

Benrig Children's House Care Home Service

Kilmarnock

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
2 May 2025

Service provided by:
East Ayrshire Council

Service provider number:
SP2003000142

Service no:
CS2003000743

About the service

Benrig is a local authority provided, purpose-built care home for children and young people. The service is located in a residential area of Kilmarnock in East Ayrshire. It provides en-suite accommodation for a maximum of seven young people aged between 0 and 20 years.

The accommodation comprises individual rooms with ensuite for the young people, a large kitchen, a dining room, a large lounge, an education/games room, two staff offices and staff washroom facilities.

Benrig is situated within its own grounds and has outdoor facilities including a barbeque area, seated decking area and garden.

At the time of the inspection there were seven young people resident with the service.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 22nd and 23rd April 2025. The inspection was carried out by two inspectors 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 four people using the service and four of their representatives
- Spoke with six staff and three members of management
- Observed practice and daily life
- Reviewed documents
- Spoke with five visiting professionals.

Key messages

- Young people were making progress through their plans.
- Some young people were achieving good outcomes.
- Staff were working hard to build and maintain positive relationships with the young people.
- Staff were working in collaboration with external professionals to engage young people and aim to manage or reduce risk.
- Young people's risk assessments and plans require some review to ensure there is the required support to meet young people's needs.

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

This inspection considered our Key Question 7: How well do we support children and young people's wellbeing?

We evaluated the service as good as there are a number of important strengths which, taken together, clearly outweigh areas for improvement. These strengths will have a significant positive impact on people's experiences and outcomes. However, improvements are required to maximise wellbeing and ensure that people consistently have experiences and outcomes which are as positive as possible.

All young people spoken with stated they had good relationships with staff and some young people identified particular staff they would seek out for support. Overall, staff had a good understanding of most of the young people's needs. They employed this knowledge in engaging with young people to develop positive relationships in aiming to support positive outcomes for them. Where this was not so successful, the service had introduced a speech and language therapist to support staff's understanding of some young people's communication needs. This support was proving beneficial in assisting engagement between young people and staff.

Young people's mental and physical health needs were promptly and comprehensively met. Visits from school nurses assured young people's health needs were assessed. Staff were pro active in contacting health service for young people when needed. Staff were supported to access any additional health services identified as required to maximise the young people's health and well-being. This additional support was important for young people in building resilience and self-care skills.

Having access to independent advocacy is very important for young people in care to ensure their rights are being considered and respected. It was good to hear therefore that the young people had access to independent advocacy. Through this support, young people were assured that their voice would be heard and their views communicated.

Positive relationships between staff and young people had been progressed. Young people experienced warm, trusting, nurturing care and support through these relationships. There had been very few instances of restraint within the service since the previous inspection. This was very positive to note. A reflective log for staff and young people to complete had been introduced and this was evidencing good positive reflections on practice. External agencies had been consulted with regard to reflective practice and positive outcomes noted.

Young people's individual talents and interests were promoted and involvement in related activities supported. This provided young people with a sense of achievement whilst developing their skills and providing new experiences and enjoyment. We heard from young people of exciting opportunities to attend concerts of favourite artists, attending community clubs that encouraged participation in favoured activities and short breaks with staff.

Young people engaged in education were achieving good outcomes in college and in school. This provided these young people with confidence and hope for their plans and ambitions. It was positive to note that some young people who had disengaged from education and employment opportunities had attended some placements. This provided some level of hope and optimism for future prospects.

Appropriate connections to family members were supported by staff. This provided young people and their families with assurances that these important relationships would be nurtured and maintained.

Care plans require to adhere to SMART principles of specific measurable achievable realistic and timeous. Some young people's care plan goals were non specific and lacked the detail of how support would be provided and evaluated. We also saw that some identified risks did not have associated actions to address, mitigate or manage the risks. Whilst there was an overall improvement in risk assessments and care plans from the previous inspection we have continued the evaluation and review of risk assessments and care planning as an area for improvement (see Area For Improvement 1).

Staff were appreciative of the manager's leadership and support. They benefited from regular advice and guidance through supervision, team meetings and a supportive team of peers. The external manager was a frequent visitor to the service providing further assurances to young people of the support offered. Regular team meetings and individual supervision sessions offered staff opportunities for reflection and discussion about best practice and provided leadership support.

Staff training was being tracked by the manager. Training was identified and offered relevant to young people's needs and residential care work. Staff were recruited through Safe Recruitment practices with all statutory checks being completed and relevant qualifications, experience and skills sought. Staff received a thorough induction process and the staff we spoke with felt that this had given them the skills and confidence to do the job well.

