

Care Visions - Cowdenlaws Farm Care Home Service

Kirkcaldy

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
31 March 2025

Service provided by:
Care Visions Group Limited

Service provider number:
SP2003002569

Service no:
CS2009230689

About the service

Cowdenlaws Farm is a care home service for up to three children and young people aged between 8 and 20 years old. It is situated in a semi-rural location near the centre of Kirkcaldy, Fife. The house is a traditional, detached farmhouse with a large garden. Since the last inspection the house has changed to accommodate two young people, as such some rooms have been repurposed. Each young person has their own bedroom, with private bathroom. There is also a dining kitchen, chill out room, living room, conservatory and two office spaces.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection, which took place on the 24 and 25 March 2025 between the hours of 11:00 and 18:00, and 10:00 and 15:00 respectively. 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 we:

- Met with two young people using the service and one of their family members
- Spoke with four members of staff and management
- Observed practice and daily life
- Reviewed documents
- Spoke with four external professionals
- Reviewed 11 survey responses

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 requirements or areas for improvement will be highlighted in this report.

Key messages

- Young people were kept safe by staff who knew them well.
- Staff made use of relationships with young people to offer support, particularly at times of crisis.
- Young people were supported to maintain relationships with those important to them. This included one of their pets moving into the house.
- Young people were involved in planning their care and support.
- The service should ensure care plans and risk assessments include all aspects of SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound) planning.

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?	4 - 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?

4 - Good

7.1: Children and young people are safe, feel loved and get the most out of life

We evaluated this key question as good, where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for young people and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Young people were kept safe by staff who had a good knowledge and understanding of their needs. One young person told us they feel safe living at Cowdenlaws. Collaborative working with other services promoted the safety and wellbeing of young people. External professionals commented on '*good communication*' with staff, and information being shared appropriately.

Staff discussed challenges around ensuring young people had access to independent advocacy, due to different or changing remits of advocacy services. Staff continue to promote access to independent advocacy for young people to ensure their rights and views are considered.

Child protection processes were clear and staff understood their responsibilities in this area. Practice was underpinned by the organisations child protection policy. This contributed towards young people being protected from harm.

Young people experienced therapeutic and stable care from a caring and compassionate staff team. Staff have remained the same for several years, which contributed to the consistency and continuity of relationships. The use of physical intervention was always a last resort, and attempts were made by staff to engage with young people using relationships instead.

There was consistent practice around inviting young people to engage in reflective discussions following incidents, in an attempt to improve understanding and consider any changes required. This promoted young people's involvement in planning their care and support.

Young people enjoy warm and nurturing relationships with those caring for them. Staff took an individual approach to supporting young people, recognising each of them to be individual and so needing different support. An external professional commented on how staff '*communicate with YP effectively in ways they understand. They take a tailored approach to each YP*'.

Young people experience respect from those involved in looking after them. Since the last inspection, the service has reduced to offering care for two young people instead of three. This decision was based on the needs of those living in the house. One young person told us they preferred living with only one other young person. Staff reflected the reduction in young people living in the house had allowed them to have more time with the young people.

Young people's connections to important people were promoted by staff, including offering practical support such as transport. Staff worked alongside other professionals to ensure young people had regular opportunities to spend time with those important to them, which included having friends and family visit their house. This helped young people feel included and maintain important relationships.

The service have very recently supported a young person to have their pet move into the home. The team

recognised the importance of this relationship to the young person and worked hard to achieve this. This has contributed towards the young person feeling more settled and secure.

Staff supported and encouraged young people's individual interests and ambitions, to ensure they had access to a variety of experiences and opportunities, should they wish. This helped young people have fun and explore their interests.

Young people were supported in education through individualised support tailored to their needs and preferences. Staff kept in regular contact with education colleagues to support their awareness of the young people's needs, progress and any difficulties. This ensured that young people were supported in their learning.

Young people had individualised risk assessments and care plans, which they had contributed towards. These supported staff in keeping young people safe and offering meaningful support. The service should ensure information contained within both care plans and risk assessments is reflected in the other so that young people are supported in line with their identified needs.

There was a lack of clear timescales for goals being reviewed and tracked. The organisation is working towards developing an adapted format of care plans which is hoped to be more personalised and meaningful to young people. To ensure care plans and risk assessments are informative and supportive the service should ensure that all aspects of SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound) planning are included.

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

To support the young people's wellbeing, outcomes and choice the service should review their care planning and risk assessment processes. This should include but is not limited to:

- a) Ensuring young people are actively consulted on deciding their goals, and that these are clear and visible to them.
- b) Ensuring that goals are SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely). These should be reflective of young people's words, and should clearly describe the supports required to achieve these. Goals should be actively tracked and subject to regular review.
- c) Ensuring that all staff are aware of the needs and focus of work for all young people within the service, and know exactly what is needed from everyone to support young people to reach their goals.
- d) Ensuring that risks for young people are clearly written. This should include explicit detail of how the staff should respond to, and support young people.
- e) Ensuring there are quality assurance measures in place to track progress, and allow further supports to the team if required.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:

'My personal plan (sometimes referred to as care plan) is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices.' (HSCS 1.15). and

'I am protected from harm, neglect, abuse, bullying and exploitation by people who have a clear understanding of their responsibilities.' (HSCS 3.20).

This area for improvement was made on 20 February 2023.

Action taken since then

Since the last inspection, we found the service have reviewed care planning documents to ensure these are person centred and individualised to the needs of each young person. Timescales for actions were not always clear in sampled documents, which would strengthen care plans. We found there was a clear quality assurance process in place which considered care planning and risk assessments.

Overall, 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.

Detailed evaluations

How well do we support children and young people's rights and wellbeing?	4 - Good
7.1 Children and young people are safe, feel loved and get the most out of life	4 - Good

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