

## Gardenhouse Care Home Service

Dalton  
Lockerbie  
DG11 1DU

Telephone: 01576 204202

**Type of inspection:**

Unannounced

**Completed on:**

25 October 2018

**Service provided by:**

Common Thread Ltd

**Service provider number:**

SP2005007437

**Service no:**

CS2007148153

## About the service

The Care Inspectorate regulates care services in Scotland. Information about all care services is available on our website at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com)

This service was previously registered with the Care Commission and transferred its registration to the Care Inspectorate on 1 April 2011.

Common Thread's Gardenhouse service comprises Gardenhouse, close to the village of Dalton near Lockerbie, and Whitcastles which is situated near Corrie Common, Lockerbie. This service is registered to provide a care home service for up to four young people, aged eight to eighteen years, three in Gardenhouse and one in Whitcastles. It was fully occupied at the time of our inspection. Both houses provide single bedrooms and shared living areas which, though spacious, are domestic in scale. Both houses are furnished, decorated and maintained to a high standard.

Common Thread Ltd provides a number of care services across Scotland and describe their services as providing "intensive therapeutic work in a safe, structured environment, with a strong leaning towards interest based activities in response to an urgent or crisis situation."

Common Thread aim to provide successful outcomes for children and young people and to work towards clearly identified and agreed outcomes. Common Thread has its education service with three day-schools situated in Dumfries, Falkirk, and Kilmarnock. They aim to provide "an educational experience that will enable learners to re-enter mainstream education as confident, effective and successful individuals."

## What people told us

Young people told us that they were supported well and liked most or all of the staff working with them. One young person described the placement as "*gucci*" - (defined by the Urban Dictionary as "*good, chill, cool, awesome.*")

Two young people confirmed they had made very good progress in the placement and felt it had helped them achieve good outcomes; another felt they had achieved good outcomes, but that they would have done so elsewhere too. Three young people referred to the rural location and/or distance from home as being a down-side of their placement. All confirmed, however, that they were supported to maintain contact with home and to participate in community and/or school events. Two young people compared the placement very favourably with previous placements. One young person referred to the slow Wi-Fi/broadband speed.

A previous user of the service told us before the inspection that their placement had a trauma-based focus and that had been great for them. They had loved their time there and the service had helped them a lot. They said they had trauma in their life and certain things triggered a response from them and that Common Thread had helped them to recognise this. They were particularly positive about a director who they described as 'wonderful' and that they were still in touch.

## Self assessment

We didn't request a self-assessment, but asked instead that services carry out their own assessment and share with us their plans for improvement. Plans for this service were shared with us during the inspection and demonstrated a realistic assessment of the service and identified suitable areas for ongoing improvement.

## From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	6 - Excellent
Quality of environment	not assessed
Quality of staffing	not assessed
Quality of management and leadership	6 - Excellent

## What the service does well

The service has maintained and continued to improve the high standards that we reported following our last inspection. Managers and staff had developed an approach to their work which combines high professionalism with a warm and nurturing care setting. This includes excellent commitment to supporting young people's education, developing their strengths for independent living and supporting good transitions. Sometimes this had been undertaken in extremely challenging circumstances. Young people and a social worker spoke of very positive placement outcomes.

The manager, staff and provider give excellent attention to celebrating individual success which helps to promote a happy and positive atmosphere and individual self-esteem. Strong links have been established with a local school which two young people attended. One had overcome significant personal circumstances to achieve commendable grades in their Highers and National Highs. They were now making university applications. Another young person told us how their placement had helped them overcome their disability and is now on a vocational college course.

Young people are active participants in day-to day decision-making including care planning discussions. These are managed in a way which takes very good account of individual ability and any personal limitations. This ranges from support to complete plans one simple step at a time to detailed discussion of complex personal issues according to the young person's readiness to do so. Where the service has been asked to carry out a detailed assessment of need, this is thorough and evidence-based, person-centred and objective in its conclusions.

Managers and staff had given very good attention to the recommendations we made following our last inspection. All the care plans we looked at are in the provider's new format, are up to date and fully completed. Plans are person-centred, detailed, consistent and include clear statements of current needs and priorities and these are consistent with the expectations of placing authorities. They are written in a way which recognises what is going well and, where areas are identified for more progress, they describe the kind of staff support needed to help young people achieve progress towards identified goals.

A social worker described how, despite the rural location, the service has provided "tailored support" for a young person which had encouraged them to use public transport. They said this had been consistent right from the "early stages" and that the young person is "now a keen bus and rail user."

