

Balmore Children's Unit Care Home Service

Glasgow

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
29 January 2026

Service provided by:
Glasgow City Council

Service provider number:
SP2003003390

Service no:
CS2003001059

About the service

Balmore Children's Unit is a registered care home service provided by Glasgow City Council. The service operates from a purpose-built two storey house. It is located between Ruchill and Milton, and is located close to all local amenities with access to public transport links.

The service provides care to a maximum of eight children and young people. The house has its own parking spaces and an enclosed patio area to the front of the property. It has eight bedrooms with en-suite facilities. There are two lounges, a large kitchen dining area and a bathroom. The living areas are furnished and decorated to a high standard.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which was carried out by one inspector from the Care Inspectorate. The inspector visited on 22 January 2026 between 11:45 and 20:00 and 26 January 2026 between 11:15 and 20:15.

To prepare for the inspection, we reviewed information about this service. This included registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year.

To inform our evaluations we:

- met eight young people
- spoke to three family members
- spoke to nine members of staff and management
- spoke to three representatives from social services
- reviewed survey responses received from young people, family, staff and external professionals
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

The provider of this service is a corporate parent, with statutory responsibilities to look after and accommodate children. This may mean that the duty of care for children and young people on an emergency basis, or with highly complex needs, is their highest safeguarding priority.

In these circumstances, our expectations focus on outcomes, and evaluations remain identical to all other providers. We may, however, provide some additional narrative in the body of the report to reflect the impact of these duties, should it be relevant to this particular service.

Key messages

- Young people were enabled to take safe risks which was supported by innovative pro-active approaches.
- Staff and managers prioritised building strong relationships with young people, underpinned by love, care, respect and fun.
- Important connections were championed and children and young people felt supported to keep in touch with people important to them.
- Staff were extremely knowledgeable and this was embedded by a model of practice and shared with other services.
- There was a strong culture of ongoing improvement, innovation, reflection and learning.

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?	6 - Excellent
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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?

6 - Excellent

This inspection considered our Key Question 7: How well do we support children and young people's rights and wellbeing? We evaluated the service as excellent, where performance was sector leading with outstandingly high outcomes for children and young people. Practice was effective, innovative and sustainable across a wide range of activities.

The service was highly committed and proactive in ensuring the safety of young people. Children and young people told us, and observations indicated, that young people felt safe. We saw that the service had been pro-active in using innovative technology to support young people to be kept safe. Staff, stakeholders and family members commented that young people were supported to be kept safe, with one family member stating: "I knew [my child was] in a safe place, with loving adults who really care."

All staff had an understanding of child protection, adult protection and whistleblowing. During the course of the inspection, we provided feedback in relation to the recording of incidents and child protection records, and it was pleasing that the service was continuing to develop this practice. Stakeholders commented on the excellent communication and collaborative approach with the Balmore staff and management team.

We saw that staff prioritised relationships with young people, and these were described as loving and family like, by staff, young people, stakeholders and family members. Relationships were informed by staff's knowledge of nurture, trauma and children's rights. One young person commented:

"I like living here because I think people go above and beyond their duties. I get lots of opportunities, get holidays, time with people who love me and care about me. I know everyone here wants the best for me. I know that the carers love taking me on holiday, even though I know they don't have to, they want to."

We found that a clear model of care was embedded in staff practice. This led to staff understanding young people's needs to provide individualised care, prioritising young people's recovery and building resilience. Managers shared this approach with other services, to positively influence practice around caring for children and young people. This supported positive outcomes for young people which supported them to reach their full potential.

There was a strong emphasis on children's rights, fun, respect and love with staff describing young people as "ours" and Balmore as a "family hub". One staff member commented: "We claim our children, they are loved in Balmore, we ensure our children feel we are part of the extended family."

Young people told us that they felt listened to and that their views were respected. One young person commented that, "staff always try their best", "this is my home", "I never feel judged", "I always feel listened to" and that "this is my safe space". There was effective and passionate championing of children's rights. All young people had access to individual advocacy arrangements, had regular individual time with staff, and were supported to participate in meetings. This meant young people's views and wishes were embedded throughout key documents, and their views acted upon where possible.

The service supported young people's health needs, and young people had access to routine or specialist appointments. We heard that the service had developed innovative and creative ways to support young people's emotional wellbeing. This included staff accessing, implementing, and facilitating specialist training, and developing individual approaches for young people.

Important connections were championed, and children and young people felt supported to keep in touch with people important to them. All family members felt that relationships with their children, and time spent with their children, was fully supported by staff. Staff were creative and flexible in building opportunities for family time, and creating memories, including supporting young people with these connections.

The service supported and developed young people's individual ambitions, interests and life skills. All young people had an individualised education plan including attending or being supported to attend school, individual timetables, employment and work placements. Interests were also supported including fishing, politics, dancing, music, days out, holidays, learning to drive and promoting independence. Young people were supported to have their aspirations met and reach their full potential.

The service had a commitment to continuing care and keeping in touch when young people had moved on.

Service leaders worked hard to develop a supportive culture which prioritised reflection and learning, which staff commented was modelled by managers. One staff member commented: "There is a strong leadership team, that are nurturing, supportive, and kind; clear expectations which allows for a caring, loving team to be the best possible". This was reflected in the service's development planning, including promise reflection plans and peer support, to ensure the service continued to aspire to meet the promise.

The support young people received was reflected in key documents. All children and young people had care plans and risk assessments in place. Care plans were clear, respectfully written, and reflected young people's views. These identified clear goals which were SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timebound) to support young people.

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?	6 - Excellent
7.1 Children and young people are safe, feel loved and get the most out of life	6 - Excellent

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