The staff team was very stable with limited changes of personnel. This aimed to provide stability, familiarity and security for young people through them knowing who was there to care for them. Some external stakeholders were of the view that there were times where insufficient staff were on shift. This, they stated, was impacting on staff's ability to positively influence young people's decision making and engagement. It is recognised that consistent, positive, trusting relationships are crucial in supporting young people impacted by trauma. This matter continues to be under review by the service provider.

External management oversight played a role in monitoring the quality of young people's experiences and aimed to drive improved outcomes. An external managers self evaluation provided a very good depth of analysis and audit of the service. We did not find there to be continuous robust evaluation of the service, however. Strong quality assurance processes would regularly evaluate and monitor all aspects of the service. Whilst we saw lists of areas looked at on a weekly basis these audits did not offer any analysis or identify actions to take to maintain and improve the service. We have identified this as an area for improvement. (see Area For Improvement 2)

The service development plan identified areas for development that align with the Promise. We would agree that these would be beneficial to young people and should be developed to enhance service delivery. Identifying a participation lead and Promise champion for example would go toward meeting these aims.

Whilst the service staff and managers showed respect to the young people, the service provider's recording system for incidents is not aligned with the Promise relating to young people's rights. Incident recording contained details of young people and of incidents alongside health and safety records and information. We have asked the service provider to review this practice to ensure alignment with best practice, young people's rights and GDPR principles. We have identified an area for improvement relating to staff's discussions with young people in relation to their rights and the Health and Social Care Standards. (Area For Improvement 3)

The service provider should ensure that young people's pathway assessments and welfare assessments are completed in time in accordance with the a Welfare Assessment of that person in accordance with Article 7 of the Continuing Care (Scotland) Order 2015. This is an area for improvement. (See Area For Improvement 4)

Areas for improvement

1. To support the achievement of positive outcomes for children and young people, the provider should ensure that the recording of care plans comply with SMART principles. This should include, but not limited to, the clear recording of specific actions, these should be realistic, measurable and have an identified timeframe for completion.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards, which state; "My personal plan (sometimes referred to as a 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).

2. To support children and young people's health and wellbeing, the provider should ensure timely action is taken in response to quality and audit activity. This should include, but not limited to, timely action on identified areas of improvement from audit activities.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes' (HSCS 4.19).

3. To support young people's health and well being and ensure their rights are being upheld the service provider should ensure staff are discussing young people's rights with them in relation to the Health and Social Care Standards. 2.3 I am supported to understand and uphold my rights.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'I am supported to understand and uphold my rights'. (HSCS 2.3) and, 'My human rights are central to the organisations that support and care for me'. (HSCS 4.1)

4. To support young people's inclusion in informed care planning, the provider should ensure that young people are aware of their rights to continuing care and that all young people are supported to have a welfare assessment completed within the statutory timeframe.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards, which state: "I am supported to understand and uphold my rights" (HSCS 2.3) and "I am fully involved in developing and reviewing my personal plan, which is available to me" (HSCS 2.17).

What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at or since the last inspection

Requirements

Requirement 1

By 14th January 2024 the service provider must ensure that young people's health and wellbeing are fully assessed with risks and effective strategies to address risk identified. To do this the service provider must ensure that all young people's risk assessments inform strategies to address risk, are fully completed, up to date and reviewed in accordance with their own policy. This is necessary to comply with the Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 SOCIAL CARE No. 210 regulation 4 and 5 and to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards, which state: 'I am helped to understand the impact and consequences of risky and unsafe behaviour and decisions. (H&SCS 2.25) and 'I am protected from harm because people are alert and respond to signs of significant deterioration in my health and wellbeing, that I may be unhappy or may be at risk of harm'.(H&SCS 3.21)

This requirement was made on 29 May 2024.

Action taken on previous requirement

Some progress had been made in relation to the completion of risk assessments and the identification of responsive actions. Supports from outside agencies had been enlisted to better engage young people in their care plan. There remained some work to progress to improve the quality of care plans and the consistent identification of care plan goals for each young person. An area for improvement has been made to address the remaining issues to be addressed. This requirement is met. **MET**

Met - outwith timescales

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
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7.1 Children and young people are safe, feel loved and get the most out of life	4 - Good
7.2 Leaders and staff have the capacity and resources to meet and champion children and young people's needs and rights	4 - Good

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