

# The Cottage Care Home Service

Lanark

**Type of inspection:**  
Announced (short notice)

**Completed on:**  
29 January 2026

**Service provided by:**  
Common Thread Ltd

**Service provider number:**  
SP2005007437

**Service no:**  
CS2015343491

## About the service

The Cottage is a care home for children and young people, registered to care for three children and young people. The property is a large bungalow, with a substantial outdoor area, located in a rural area near the town of Lanark. The provider is Common Thread, and this service has been registered with the Care Inspectorate since 2016.

Each young person has their own bedroom and there is a large kitchen with dining space and a good sized living room area. There is also an office and sleep in space for staff.

At the time of inspection, there were three young people living at The Cottage.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 21 January 2026 from 09:45 to 19:00 and 22 January 2026 from 08:50 to 17:15. 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. We reviewed responses to our survey questionnaires from staff and external professionals.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with three young people using the service
- spoke with seven staff members, including management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents
- spoke with one visiting professional and three parents.

## Key messages

- Young people's safety was a priority at The Cottage.
- Changes within the staff team had impacted on stability of care for young people.
- Effective partnership working had been established with a variety of external agencies.
- The importance of young people's rights was promoted.
- The organisation plans to strengthen staff knowledge regarding the impact of trauma.
- The service could benefit from strengthening their formal staffing needs assessment.
- Young people were successfully encouraged to be safely and meaningfully connected to important people and education was prioritised.
- Personal planning documents were not successfully supporting young people's needs or directing staff practice.

## 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 made an evaluation of good for this key question, as several important strengths, taken together, clearly outweighed areas for improvement. Whilst some improvements were needed, the strengths identified had a significant positive impact on young people's experiences.

Young people's safety was a priority at The Cottage. Overall, staff knew and responded well to the young people, with young people identifying key staff that they would discuss concerns or worries with. Staff had a good understanding of safeguarding procedures, and were alert to the needs of the young people.

Some warm and nurturing connections had been established between staff and young people, however significant changes within the staff team had impacted on consistency, stability of care for young people and their feelings of emotional wellbeing.

Effective partnership working had been established with a variety of external agencies, exploring risks, strategies and opportunities for young people. This provided additional safeguarding and a social worker commented that they are "confident The Cottage will work with us as a team".

The importance of young people's rights was promoted. The service was meaningfully advocating on behalf of young people in a variety of ways and some young people were benefitting from active involvement with independent advocacy. This contributed greatly to young people's views being heard.

The service was committed to a culture and focus on least restrictive practices, prioritising individualised de-escalation strategies. To enhance this further, the service recognised the benefit of establishing a model for analysing incidents to support the identification of themes and patterns of behaviour. Additionally, the organisation had recently strengthened their search documents to ensure proportionate actions were being taken at all times.

The organisation recognised the importance of staff fully understanding the impact of trauma and were in the process of strengthening learning opportunities for staff; this included additional training opportunities, team supervision and ensuring 1:1 reflective supervision was prioritised.

Despite some challenges regarding the stability of the staff team at The Cottage, the organisation had effectively put measures in place to begin to address this; ensuring limited impact on outcomes for young people. Alongside this, the service could benefit from strengthening their formal staffing needs assessment. This would ensure consistently adequate staffing levels and skill, whilst supporting the needs of young people at all times (area for improvement 1).

Young people's health needs were being met, with specialist intervention services in place and staff consistently attempted to support and encourage young people to enjoy healthy routines. The service was also appropriately encouraging young people's independence around health matters.

Young people were successfully encouraged to be safely and meaningfully connected to important people. This supported young people to maintain bonds with family members and establish friendship connections within the local community.

Young people were being encouraged to participate in a variety of fun activities, with staff consistently offering various options for young people to become involved in. Education was also prioritised, with positive connections established with the local school. This ensured young people were benefitting from individually tailored support to participate in learning.

The organisation intends to remodel their personal planning documents as these were not successfully supporting young people's needs or directing staff practice. Meanwhile, it is crucial that the service reviews existing care planning documents including risk assessments to ensure their accuracy, relevance and effectiveness at guiding care and support. The future establishment of robust quality assurance processes across the service will further support this (area for improvement 2).

### Areas for improvement

1. To ensure young people are cared for by the right number of staff who have the required experience and skill mix to meet their changing needs, the provider should establish a staffing assessment process.

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

My care and support is provided in a planned and safe way, including if there is an emergency or unexpected event (HSCS 4.14).

2. To support young people's ongoing development, the service should ensure their care planning documents are in accordance with SMART principles, risk assessments are current and quality assurance is imbedded to support improvement.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (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).

## 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

The service should develop a continuing care policy to set out its responsibilities to provide continuing care to young people and how it will ensure that young people are aware of their right to continuing care up to the age of 21. They should also ensure that all staff undertake Adult Protection training.

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

As a child or young person I feel valued, loved and secure' (HSCS 3.5) and 'My human rights are central to the organisations that support and care for me (HSCS 4.1).

**This area for improvement was made on 20 December 2025.**

#### Action taken since then

The organisation has created a continuing care policy with plans to review and update this as required. Staff have undertaken adult protection training and face to face training is in place.

### Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://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

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