

North Lodge Care Home Service

Monkton

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
20 January 2025

Service provided by:
Spark of Genius Limited

Service provider number:
SP2016012791

Service no:
CS2023000256

About the service

North Lodge House is a residential care home service for children and young people. The service is registered to care for a maximum of five young people. It is contained within a detached house in a semi-rural location close to a small village in South Ayrshire.

The service provides accommodation over two floors. There are five bedrooms, a lounge, a large activities room and a large kitchen. The service has its own fenced outdoor play area. At the time of the inspection, five young people were using the service.

The service provides residential living accommodation for the young people and aims to provide care which:

'Helps a young person to make sense of past experiences and to develop coping strategies to deal with these. Provides young people with positive, stimulating and enjoyable experiences.

Helps young people (and wherever possible their families/networks) to plan towards and achieve a positive and successful future. North Lodge offers a nurturing & therapeutic environment for children and young people with a diagnosis and additional learning needs'.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Wednesday 15th January 2025. 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 young people using the service and two of their representatives
- Spoke with four staff and two members of management
- Observed practice and daily life
- Reviewed documents

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.

Key messages

- The service staff had established trusting nurturing relationships with the young people which contributed to them feeling safe.
- The staff had trained in a variety of communication tools to ensure that young people's needs and wishes were at the centre of care planning.
- Managers and external managers of the service played a key role in monitoring young people's experiences and improving outcomes.
- Children and young people were benefiting from effective proactive championing of their legal and human rights.
- Robust assessments were compiled by the service occupational therapist to effectively inform risk assessments and care plans.
- The service had appointed a well being co-ordinator who was accessing a variety of chosen and new experiences for the young people.
- Young people were thriving and exceeding the expectations of the placing authorities.

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?	6 - Excellent
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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?

6 - Excellent

This service manager and staff demonstrated major strengths in supporting positive outcomes for young people. There were several areas of practice that were delivered to a very high standard, were effective, and sustainable across a wide range of activities. As a result, this service has been evaluated as excellent.

Children and young people were experiencing a very high level of care which was leading to them experiencing very positive outcomes. One social worker commented that the service had '...been a brilliant resource for (X)'.

The young people we spoke with told us they felt safe in the service, with a staff group that were nice, caring and fun. We observed warm, caring and nurturing interaction between the staff and relaxed and happy young people. Where staff considered it beneficial to intervene, they employed their extensive knowledge of the young people in responding with compassion and skill to promote positive outcomes and de-escalate from any potential upset. This contributed to creating a welcoming, harmonious environment within which the young people presented as happy and safe. One social worker told us (staff), '...provide a warm nurturing service and its evident they are invested in the children they care for'.

Staff we spoke with were confident in their role regarding child protection and whistleblowing. Any concerns raised had resulted in appropriate action being taken promptly to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the children and young people.

Staff recognised the importance of building positive and lasting relationships with children and young people. They had an in-depth knowledge of each individual child and young person, with a very enhanced understanding of their care needs. Staff used this knowledge together with their person-centred skills to form and maintain strong positive relationships with the children and young people. This enabled the young people to feel, understood, relaxed, cared for in the home and trusting of staff.

Consistency of care was achieved through regular detailed updates to care plans, key time records and discussions at regular team meetings. Staff we spoke with were highly appreciative of their colleagues in describing a very supportive team. Through this consistency of care the young people were supported to maintain the structures and routines that contributed to their improving outcomes.

The service wellbeing co-ordinator identified and accessed a variety of stimulating, and exciting activities for young people to engage in. The activities were also matched with regard to the occupational therapists' assessments. This ensured young people's personal growth and development progressed steadily. One social worker told us: "(T)he progress (X) made has been unbelievable", and 'the service has been fantastic, we hadn't anticipated how far (they) had progressed'.

Communication tools were being employed by staff to gather views to the best of the children and young people's ability. Through these practices the children and young people's views and preferences were detailed consistently through all key documents. This commitment to engaging young people in their care planning respected their rights. One external professional commented that, 'as far as possible our pupil is given every opportunity to express (their) views, and (they) enjoys personalisation and choice'.

Children and young people had access to the highest quality of physical and mental health supports. Young people's individual specific health needs were responded to and appropriate referrals to specialist health resources made when required or identified.

Positive physical health featured significantly in the well-being co-ordinator role. Through this support, children and young people were accessing a range of activities. Opportunities for experiences not previously available to some young people were given through these activities. Examples were visits to local places of interest, play parks, sensory clubs, and many community facilities that provided for their likes and interests. Positive mental health and emotional wellbeing were also nurtured through engaging with the staff in these activities.

Maintaining connections with family was fully acknowledged as being important to the children and young people. Social workers were greatly appreciative of the professional approach of staff, commenting, 'They (staff) are very nurturing, and I've been impressed by their commitment towards family time'. This support enabled children to spend time with family, providing stability to young people and assurances to their family.

The service evidenced a strong commitment to young people staying in the home under continuing care arrangements. Staff were advocating on behalf of young people to have this right met and were working in partnership with stakeholders to ensure the best outcome for eligible young people.

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at www.careinspectorate.com.

Detailed evaluations

How well do we support children and young people's rights and wellbeing?	6 - Excellent
7.1 Children and young people are safe, feel loved and get the most out of life	6 - Excellent

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