

Alison House Care Home Service

Edinburgh

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
4 November 2025

Service provided by:
City of Edinburgh Council

Service provider number:
SP2003002576

Service no:
CS2024000465

About the service

Alison House is a care home service for up to nine young people aged 16 and over. The service is provided by City of Edinburgh Council with support being offered to young people across the local authority area. The service currently provides an outreach service to young people living in their own homes. As this part of this service is not registered with the Care Inspectorate, it was not considered during this inspection.

Each young person living at Alison House has their own self-contained flat. There were six young people living in the service at the time of our inspection. Within the building there is office space for staff as well as a communal space which can be used for social activities.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 27 and 28 October 2025 between 11:00 and 18:30, and 09:45 and 17:00 respectively. This 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 and complaints information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection. To inform our evaluation we:

- Spoke with four young people
- Spoke with seven members of staff and management
- Observed practice and daily life
- Reviewed documents
- Spoke with three external stakeholders

Key messages

- Young people were supported by a caring, knowledgeable staff team
- The service encouraged young people to be involved in planning their care and support through implementing a strength-based approach.
- Relationships with friends and family were led by young people.
- Staff felt supported through regular supervision and access to training.
- Quality assurance processes could be strengthened to further enhance the consistency of care and support experienced by young people.

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 young people and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Young people were kept safe whilst living at Alison House. Staff responded appropriately when faced with high risk incidents involving young people which contributed to the safety and wellbeing of young people.

Staff were knowledgeable and had a good understanding of external services available to support young people. The team worked effectively alongside other organisations to encourage young people to access meaningful supports.

A trauma-informed approach was adopted by staff. An external professional recognised staff treating each young person '*as an individual*'. This approach supported staff in being able to consider young people's behaviours with increased compassion and empathy.

Young people experience warm, trusting relationships with those supporting them. Young people told us they got on well with staff and would be able to speak to someone if they were worried or unhappy about something. This promoted young people feeling listened to.

Young people are encouraged to discuss their support with their key worker which contributes to the development of their support plan and associated risk assessments. Young people said staff speak to them about their care plans and they have opportunity to add to this should they wish. At the time of inspection the service was implementing a new approach to the recording and review of care and support. This involved a strength-based approach to the development of care plans and risk assessments. We look forward to seeing the progress at the next inspection.

Decisions around relationships with those that are important to young people are lead by young people themselves. Staff demonstrated a good understanding of individual preferences, which contributed to young people maintaining significant relationships.

Accessing education and learning opportunities is encouraged by the team. The service has strong links with local careers services who can offer focused support to young people in this area, should they wish. This helps young people in achieving their potential.

There was a culture of support within the service, for staff and young people. The service is going through a period of change as a result of a wider service review which led to a level uncertainty for staff. Despite this, we found that staff continued to offer a high standard of care and support to young people.

Where possible transitions are managed in a planned way which allowed for a gradual, supportive transition to the service. As part of the admissions and matching process impact assessments are now completed. These have promoted exploration of young people's needs alongside the remit of the service, as well as consideration to any impact upon those already living at the service.

Staffing needs assessments are undertaken on a regular basis, to ensure there are sufficient staff within the service to meet the needs of young people. Staffing is a challenge for the service and has resulted in having

to rely on agency or bank staff. Steps have been taken to ensure that any staff covering shifts are familiar with the service and the young people, in an attempt to offer some level of consistency.

Staff have access to training relevant to their role which contributes to them being able to successfully meet the needs of young people. Staff also have support in the form of supervision from their line manager on a regular basis. Following significant incidents, we found consistent practice of managers checking in with staff involved to offer support and opportunity to debrief.

There was a comprehensive development plan in place for the service with many of the areas for development identified within this evident throughout the inspection - for example the introduction of wellbeing documents, implementation of SMART planning and development of quality assurance and audit practices.

There was some evidence of quality assurance processes being in place in relation to incidents, staff supervision and young people's files however these could be further strengthened through more detailed recording and managerial oversight. This would contribute to an enhanced understanding across the team of young people's needs and opportunity to consider different approaches.

(See area for improvement 1).

Areas for improvement

1.

To ensure young people experience consistent high quality care and support, the service should develop and implement robust quality assurance processes in relation to all aspects of care provision.

This should include, but it is not limited to, ensuring roles and responsibilities of managers and staff are clearly defined to allow for regular oversight and scrutiny of practice.

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

'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes.' (HSCS 4.19).

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?	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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