

# Atha Mhor Close Support Care Home Service

Newtonmore

**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
27 April 2023

**Service provided by:**  
Applied Care & Development Limited

**Service provider number:**  
SP2003003432

**Service no:**  
CS2005098750

## About the service

Atha Mhor Close Support is a small residential service for children and young people and is provided by Applied Care & Development Limited, owned by Care Tech Holdings PLC. The service is located in Newtonmore, within the Cairngorms National Park.

The property is a double storey detached house set within its own grounds. The accommodation for young people comprises individual bedrooms, bathrooms and a range of communal areas. The garden is enclosed, with space to play and relax.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 24 April 2023 between 13:30 and 18:00 and 25 April 2023 between 09:00 and 15:00. The inspection was carried out by two inspectors 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 young people using the service
- spoke with four members of staff and management and two completed our survey
- spoke with three external professionals and another provided written feedback.
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

## Key messages

- An experienced and skilled manager has implemented significant improvements since the last inspection.
- Young people's health benefited from a proactive approach in working with external professionals.
- Young people enjoyed supportive relationships with caring adults.
- Young people's rights were championed by adults.
- Leaders took a careful and considered approach to matching young people to the service.
- Young people would benefit from the service embedding a dynamic, trauma informed learning culture.

## 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?	4 - 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?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and young people and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Young people were kept safe at Atha Mhor. They benefitted from knowledgeable and compassionate staff who were able to use a relationship-based approach to work with young people to reduce risk. Young people told us that they felt safe and young people's outcomes relating to safety had improved. This had been achieved through the introduction of an experienced and skilled manager to the service and the subsequent development of a stable staff team.

The service implemented national guidance and best practice in child protection and young people's health, safety and wellbeing outcomes improved because knowledgeable and trained staff worked with social workers, the police and health professionals to support young people in the way they needed. Some staff did not have an awareness of adult support and protection and due to the age and potential vulnerabilities of the young people living in the house we made an area for improvement (**see area for improvement 1**).

Children and young people experienced high levels of respect from everyone involved in looking after them. There were no instances of restraint, and the fully trained staff were confident that they would be able to support young people long before this was required.

Young people's rights were also championed by the staff and they advocated for young people's right to continuing care, including by ensuring young people had continuing care welfare assessments in place.

Respect was also reflected in the quality of environment and the resources available for young people. The house was relaxed, comfortable and homely and the practice of not using an office contributed to this. The service had plans to create a private area for sensitive conversations to take place and we looked forward to seeing this at the next inspection.

Young people had access to responsible adults outside the service, including advocacy and the staff worked hard to support these services to visit and spend time with the young people. Young people also had a clear input in to their plans and they were fully supported, by the staff, to pursue interests and life skills.

Young people enjoyed warm, trusting, and nurturing relationships with those caring for them. The relationships were based on compassion and fun. However not all staff had an understanding of trauma and the services chosen practice model, PACE, had not been fully embedded and this meant there was not always a consistent approach when young people were distressed. We therefore made an area for improvement (**see area for improvement 1**).

Leaders had worked hard to bring together and develop the team since the last inspection. The manager modelled high standards of practice and staff felt well supported by them. However, some staff had not had regular supervision in line with the organisations policy. Formal, reflective and supportive supervision and appraisal is an important feature of the ongoing development of the team but also to ensure consistency of practice. We therefore made an area for improvement (**see area for improvement 1**).

There was evidence that the manager and external manager engaged in reflective and challenging discussions regarding appropriate matching of young people. Impact risk assessments were carried out and consideration was given to team development. This was a helpful way of working and was an important factor in stabilising the team and maintaining a settled home for the young people in recent months.

### Areas for improvement

1. To ensure young people's safety, health and wellbeing benefitted from a well trained, consistent and knowledgeable team of staff, the service should implement a dynamic and responsive learning culture. This should include but is not limited to;

- Introducing training in adult support and protection.
- Embed the model of trauma informed practice, that the service has chosen to use, in all aspects of the service.
- Ensure staff receive regular, formal and supportive supervision and appraisal.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes' (HSCS 3.14).

## What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at or since the last inspection

### Requirements

#### Requirement 1

By 1 December 2022, the provider must ensure that children and young people experience the best possible outcomes.

To do this, the provider must, at a minimum:

a) appoint a manager who is in full time, day to day charge of the service.

This is to comply with Regulation 17 (1) (c) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210).

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice' (HSCS 4.11).

