guidance on notification reporting" REG-0821-067.

**This area for improvement was made on 28 August 2023.**

#### Action taken since then

The staff had been made aware of the guidance document and the manager was submitting the required notifications. **This area for improvement has been met.**

#### Previous area for improvement 3

The service provider should aim to develop reflective practice through discussions in supervision and team meetings of the detailed recording of incidents and the associated debriefs. To do this, the provider should:

- a) improve the incident recording and debrief process, to ensure that audit of incidents can occur to support improved interventions for young people.
- b) ensure that debriefs are completed for staff and offered to young people.
- c) implement a system where tracking and review of incidents can occur within the home.
- d) ensure that learning from incident tracking is discussed with young people and incorporated into the care plan.

**This area for improvement was made on 28 August 2023.**

**Action taken since then**

There had been few incidents (one). Staff had completed debriefs with the manager and a reflective discussion recorded. This was further discussed at team meetings. A post incident discussion was held with the young people and their views sought. **This area for improvement has been met.**

**Previous area for improvement 4**

The service provider should ensure that quality assurance systems are in place to regularly review appropriate professional registration (such as with the SSSC or GTC) of staff and ensure they are so registered within the statutory timeframe.

**This area for improvement was made on 28 August 2023.**

**Action taken since then**

All staff were appropriately registered within the required time frames and this was monitored in supervision. **This area for improvement has been met.**

**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).

**Detailed evaluations**

How well do we support children and young people's rights and wellbeing?	5 - Very Good
7.1 Children and young people are safe, feel loved and get the most out of life	5 - Very Good

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