

Aberlour Options - Fife Support Service

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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
14 October 2025

Service provided by:
Aberlour Child Care Trust

Service provider number:
SP2010011118

Service no:
CS2010272721

About the service

Aberlour Options - Fife Outreach Service is an outreach support service for children and young people in the Fife area with disabilities, complex needs and autism. The service has been registered with the Care Inspectorate since 2010 and is based in central Glenrothes.

The service is provided by Aberlour Childcare Trust and provides children and young people with opportunities to access community activities, develop personal and social skills and have fun. The outreach service also has access to Aberlour's Rainbow Heart Cottage - supporting the young people to enjoy indoor activities.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 6 October 2025 from 09:30 to 18:00, 7 October 2025 from 09:15 to 17:00 and 8 October 2025 from 11:00 to 16:00. The inspection was carried out by two inspectors from the Care Inspectorate.

To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information from the service. This included registration information, information submitted by the service, and intelligence. To inform the inspection we:

- spent time with the young people receiving outreach support
- spoke with seven members of staff including managers
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents
- spoke with two external professionals and four parents/carers
- accessed feedback questionnaires.

Key messages

- Young people were fully supported to make decisions and choices.
- Staff were knowledgeable regarding the individual needs of young people.
- Young people were benefitting from strong relationships and bonds with staff.
- The service was skilfully supporting young people with a range of complex health needs.
- Young people were offered a variety of new experiences.
- Young people were kept safe.
- The service should individualise risk assessments.
- Young people were benefitting from consistent, reliable and meaningful support.
- The service should introduce a formal staffing needs assessment.
- Young people benefitted from a staff team that communicated effectively.

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 people's wellbeing?	5 - Very Good
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good

Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

How well do we support people's wellbeing?

5 - Very Good

We evaluated this key question as very good, as we found significant strengths in aspects of the care and support provided; encouraging positive outcomes for young people.

Young people were effectively encouraged to be involved in decisions and to make choices in directing their personalised support. Staff were knowledgeable regarding the individual needs of young people, supporting them to express their views using a variety of communication tools. Additionally, the service was successfully sharing strategies, likes and dislikes with parents/carers and schools. This ensured young people were being listened to, receiving consistent support and that transitions were being thoughtfully managed.

Young people were benefitting from strong relationships and bonds with staff, experiencing fun, laughter and affection. These positive relationships also extended to the families of many of the young people who felt welcome, supported and listened to.

The service was skilfully supporting young people with a range of complex health needs, with staff having undertaken specific specialised training to ensure these needs could be met whilst on outreach. The health of young people was consistently taken into consideration when planning outreach activities. Staff knowledge and training reduced barriers, ensuring young people had the opportunity to enjoy a variety of activities.

Aberlour Options - Fife offered a flexible support service, recognising young people's changing needs and identifying when individual or group activities would maximise young people's outcomes. A social worker told us that "the service is incredibly responsive and will offer extra support; this is a real lifeline service for families"

Young people were offered a variety of new experiences to develop and explore their interests. This enabled them to get the most out of life, with staff providing encouragement and celebrating achievements. Young people were involved in a range of activities in their local community, making connections with peers and reducing possible isolation. Independence skills were also being developed, working at the individuals pace. One parent told us "my child has a great time doing things that we don't have time to do as a family."

Young people were kept safe, supported by a staff team who were well aware of their safeguarding responsibilities, recognising their role in ensuring young people were protected from harm. Staff were confident that any concerns, including poor practice would be addressed by the organisation. To strengthen safeguarding practices, the risk assessment process should be reviewed to ensure individualised risks are being captured. This would support staff to respond appropriately to young people's needs with identified strategies (see area for improvement 1).

Areas for improvement

1. To support young people's wellbeing and development, the provider should ensure risk assessments are individualised, accurately identifying risks and effective strategies to direct safe care.

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 because people have the necessary information and resources (HSCS 4.27).

How good is our staff team?

5 - Very Good

We evaluated this key question as very good, as we found significant strengths in aspects of the care and support provided; encouraging positive outcomes for young people.

Young people accessing the service were supported by a staff group who knew the young people very well. Staff demonstrated care and understanding of needs and promoted young people's dignity at all times. Staffing arrangements were flexible, and young people were benefitting from consistent, reliable and meaningful support. As a result, trusting relationships and strong connections were established between young people and staff.

The organisation had taken positive action to strengthen the staff team with increased responsibilities for assistant managers and the creation of seniors. This development will support greater managerial oversight, alongside the opportunity to model best practice.

To strengthen and ensure a formal staffing needs assessment is being undertaken, Care Inspectorate guidance was shared. This will support the analysis of staffing levels based on the needs of young people and the skills of staff (see area for improvement 1).

External professionals and parents commented that staff had the right knowledge and skills to support young people's outcomes. A parent told us "the staff are amazing and always know what my son needs". To further enhance this, staff had completed service and young people specific training; recognising and supporting individual needs. The service was committed to ensuring that staff were given opportunities to complete all mandatory training.

Young people benefitted from a staff team that communicated effectively, evidencing good working relationships. Staff were confident in making suggestions about practice, supported by opportunities for discussion about how to improve outcomes for young people. Overwhelmingly, staff were motivated and passionate, working as a strong team to ensure that young people's positive outcomes were maximised.

Positive relationships were also meaningfully extended to parents and family members who described staff interactions towards them as warm and caring, ensuring young people were benefitting from an inclusive approach to their support.

Areas for improvement

1. To fully support young people, the provider should implement a system for assessing staffing levels, consistency and skill mix at all times, matched to the needs of young people using the service.

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

My needs are met by the right number of people (HSCS 3.15).

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 support effective planning for young people, the service should ensure care planning and goals are in accordance with SMART principles, and that progress is formally reviewed and documented within agreed timescales.

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

My personal 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 10 November 2023.

Action taken since then

This inspection identified that goals were in accordance with the SMART framework. Care planning was being reviewed and alternative goals were set as the young person progressed. It was suggested that the service could strengthen this by clearly identifying the individuals and agencies involved in the review process.

Previous area for improvement 2

To support continuous improvement and meet young people's changing needs, the provider should ensure quality assurance processes are consistently undertaken; particularly relating to auditing and oversight of care planning documents.

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).

This area for improvement was made on 10 November 2023.

Action taken since then

File audits were being undertaken annually for each young person, incidents were being shared with the safeguarding team and senior management with various reporting mechanisms in place. This inspection highlighted areas where the quality assurance procedures could be developed to increase effectiveness.

Previous area for improvement 3

To ensure young people achieve the best outcomes, the service should strengthen the learning and reflective opportunities for staff with consistent debriefing following incidents.

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 of their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes (HSCS 3.14).

This area for improvement was made on 10 November 2023.

Action taken since then

Staff advised they felt supported, with consistent opportunities for support following any challenging times and via supervision. Incidents were minimal in number and we will support the service to ensure that incidents are being appropriately recorded and shared with The Care Inspectorate.

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 people's wellbeing?	5 - Very Good
1.2 People get the most out of life	5 - Very Good

How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good
3.3 Staffing arrangements are right and staff work well together	5 - Very Good

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