**This requirement was made on 22 September 2022.**

#### Action taken on previous requirement

The service appointed a full time, experienced manager in November 2022. Important improvements have been made to the service since this time.

**Met - within timescales**

#### Requirement 2

By 1 October 2022, the provider must ensure the health and welfare of children and young people.

To do this, the provider must at a minimum:

a) make arrangements to secure the provision of adequate and appropriate services from health care professionals in a timeous manner.

This is to comply with Regulation 4(1)(a) and (d) (welfare of users) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210).

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 because people are alert and respond to signs of significant deterioration in my health and wellbeing, that I may be unhappy or may be at risk of harm' (HSCS 3.21).

This requirement was made on 22 September 2022.

#### Action taken on previous requirement

All young people had access to the appropriate health professionals. The staff have been pro-active in engaging with a variety of health professionals and young people's outcomes have significantly improved as a result.

**Met - within timescales**

### Requirement 3

By 1 December 2022, the provider must ensure the health, welfare and safety of children and young people.

The provider must at a minimum:

a) ensure at all times suitably qualified and competent persons are working in the care service in such numbers as are appropriate for the health, welfare and safety of service users; and

b) ensure all staff receive training appropriate to the work they are to perform.

This is to comply with Regulation 15 (a) (b) (i) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210).

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes' (HSCS 3.14).

This requirement was made on 22 September 2022.

#### Action taken on previous requirement

The service ensured that staffing levels at all times have been appropriate and staff had the skills, experience and training required to work in the service. Staff have undertaken appropriate training for the young people living in the service and management had a full overview of staff training.

We did however identify an area for improvement to ensure staff receive training in anticipation of young people's ongoing and changing needs. A new area for improvement will be made in relation to this, however this requirement has been met.

**Met - within timescales**

## What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection

### Areas for improvement

#### Previous area for improvement 1

To ensure children and young people's views and rights are upheld, the provider should ensure that advocacy services routinely seek the views of children and young people and have direct input into the care plans for children and young people.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'My care and support meets my needs and is right for me', (HSCS 1.19) and 'My needs, as agreed in my personal plan, are fully met, and my wishes and choices are respected' (HSCS 1.23).

**This area for improvement was made on 22 September 2022.**

#### Action taken since then

Advocacy workers visited the young people regularly and the impact of their work has been evident in young people's outcomes and recorded files. Young people's rights have been pro-actively upheld as a result of the work the staff in the service have carried out.

#### Previous area for improvement 2

To enable young people to experience stable and consistent care beyond the age of 18 years, the provider should ensure that continuing care welfare assessments are undertaken timeously for young people.

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' (HSCS 1.14).

**This area for improvement was made on 22 September 2022.**

#### Action taken since then

Continuing care welfare assessments were in place for those young people that were entitled to one. We would encourage the service to continue to pursue these assessments as young people's needs change.

#### Previous area for improvement 3

To ensure that personal planning takes full account of the views of children and young people, the provider should, along with children and young people, devise personal plans which contain clear strategies to address the needs and wishes of children and young people.

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

**This area for improvement was made on 22 September 2022.**

**Action taken since then**

This was evident in the young people's plans. A range of methods had been used to gather young people's views. Plans had clear strategies to support young people.

**Previous area for improvement 4**

To ensure that improvement planning is inclusive of the views of children and young people, the provider should better evidence ways in which skilful therapeutic care elicits these views and influences experiences and outcomes for those living at the service.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes, (HSCS 3.14) and 'I can be meaningfully involved in how the organisations that support and care for me work and develop (HSCS 4.6).

**This area for improvement was made on 22 September 2022.**

**Action taken since then**

Young people's views were captured throughout the services planning and paperwork. This was captured through the use of the Mind of My Own tool, through sensitive discussion undertaken and recorded by staff and through stakeholder feedback questionnaires.

**Previous area for improvement 5**

To ensure that children and young people experience the best possible care and support, the provider should implement a range of self evaluation methods to measure the performance of the service.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'I use a service and organisation that are well led and managed', (HSCS 4.23) and 'I am confident that people are encouraged to be innovative in the way they support and care for me' (HSCS 4.25).

**This area for improvement was made on 22 September 2022.**

**Action taken since then**

The service has implemented a range of self-evaluation methods which importantly included direct feedback from young people, their family, external professionals and staff members.

**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?	4 - Good
7.1 Children and young people are safe, feel loved and get the most out of life	4 - Good
7.2 Leaders and staff have the capacity and resources to meet and champion children and young people's needs and rights	4 - Good

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