

# Wheatlands Care Home Service

Galashiels

**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
28 July 2025

**Service provided by:**  
Scottish Borders Council

**Service provider number:**  
SP2003001976

**Service no:**  
CS2008175229

## About the service

Wheatlands is registered as a care home for children and young people. It can care for a maximum of seven young people between the ages of 12 and 22 years including two over 16 years in a nearby satellite flat. It is run by Scottish Borders Council, providing residential care for young people who require emergency, medium and long-term care.

Wheatlands is situated in Galashiels, on a main bus route, not far from the town centre. It is a detached Victorian building with public areas and a staff office on the ground floor, and bedrooms and bathrooms upstairs. Young people have access to a comfortable lounge, a games room, a dining kitchen, and outdoor space.

Its mission statement is: "Wheatlands will provide high quality childcare for all young people accommodated here. We aim to do this by providing a safe, caring, supportive environment which enables individuals to progress towards and reach their full potential".

At the time of this inspection the service's registration had been temporarily varied to include Lowood, a residential care service recently taken over by Scottish Borders Council and in the process of being registered as a separate service. Lowood provides care to one young person and was also visited as part of this inspection. Lowood is situated in nearby Melrose.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 21 and 22 July 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 six people using the service and one of their family members
- spoke with eight staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents
- spoke with visiting professionals

## Key messages

- Young people benefit from loving and consistent care from a skilled and stable team of staff
- Young people are kept safe and risks are well understood
- The service needs to develop a clearer way of recording child protection concerns and outcomes
- Young people benefit from a reflective culture and a strong commitment to reducing the use of restrictive practice within the service
- Young people are respected and well understood as individuals
- The service demonstrates a strong commitment to advocating for young people's right to continuing care and has a strong history of continued support to young people who have moved on from the service.
- The service should ensure that all young people in continuing care have welfare assessments in place

## 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

We found significant strengths in many aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for children and young people outweighing the areas for improvement identified. Therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

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

Young people within Wheatlands benefitted from stable and therapeutic care. Warm and trusting relationships between staff and young people were apparent. The staff team was longstanding and very stable. When agency staff were used, this was managed thoughtfully to ensure that young people always had access to someone who knew them well. Although the Lowood staff team was new, it was apparent that they came to the role with a wide range of valuable experience in the field and were committed to providing nurturing and predictable therapeutic care.

Young people living in both parts of the service benefitted from a safe and secure environment. Where there were risks at home or in the community, these were well understood. Risk assessments were thorough and regularly reviewed. Where young people were involved with risk taking behaviour there was evidence of this reducing as young people settled into the service and build trusting relationships with staff.

The service follows national guidance with regards to child and adult protection with any concerns shared appropriately with lead agencies. Staff were responsive and worked well with other services to help keep young people safe. However, the service needs to develop a consistent way of recording this communication and the outcomes of any protection concerns as the method currently used is difficult to follow (see area for improvement 1).

Young people benefitted from a culture that aimed to minimise the use of restrictive practices. Where these have been used they have been proportionate and necessary, and a trauma informed approach was taken by staff and management. Wheatlands has established a restraint reduction steering group and evidences continual development in this area. This means that practice in this area is thoughtful and robust.

All young people had access to responsible adults outwith the service who are able to advocate for them including third sector partners. The staff team also passionately and effectively advocate for the rights and best interests of young people. This ensured that young people were treated with a high level of respect .

Young people were encouraged to be fully engaged in the planning of their care and support. Young people were all aware of their care plans and were supported to contribute towards these. Young people were also encouraged to share their views of the service on a regular basis.

Young people's physical and mental health is well supported. Young people engaged with a range of community supports and the team worked well with other professionals to deliver consistent care. This led to improved health and wellbeing outcomes for young people.

Young people's connections with friends, family and other important people were skilfully supported. Staff worked alongside family members and other professionals to help rebuild relationships that had become strained. This meant that some young people were able to return home to live with their families and others were supported to maintain meaningful relationships.

Young people all engaged with learning and education, sometimes despite significant gaps in their education prior to moving to Wheatlands. When young people left school continuous learning and development remained a focus. Unaccompanied asylum seeking young people had good outcomes and were supported to attend college, learn English and get their driver's licenses during their time in the service. Young people were therefore supported to be aspirational and ambitious about their plans for the future.

Young people's right to continuing care was well understood and championed. Additionally, Wheatlands has a long and committed history of supporting people well into adulthood. However there was some inconsistency in transition planning for young people. Not all eligible young adults had continuing care welfare assessments in place and there were instances where there were external pressures on some young people to move on from Wheatlands before the age of 21. Whilst this is not the sole responsibility of the service, the staff team need to ensure the local authority upholds the rights of all young people who are eligible for continuing care (see area for improvement 2).

### Areas for improvement

1. To enhance safeguarding and support wellbeing, the service should establish an effective method to record, assess and document decisions regarding welfare concerns, including child and adult protection matters.

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

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

2. To ensure young people experience stable and consistent care beyond the age of 18, the provider should ensure that all young people's voices are heard and that a continuing care welfare assessment is undertaken timeously for all young people using the service.

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

'My future care and support needs are anticipated as part of my assessment.' (HSCS1.14).

### Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://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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