

Pitillock Farmhouse Care Home Service

Cupar

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
1 August 2025

Service provided by:
Moore House School Ltd

Service provider number:
SP2003002628

Service no:
CS2018365131

About the service

Pitillock Farmhouse is a care home service for up to four children and young people. The service occupies two floors of a three-storey farmhouse situated next to a working farm in a rural setting in Fife. Young people have their own bedrooms and share two bathrooms, a living room, dining room, dining kitchen and garden. The nearby villages of Freuchie and Falkland have some shops whilst Glenrothes, about four miles away, has a wider range of shops and other facilities, as well as public transport links.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 22, 23 and 25 July 2025 between 12:00 and 19:00, 09:35 and 16:30 and 09:20 and 12:30 respectively. The inspection was carried out by one inspector from the Care Inspectorate and a young inspection volunteer (with a supporter). To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about the 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:

- reviewed survey responses from three young people, four staff and three external professionals
- spoke with three young people using the service and two family members
- spoke with seven staff and managers
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- The service managed risk very well to prevent harm and keep young people safe.
- Staff minimised the use of physical restraint. They used sensitive and nurturing responses to distressed behaviour by young people.
- Young people benefitted from very stable, compassionate and positive relationships with staff.
- Young people were supported to engage in learning, stay active, make friends and stay connected with their families.

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 evaluated this key question as **very good**. This means there were major strengths in supporting positive outcomes for young people.

Staff knew young people well and were able to minimise the potential for harm as changes occurred to keep them as safe as possible. Young people were also developing a greater awareness of risk.

Young people's daily lives had become more settled and predictable over time. Staff minimised the use of physical restraint as a response to distressed behaviour, recognising it as a last resort and employing alternative strategies. This reduced the potential for compromising young people's physical wellbeing and dignity. Staff supported them to find personal strategies that might work for them when difficulties arose. Relevant training supported staff to work in a way that was developmentally attuned and to recognise and respond to young people's experience of trauma. Managers' oversight of significant incidents as they occurred contributed to ongoing learning in this area. In addition, regular collation and analysis of significant events led to learning being implemented, though recording could be improved.

Nurturing and positive relationships between young people and staff were a key strength of the service and helped create a loving environment. An external professional told us: 'Pitillock has been steadfast in its support of (a young person).' Low staff turnover was an important factor in promoting this impressive stability: 'The continuity over the years has made all the difference'.

Staff regularly sought young people's views and responded to suggestions and requests. This helped ensure that their preferences were reflected in their day-to-day experiences. One young person said: 'They'll let me know if it can't be resolved the way I want, which makes me feel heard'. Independent advocacy was available and they were supported to attend decision-making forums. The use of any restrictive practice was clearly documented, as were discussions with young people. However, consultation with external professionals should also be recorded. Following some comments from young people, we asked managers to clarify for them the service's approach to a specific aspect of care.

The service's ethos of respect was well reflected in the quality of the environment, which was welcoming, comfortable and homely, with a garden that provided very pleasant and relaxing rural views.

Safe and effective management of medication formed part of a range of high-quality supports for maximising young people's physical and mental health. There was also sensitive encouragement for a young person to engage in important health monitoring. They had opportunities for focussed mental health support from the provider's specialist team. This team also played a role in developing staff skills and knowledge in this area.

Young people received encouragement to be active and develop individual interests. Staff supported friendships and recognised the beneficial role they play in young people's lives: 'We can have friends here, I have sleepovers and I can go and stay at my (friend's)'. Where possible and in line with their preferences, young people maintained connections with family members. This promoted a sense of worth and belonging.

Holidays, musical events and celebrations provided fun as well as extended time with favourite staff, and widened young people's horizons. School and college attendance supported learning and life skills development as well as beneficial daily routines.

Assessment and planning processes contributed to positive outcomes for young people and were regularly reviewed. We made suggestions for minor improvements only.

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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