

Aberdeenshire Supported Lodgings Service Adult Placement Service

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Aberdeenshire Council

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About the service

The supported lodgings scheme is an accommodation option for young people, provided by Aberdeenshire's Throughcare and Aftercare team.

Supported lodgings offers a stepping stone to completely independent living, offering young people a room within a family home. Supported lodgings hosts are people who are recruited and approved to provide this accommodation and support and assist young people to acquire the skills they will need to live successfully in their own home.

The statement of purpose for the service is, 'To ensure that young people aged 16+ who cease to be looked after are given as good a chance as any other young person of making a success of their lives by acquiring the life skills they need as independent young adults.'

This service has been registered since 2010.

About the inspection

This was an announced (short notice) inspection which took place between 15 January and 28 February 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 one person using the service and one caregiver.
- Spoke with five staff and management.
- Observed one fostering panel.
- Spoke with the panel chair and the agency decision maker.
- Observed practice and daily life.
- Analysed survey responses.
- Reviewed a wide range of documents.

Key messages

- Young people enjoyed positive nurturing care experiences whilst being empowered by their caregivers to develop independent living skills.
- Caregivers provided a high quality of care and support to the young people they looked after.
- Young people were encouraged to be creative and active members of their community.
- There was a focus on young people attending further education and gaining volunteering opportunities to develop practical and social skills.
- Young people were actively involved in leading and directing their own care plans.

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 people's wellbeing?	5 - Very Good
How well is our care and support planned?	5 - Very Good

Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

How well do we support people's wellbeing?

5 - Very Good

We evaluated this key question as very good. We identified major strengths in supporting positive outcomes for people. There are very few areas for improvement.

Young people benefited from meaningful, affectionate and nurturing relationships with their caregivers. They experienced stability and predictability of care and were considered a valued family member of the caregiver household. People in caregiver households went on holiday together, having fun and creating positive memories. Young people knew they would have a lifelong relationship with their caregivers and other members of the household, aligning with the commitments in 'The Promise.'

Caregivers supported young people to manage and understand the dynamics of birth family relationships, in ways that were sensitive and met the needs of the young people. Young people's care was personalised and enriched by caregivers who understood their strengths and preferences. Caregivers accepted the unique circumstances of the young people they looked after. They encouraged honest discussions around sexual health and healthy relationships. Young people were supported to develop independent living skills and sensitively encouraged to assume the responsibilities of a young adult. Mealtimes were social occasions with young people involved in planning and preparing meals for themselves and others in the household.

Caregivers engaged young people in realistic discussions surrounding strengths and support required to work towards their identified goals and aspirations. They gently provided practical and emotional support to push young people through their comfort zone and reach their potential. The emotional health of young people was further supported by relevant referrals to adult mental health and wellbeing services, requesting assessment and support where appropriate.

Young people played an active and responsible role in decisions that affected them. Their choices to participate in various interests and activities were respected and they led active and fulfilling lives. Young people accessed further education and were actively involved in a wide variety of local community volunteering projects. They learnt new skills which promoted their sense of confidence, self-efficacy and resilience, whilst forming positive relationships with other adults they could trust.

Caregivers advocated passionately for the young people they looked after. Young people's right to confidentiality was respected and highlighted in the supported lodging agreement. They were provided with adult protection training and actively sought out and attended relevant training relating to the young people they looked after. Caregivers and supervising social workers enjoyed positive and responsive relationships. Open, honest and insightful reflections were recorded in documentation provided.

When asked what the service does well one professional said, "Supports young people to feel safe, secure, loved, part of the family, part of the community, given support to access health services effectively, and to reach their own individual potential in a caring and supportive way."

How well is our care and support planned?

5 - Very Good

We evaluated this key question as very good. We identified major strengths in supporting positive outcomes for people. There are very few areas for improvement.

Young people benefited from high quality personal planning. Welfare assessments and pathways plans were in place and reviewed regularly. Plans to promote autonomy with a view to reducing support needs and increase levels of independence was evident. Safe care planning and assessments of needs and risks were in place; however, we felt they could be more robust.

Young people were at the heart of formal care planning and there was a clear sense of ownership. They were enabled to lead and direct the development of their care plans. Their views were represented, and staff and caregivers passionately advocated for young people in their care. Practice based on young people's rights was evident in documentation. We were told, "Young people are actively involved in Pathways Reviews and any other planning in between."

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 people's wellbeing?	5 - Very Good
1.1 Children, young people, adults and their caregiver families experience compassion, dignity and respect	5 - Very Good
1.2 Children, young people and adults get the most out of life	5 - Very Good
How well is our care and support planned?	5 - Very Good
5.1 Assessment and care planning reflects the outcomes and wishes of children, young people and adults	5 - Very Good

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