Staff give consistent attention to supporting young people's health needs and help them to access relevant health services. Medications administration and storage are well-maintained.

The provider has a trauma-based focus which informs staff training and development. The provider has secured the services of a skilled team of consultants whose professional skills and qualifications include psychology, psychiatry and psycho-therapy and art therapy. These consultants are available for individual focussed work or to support the staff team and had helped young people to achieve positive outcomes, e.g. in dealing with post traumatic stress.

Both houses reflect the strong person-centred culture of the provider. Staff are clear concerning the role of consistent expectations, safe routines and clear boundaries and young people confirm they feel safe and very well-supported. A social worker told us that this approach had been "key to the young person's success both in their emotional wellbeing and mental health support."

Managers and key workers have often championed the individual needs of young people with other agencies. This has sometimes included rigorous advocacy in order to ensure young people receive the right kind of support and have the best opportunities for success.

The service has developed a consistently robust approach to supporting independence and preparing transition plans with young people. These take excellent account of individual needs, views and circumstances and are innovative in their unwavering commitment to helping young people to have the best possible start to independent living. One example involved engaging the provider's own maintenance team to prepare a housing association flat for the young person's move back to their home area. Managers and staff ensured a co-ordinated and suitably detailed support package during the transition period.

Another example is the provider's planned conversion of a barn to provide a 'home-base' for a young person hoping to go to university. This has given them renewed confidence to plan for their future, secure in the knowledge of a home-base and the continuing support of familiar staff. The success of the service's approach to planning transitions is being shared across the provider's other houses. The provider is now hoping to share this good practice across the wider looked-after sector.

The provider has introduced a new Quality Assurance Development Framework which includes a combination of tick boxes and narrative. Supplementary quality checks use evaluative statements to assess and celebrate success and promote further improvement.

## What the service could do better

The service should continue to develop its implementation of their new approach to care planning and associated record-keeping. This might include developing better ways of capturing and evaluating some of the more complex individual work that is undertaken, its desired outcomes, specific tasks by young people and staff and measures of success.

## Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

## Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

## 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).

## Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings
30 Oct 2017	Unannounced	<div>Care and support</div> <div>5 - Very good</div> <div>Environment</div> <div>Not assessed</div> <div>Staffing</div> <div>5 - Very good</div> <div>Management and leadership</div> <div>Not assessed</div>
9 Feb 2017	Unannounced	<div>Care and support</div> <div>5 - Very good</div> <div>Environment</div> <div>Not assessed</div> <div>Staffing</div> <div>5 - Very good</div> <div>Management and leadership</div> <div>Not assessed</div>
2 Feb 2016	Unannounced	<div>Care and support</div> <div>5 - Very good</div> <div>Environment</div> <div>4 - Good</div> <div>Staffing</div> <div>4 - Good</div> <div>Management and leadership</div> <div>5 - Very good</div>
14 Jan 2015	Unannounced	<div>Care and support</div> <div>5 - Very good</div> <div>Environment</div> <div>5 - Very good</div> <div>Staffing</div> <div>5 - Very good</div> <div>Management and leadership</div> <div>5 - Very good</div>
6 Jun 2014	Unannounced	<div>Care and support</div> <div>5 - Very good</div> <div>Environment</div> <div>5 - Very good</div> <div>Staffing</div> <div>5 - Very good</div> <div>Management and leadership</div> <div>4 - Good</div>

Date	Type	Gradings
7 Jun 2013	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment 4 - Good Staffing 5 - Very good Management and leadership 4 - Good
5 Sep 2012	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment 5 - Very good Staffing 4 - Good Management and leadership 5 - Very good
27 Oct 2010	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment Not assessed Staffing 5 - Very good Management and leadership Not assessed
10 Jun 2010	Announced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment Not assessed Staffing 5 - Very good Management and leadership Not assessed
15 Dec 2009	Unannounced	Care and support 4 - Good Environment 5 - Very good Staffing Not assessed Management and leadership Not assessed
27 Aug 2009	Unannounced	Care and support 4 - Good Environment 5 - Very good Staffing 4 - Good Management and leadership 5 - Very good
18 Mar 2009	Unannounced	Care and support 4 - Good Environment 4 - Good Staffing 4 - Good Management and leadership 4 - Good
5 Jun 2008	Announced	Care and support 4 - Good Environment 4 - Good Staffing 4 - Good Management and leadership 4 - Good

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