

Ashton House Care Home Service

Inverness

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
21 May 2025

Service provided by:
Highland Council

Service provider number:
SP2003001693

Service no:
CS2003014132

About the service

Ashton Road is a care home for children and young people, which can care for up to five young people between the ages of 12 and 20 years old. The service is provided by the Highland Council and is situated in a residential area of Inverness.

Within the home there are five bedrooms for young people, each with an ensuite. There is a living room, large kitchen/dining area, a games room and two office spaces. There are accessible gardens to the front and rear of the property. The service is located near the city centre with easy access to local amenities.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection, which took place on 13 and 14 May 2025 between 09:45 and 18:30, and 09:30 and 13:45 respectively. This 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 and complaints information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection. To inform our evaluation we:

- Spoke/spent time with four people using the service and four of their family/representatives
- Received 27 completed questionnaires
- Spoke with 10 members of staff and management
- Observed practice and daily life
- Reviewed documents
- Spoke with nine external professionals

Key messages

- Young people were kept safe physically and emotionally by a committed staff team.
- Staff were reflective and curious which contributed to young people experiencing a high standard of care.
- The team are continuing to develop practice around trauma informed care.
- Young people were encouraged to be part of decisions and plans affecting them.
- Relationships with those important to young people were promoted by the service.
- Young people were supported to engage with education and learning opportunities that were based on needs and interests.

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

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

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for young people, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

Overall, young people are kept safe by a caring and committed staff team. Some young people spoke of instances whereby the behaviour of others impacted upon their feelings of safety. Collaborative working further promoted the safety and wellbeing of young people, and this was underpinned by effective communication and information sharing by the team. The team were described as being open, curious and reflective. These attitudes contributed to young people experiencing a high standard of care and support.

Young people had access to external advocacy, should they wish and their views around this were respected. This meant that young people felt listened to.

The staff team had made progress towards achieving a trauma-informed approach to practice. Staff take an individualised approach to each young person and looked beyond behaviours when thinking about what support is needed. This means young people experience support that is meaningful to them.

Young people experience warm, trusting and nurturing relationships with those caring for them. An external professional described staff as '*caring and compassionate*' and we heard of staff allowing relationships to develop at young people's pace. Staff understood some young people had preferences in which staff they approach for support. This was taken into account when supporting young people and led to more meaningful, open discussions and staff developing a better understanding of individual needs.

Young people experience a high level of respect from those involved in looking after them. Some young people did not want to be in a group living environment, which impacted upon their level of engagement with the team. Despite this, staff continued to demonstrate their care and interest in young people, which helped them feel included, where they wished.

Young people were encouraged to be part of decisions and plans made about them, however the level they did engage differed based on interest and understanding. Young people were aware of their care plan and understood they could see this if they wanted to.

Young people's physical and mental health were given priority within the service. This was supported by strong links with Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) who worked alongside the team to develop improved understanding of young people and develop effective support strategies. We saw one example where staff developed a sensory box with one young person to offer a distraction during difficult times. In relation to medication, we identified some discrepancies in recording practices. These were discussed during the inspection and we are aware the manager has taken steps towards improving this.

Staff worked alongside other professionals to ensure the young people had opportunities to spend time with those important to them, both within and out with the house. Family members found staff shared

information as required about their young person which helped them build relationships and feel involved. Family members who had visited felt welcome within the house.

Staff were motivated to ensure young people had access to new and exciting experiences and so were proactive in making suggestions, as young people were not always aware of opportunities available to them. We heard of a visit to Edinburgh Zoo, Blackpool and a young person accessing driving lessons. This allowed young people to develop confidence and help them in leading successful lives.

Young people were encouraged to engage with education and learning opportunities. There were good links with local education provisions and bespoke plans developed based on the needs and interests of young people. Some older young people had obtained employment locally, which was encouraged by the team. This meant that young people were supported to achieve their potential and opened up future opportunities.

All young people had individualised care plans and risk assessments. These were well-balanced and clear which ensured that staff had access to the right information to support young people in an informed way.

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?	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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