

Cala Care Home Service

Elgin

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
14 October 2025

Service provided by:
The Moray Council

Service provider number:
SP2003001892

Service no:
CS2014333593

About the service

The service is purpose-built and provides residential accommodation for six children and young people. The service is provided from two separate houses, with young people benefitting from a smaller household of three young people living in each house.

The houses share the aims and objectives, manager and senior staff but otherwise operate quite separately to each other. Both of the houses provide a homely, nurturing environment for the young people living there.

The aims and objectives of the service are to:

- Provide and maintain a nurturing, therapeutic and stable environment for young people where they will feel safe, included, and develop a sense of belonging. The focus for providing this is found in the nurturing, caring, and meaningful relationships which are fundamental to the ethos at Cala.
- Create and maintain relationships within a family atmosphere.
- Provide consistent, respectful care and support.
- Develop a person-centred therapeutic approach.
- Promote a culture in which young people are supported to overcome previous traumas, and to develop positive, secure, and appropriate attachments.
- Provide support for young people to reach their own potential and progress further into independence.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Monday 13 and Tuesday 14 October 2025. 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:

- met some of the young people living at the service
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents
- received feedback via MS questionnaires from three young people, three parents, two external professionals and 10 staff.

Key messages

- Young people experienced relational nurturing care, which promoted their emotional and physical safety. A trauma informed approach ensured there was a nurturing/non punitive approach to young people's care and support.
- There was significant emphasis given to involving and supporting the people who were important to young people. Family members were supported practically and emotionally, and their views and opinions important in the care of their child.
- Ongoing relationships between adults and young people who had moved on from the service reflected the meaningful relationships they had developed whilst living there.
- Supportive adults had all aspects of young people's care and support at the heart of everything they did.

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

Young people experienced relational nurturing care, which promoted their emotional and physical safety. A trauma informed approach ensured there was a nurturing/non punitive approach to young people's care and support. Young people were very safe in the house, but less so in the community. Discussion at various meetings, risk assessment and core group meetings supported a consistent approach which helped to minimise risk.

A good understanding of behavioural support strategies and safeguarding procedures ensured that staff could thoughtfully and confidently intervene early to support safer, more positive outcomes for young people. Positive relationships with external professionals, and easily accessible support from on-call adults who knew the young people well also supported young people's safety. Risk assessment and safety planning provided meaningful and realistic responses to risk, and which had a clear foundation in the strong relationships that staff have with young people.

Young people enjoyed warm, trusting, nurturing relationships with those caring for them. This was evident in observation, discussion and questionnaire responses - from both young people and staff. An importance was placed on ongoing relationships with young people who have moved on from the service, reflecting the meaningful relationships they developed when living at Cala.

Young people at Cala lived in a very homely, relaxed environment. Any repairs which had been needed had been carried out quickly to ensure the environment continued to demonstrate care and respect for the people who lived there. Young people had been involved in decisions about the décor of the house, ensuring that their views were significant in day-to-day decisions.

There were a number of people external to the service who could advocate for young people's rights. In the house their voices were present in most aspects of their care and support, generally through ongoing and open conversation with staff but also in more formal forums such as young people's meetings and individual time with key staff.

Young people had access to a range of activities and were encouraged to develop new interests which helped promote self-esteem and confidence. The team were thoughtful in their approach, recognising that for some young people planning ahead was difficult and taking advantage of the moment was more likely to be successful. Young people enjoyed trips and holidays which they were part of planning.

All young people had access to healthcare services which promoted their physical and mental wellbeing. It was also hugely beneficial that the team had access to a CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services) clinician to consider helpful strategies of support for individual young people. Medication procedures were robust, with age-appropriate responsibility given to young people following appropriate risk assessment.

Some young people were involved with the throughcare team to support them to develop skills for their future. More natural learning opportunities to help young people develop skills prior to the involvement of the throughcare team might support greater learning.

There was significant emphasis given to involving and supporting the people who were important to young people. Family members were supported practically and emotionally, and their views and opinions important in the care of their child.

Young people had written their own care plans, which was a strong indication of how important their views were. The support plans written by adults could also incorporate the views of young people, though could be clearer if these were their directly expressed views, or an adult interpretation of these. It was clear, however, that in all aspects of their care, supportive adults had the young people at the heart of everything they did.

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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