

Woodlands House Care Home Service

Alexandria

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
8 April 2026

Service provided by:
Benesse Care Limited

Service provider number:
SP2023001532

Service no:
CS2024000457

About the service

Woodlands house is a registered care home service provided by Benesse Care Ltd. The service operates from a bungalow in a quiet setting in a residential area of Alexandria and is centrally located, with access to public transport links and local amenities.

The house is a large bungalow with a kitchen/dining room, utility room, lounge, office, quiet/sensory room, five bedrooms (one with en-suite facilities for staff sleepover), two bathrooms for the young people and a staff/ visitor toilet. The house sits within large, mature gardens and there is ample space for parking to the front.

The service provides care to a maximum of four young people.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 2 April 2026 between 10.:30 and 17:45, 3 April 2026 between 9:00 and 14:45 and 7 April 2026 between 9:00 and 14:45.

The inspection was carried out by one inspectors 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 one people using the service
- spoke with seven staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents
- spoke with one external professional.

Key messages

- Staff were committed to building positive relationships with young people.
- Some very positive outcomes were seen for young people.
- Matching processes need to improve when new young people come to live in the house.
- Managers need to provide a consistent, stable team of staff with the right skills and training to enable them to form positive, trusting relationships with children.
- Ongoing development opportunities were required to ensure all staff were skilled and confident to care for young people living in the house.
- Staff recruitment processes needed to be more robust and follow Safer Recruitment guidance.
- Some policies needed to be more detailed and processes needed to provide robust guidance to staff.

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.

Young people told us they felt safe and cared for. Staff had a good awareness of the needs of young people and what was needed to keep them safe. There was positive evidence of a relational based approach from staff which meant young people were listened to and felt valued by staff.

Young people's right to direct their care and support was being maintained and young people were being supported to have their voices and views heard. Staff were seen to be strong advocates for young people. The service was asked to ensure that all young people in the service have access to independent advocacy.

Protection concerns were managed in line with national guidance and best practice, however, the protection procedures provided lacked detail and the procedure to be followed by staff was not clear. (See Area for Improvement 3)

Staff were focused on relational based practice. The young people benefitted from nurturing and compassionate care, however, the service should provide formal training to strengthen the skill and knowledge levels of staff to further enhance this. Staff were understanding of young people's experiences and looked beyond behaviour to understand the need that was being communicated.

We heard that staff consistently collaborated with external partners. One professional told us 'Staff have responded in very trauma informed way to my young person and have been highly responsive of their individual needs'. Very positive feedback regarding strong and positive multi-agency working meant that young people's care and support was individualised and responsive.

The service was currently not restraining any young people due, in part, to their aim not to do so. It would be beneficial to the service to have staff trained in the use of restraint should it be needed given the complex needs of some young people living in the house. The service have taken immediate action regarding this and a training plan has been implemented.

A robust consideration of the individual needs and care and support plans of young people coming to live in the service was lacking. An analysis of their needs matched against the staffing skills and knowledge was lacking. The service must have in place a more robust referral and matching process which will support management oversight of admissions and the resulting impact on young people living currently living in the house. (See Requirement 1)

Safe care practices were supported through consistent identification of indicators of concern and considered strategies to manage risks. Staff had an understanding of risk and worked hard to reduce the risks for young people they cared for, however, this required to be strengthened through the provision of training linked to the needs of the young people. The overall risk of young people and the environment was being managed well despite our concerns about the skills and knowledge of all staff.

Young people were supported to participate in a range of fun activities.

In recent months there have been high level of serious incidents. We would ask that the service continue to develop consistent approaches to analysis of incidents, including incident recording and debriefs. This will

ensure a detailed knowledge of patterns relating to young people's care and support. Staff understanding of debrief was inconsistent. (See Area for improvement 1)

Young people's health and wellbeing had been prioritised within the service and we saw that staff had ensured a high level of collaboration with key professionals to provide support and guidance on how to care for young people.

Young people were supported to access health, education and employment opportunities. Young people were also supported to maintain connections to people important to them.

Young people's needs and aspirations were being maximised through the implementation of person centred planning.

