

Thistlebank Care Home Service

Cumnock

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
19 August 2025

Service provided by:
Radical Services Ltd

Service provider number:
SP2003002568

Service no:
CS2015335183

About the service

Thistlebank is a care home service for up to two children and young people. The service is provided by Radical Services Limited.

The service is contained within a detached house in a rural area close to Cumnock, East Ayrshire. It is located next door to another of the provider's care homes for children and young people, both led by the same manager.

The property consists of a large lounge, dining area, kitchen and conservatory. Each young person has their own bedroom and access to a shared bathroom. There is a further bedroom for staff along with an office space which doubles as a staff bedroom. There is a large garden surrounding the property.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 12 and 13 August 2025 between 12:00 and 18:45, and 09:15 and 12:15 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 of the service we:

- Spoke with two young people using the service and one of their family members
- Spoke with eight members of staff and management
- Observed practice and daily life
- Reviewed documents
- Reviewed nine completed survey responses
- Spoke with two visiting professionals

Key messages

- Young people were cared for by staff who knew them well.
- Staff had a good understanding of trauma informed practice which helped them support young people effectively.
- Development of positive, trusting relationships was a strength of the service.
- Young people were encouraged to be part of planning their care and support.
- Staff supported young people to maintain relationships with those important to them.
- Individualised plans were created to encourage participation in education.

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 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 children and young people, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

Overall young people were kept safe whilst living at Thistlebank. Staff had a good understanding of young people's needs and how best to support them. Risk assessments were reviewed regularly to ensure information was up-to-date and relevant to current concerns. This supported consistency across the team and contributed to young people experiencing high quality care.

Young people had access to external advocacy services if they wished which helped ensure they could contribute to decisions affecting them. In addition, young people felt able to speak to staff if there was anything they were worried about.

The service used a therapeutic parenting approach to supporting young people which resulted in young people experiencing therapeutic and stable care. Staff demonstrated a good understanding of trauma informed practice, recognising the importance of relationships in being able to effectively support young people. The organisation is working towards reducing incidents of restrictive practice with staff discussing physical intervention being a last resort, and only being used when there are significant concerns about the safety of the young person or others around them.

Development of strong, trusting relationships was a strength of the service. During the inspection we observed lots of laughter, humour and relaxed conversations which contributed to young people feeling comfortable and settled. Staff also engaged young people meaningfully in discussions about safety concerns which further demonstrated the strength of relationships.

Young people experienced a high level of respect from those involved in looking after them. We heard about a complaint made by a young person which was taken forward by managers which helped the young person feel listened to. This respect was also reflected in the physical environment of the house which was well presented and homely. It was pleasing to see actions related to the environment within the service development plan.

Introduction of a new format of care plan recording has further promoted the involvement of young people in their care and support. This allowed opportunities for young people to express their views and identify goals to work towards.

Meaningful connections with those important to young people were supported and promoted by the team through practical support such as transport as well as being involved in supervising family time. This helped young people maintain relationships and connections.

Individualised plans were developed for each young person to support participation in education. Staff took time to learn about young people's interests and ambitions, and used this information to inform learning opportunities. This meant that young people were offered opportunities that were of interest to them.

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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