

East King Street Children's House Care Home Service

Helensburgh

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
29 January 2026

Service provided by:
Argyll and Bute Council

Service provider number:
SP2003003373

Service no:
CS2003000426

About the service

East King Street Children's House is a residential care home for children and young people. The home is owned and managed by Argyll and Bute Council. It is registered to provide care for up to six children and young people.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 7 & 9 January 2026, between the hours of 10.45 & 18.45. 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 three young people and spent time in the company of one other.
- Spoke with eight members of staff and management.
- Observed practice and daily life.
- Reviewed documents.
- Spoke with visiting professionals.

Key messages

- System and practice based concerns needed to be addressed.
- Staffing arrangements did not allow for a sufficient level of individual work with young people.
- There was good evidence of collaborative working.
- Safety and security of medicines presented an increased risk to young people.
- Advocacy supports and transition plans amplified young people's voice.
- Family connections were fully supported.

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?	3 - Adequate
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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?

3 - Adequate

We evaluated this key question as adequate, where strengths only just outweighed weaknesses.

There had been changes to a number of leadership roles since the last inspection. From survey responses and through discussions with some members of staff, the inspection raised a number of system and practice based concerns, relating to young people's care and support. We highlighted a number of themes to senior leaders and advised that there was a need for the provider to ensure appropriate supportive and developmental opportunities within leadership roles (Area for improvement 1).

There was a general view that staff, including those in acting up roles, had been doing their best under, at times, difficult circumstances. For example, maintaining supportive staffing levels had been challenging. Long term staff absence and review of young people's care and support, showed that staffing arrangements had not allowed for a level of intensity of work with young people, that might have been impactful around their experiences and outcomes. We were made aware of proposed changes to the staff rota and we asked the provider to ensure that when this is implemented, the staffing arrangements are sufficient, to enable young people to reach their potential, in their day to day lives (Area for improvement 2).

The emotional wellbeing and physical safety of young people was promoted through collaborative partnership working. By securing the involvement of specialist and other services, young people's safety needs, mental health and future learning opportunities, were clearly identified. A few young people were making progress in support of their needs.

Safety and security, including potential access to medicines and young people's ability to leave the house without staff knowledge, raised concerns about how young people were being consistently safeguarded. We advised that in all instances where young people were self medicating, a comprehensive risk assessment should inform this decision (Area for improvement 3).

Young people had regular and supportive involvement of advocacy services. We spoke with an advocate who was visiting a young person at the time of our inspection visit. It was clear that young people's voices were informing wider discussion and where possible, decisions about their day to day lives. Staff also actively advocated for young people in their care and relationships between young people and most members of staff were positive and respectful.

For other young people, continued friendship groups, high school attendance and opportunities to pursue personal interests, meant that their access to social situations, education, physical activities and creative arts supported them to participate and achieve in their chosen interest.

Where young people had been involved in transition planning, there had been extensive supports put in place, to respond to the wishes of those young people. It was evident however that the difficult balance between the expressed wish of young people to live more independently, had been influenced by their ability to do so. The provider was committed to exploring ways in which young people's wishes and ambitions could inform their future lives.

The house provided a warm and well furnished environment for young people. Recent re-decoration improving the overall look and feel of the house.

There was space for young people to meet with visiting professionals or with family and friends. Staff also ensured that plans for family time were fully supported and enabled. In some instances, this involved travelling a distance to facilitate family visits.

Young people's care was progressed through individualised personal plans. We sampled plans and found that these communicated clearly to young people, ways in which their skills and interests could be developed. Their involvement showed that bespoke arrangements helped them to express what was important to them and how they wanted to be supported.

Areas for improvement

1. To ensure that young people benefit from a culture of unity and inclusion, the provider should implement appropriate supportive and developmental opportunities for those in leadership roles.

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

2. To ensure that young people can reach their full potential, staffing arrangements should be sufficient to allow for a level of intensity of work with individual young people.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with Health and Social Care Standards which state, 'My needs are met by the right number of people' (HSCS, 3.15).

3. To ensure the safety and wellbeing of all young people, those young people considered as able to self medicate, should have a comprehensive risk assessment in place.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with Health and Social Care Standards which state, 'If I need help with medication, I am able to have as much control as possible' (HSCS, 2.23).

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 that all young people receive care and support suited to their needs, the provider should review and progress decision making, where the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of young people has been identified as a priority.

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

'I experience high quality care and support because people have the necessary information and resources' (HSCS 4.27).

This area for improvement was made on 2 April 2025.

Action taken since then

The provider had progressed decision making as far as they were able, in the absence of formal assessment.

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?	3 - Adequate
7.1 Children and young people are safe, feel loved and get the most out of life	3 - Adequate

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