

# Couthie House Care Home Service

Edinburgh

**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
19 July 2022

**Service provided by:**  
Action for Children

**Service provider number:**  
SP2003002604

**Service no:**  
CS2015334879

## About the service

Couthie House is a care home for children and young people. The service is registered to provide care to a maximum of 3 children and young people aged between 5 and 19 years of age who have a learning disability and or physical disability and or sensory impairment. The service is situated in a central part of Edinburgh close to public transport and shopping centres. Each young person has their own bedroom with access to a bathroom and toilet. The house is well decorated, furnished and homely. Couthie House has a large garden at the rear of the building.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 13 July 2022 between the hours of 10:00 and 18:00. 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 one young person and met one more;
- spoke with five staff and managers;
- spoke with three parents;
- observed practice, the environment and daily life; and
- reviewed documents.

## Key messages

- Staff were very good at building nurturing relationships with young people
- Young people benefited from innovative use of resources to progress their development
- The atmosphere in the home was friendly and welcoming with lots of laughter and fun
- Young people received high quality personal care from staff who were trained to meet the specific needs of the young people
- The service works closely with parents and takes their views seriously
- Staff retention needs to be improved in order to provide consistency for young people
- Care plans stored in paper files need to be the same those stored electronically

## 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 aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for young people, therefore we evaluated this question as very good.

Young people experienced nurturing care from the whole staff team on a very individualised basis with everyone understanding their roles and responsibilities.

We saw very natural engagement between young people and their carers and young people found security in knowing who was supporting them at various times of the day.

Staff demonstrated genuine warmth and young people enjoyed lots of, laughter, and fun. There was a sense of comfort and relaxation in the house and staff had confidence in their approach to the young people.

A behaviour consultant worked alongside staff carrying out in depth analysis of behaviours, developing credible strategies to work with young people in positive and productive ways. In times of crisis staff worked alongside young people with planned and consistent approaches helping them to regulate and regain control. They had also worked alongside parents to replicate these strategies and establish routines.

A multi disciplinary approach, working alongside colleagues from education, medical practitioners and umbrella support groups, such as Deaf Action, ensured that young people received wholistic care. This had led to many successes in areas such as improved communication, speech and language development, toilet training and mobility.

Young people were given choices alongside planned activities designed to stimulate interest and help them progress. The activities included a variety of outings and holidays particular to the interests of the young people.

The service had strong relationships with parents who told us they felt supported by the service. They felt welcomed into the service and said that communication was very good.

Staff worked closely with medical professionals to ensure the safe care of all of the children. Administration of medication was well managed and recorded effectively.

Young people, who ate, enjoyed healthy meals and staff ensured that all young people were fed safely.

All of the young people had care plans which provided staff with strategies to ensure young people were cared for safely and made progress in their development. The care plans were stored both electronically and in paper files. We found some disconnect between the storage methods in updating information which had potential to lead to inconsistency. We urged the service to make the transition to paperless files as soon as possible to prevent retention of misinformation. We identified this as an area for improvement. **See area for improvement 1**

Whilst the provider had worked hard to retain staff, there had been significant changes to the staff group over the past year, resulting in changes to core care groups for young people. However, during the inspection we saw staff working well together and they had started to bond as a team. Parents told us they would like to know when new staff started, particularly if they were working as part of their child's support team. They would find it helpful to be introduced to new staff when they visited. We have identified this as an area for improvement. **See area for improvement 2**

Staff told us they were well supported and received regular, helpful supervision. This helped them to focus on their care of young people. Staff had received training in core areas such as child protection and training specific to the needs of the young people, such as autism and epilepsy training, and British Sign Language.

Management roles and responsibilities were very clear and team leaders had specific allocated tasks which they managed effectively and were overseen by the registered manager. The manager had a high profile within the home and knew the young people very well.

### Areas for improvement

1. To ensure that staff have a consistent approach to individual care paper files should reflect the information found in electronic files.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that "My personal plan (sometimes referred to as a care plan is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met as well as my wishes and choices." (HSCS 1.15)

2. To ensure consistency and promote parent confidence the provider should further explore staff retention initiatives and inform parents of changes to staffing as soon as possible.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that "I am cared for by people I know so that I can experience consistency and continuity." (HSCS 4.16)

## 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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