The service had been impacted by a lack of a full complement of staff in recent months, however, we heard that recruitment is ongoing and supporting the establishment of a full staff team.

The staff we met displayed a mix of skill and experience of working with young people who had experienced trauma. The staffing rota had been adjusted to ensure that a qualified member of staff was on shift, where possible with an unqualified member of staff. The provider must ensure there are adequate numbers of skilled staff equipped to keep young people safe. (See Requirement 2)

We were concerned that whilst some staff had completed some training there were significant gaps which could impact on the outcomes for young people. The service should ensure that all staff have access to and complete training specific to the needs of those in their care. This is linked to our previous comments on matching which should carefully consider the needs of the young people and the skills and knowledge of staff to confidently meet these. (See requirement 3)

We reviewed staff recruitment records for three staff. Evidence we were provided with was inconsistent and lacked clarity. (See Area for Improvement 2)

We found the manager to be trauma informed and aspirational in his vision for the house. He had supported the staff team to develop their knowledge through discussion and reflection and had used team meetings and supervision to model this standard of practice and expectations for the best outcomes for young people.

We were confident that the manager had a clear vision for the service. Quality assurance processes were robust and the service had in place a detailed development plan.

We were provided with some policies and procedures which differed from those provided during the registration of the service. The ones provided lacked detail and procedures to be followed by staff and needed to be more robust. (See Area for Improvement 3)

Requirements

1. By 30 June 2026, the provider must ensure that children and young people receive quality care and support by the service who has undertaken a thorough matching process. To do this, the provider must, as a minimum:

- a) Implement matching guidance and documentation that follows good practice.
- b) Gather appropriate information about the needs and risks of a young person before a placement decision

is made.

c) Undertake a matching assessment of the skills and knowledge of staff in order to determine if the match is suitable and safe.

d) Undertake a matching assessment of other young people at the placement in order to determine if the match is suitable and safe.

This is to comply with Regulation 4(1)(a) (welfare of users) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210).

This to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'I am supported and cared for sensitively by people who anticipate issues and are aware of and plan for any known vulnerability or frailty' (HSCS 3.18) and; '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. By 30 June 2026, the provider must ensure there are adequate numbers of skilled staff equipped to keep young people safe. To do this, the provider must, as a minimum:

a) Ensure there are sufficient numbers of staff working in the service and that risk and staffing needs assessments must ensure that both care and support arrangements are predicated on the safety of young people and staff being of paramount concern.

This is to comply with section 7 (1)(a)(b)(c) of the Health and Care (Staffing) (Scotland) Act 2019.

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

3. By 30 June 2026, the provider must ensure that all staff have access to and complete training specific to the needs of those in their care. The provider must ensure all staff are sufficiently confident, skilled and experienced to look after young people with highly complex needs and safely manage unplanned escalated behaviours This is to ensure young people receive safe and consistent care. In particular, the provider must:

a) Undertake a training needs analysis for each member of staff.

b) Produce a robust and comprehensive training package which is also informed by the individual needs of the young people being cared for.

c) Ensure all staff have undertaken up-to-date child and adult protection training.

d) Ensure all staff have undertaken training in relation to trauma-informed practice.

e) Ensure all staff have undertaken training in relation restraint reduction.

f) Develop a plan detailing how the service plans to embed a trauma-informed model of care within its ethos and culture.

This is in order to comply with section 8(1)(a) of the Health and Care (Staffing) (Scotland) Act 2019.

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 on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes' (HSCS 3.14); and 'I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice.' (HSCS 4.11)

Areas for improvement

1. To improve the safety and welfare of young people, the service should continue to develop consistent approaches to analysis of incidents, including incident recording, debriefs and audit. This will ensure a detailed knowledge of patterns relating to young people's care and support and ensure staff and young people are receiving appropriate support.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'I am protected from harm, neglect, abuse, bullying and exploitation by people who have a clear understanding of their responsibilities' (HSCS 3.20).

2. To keep children and young people safe the service should ensure that all staff are recruited in line with Safer Recruitment Guidance.

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 based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice' (HSCS 4.11).

3. To keep young people safe and promote their wellbeing, the service should undertake a review of all policies and procedures being used in the service to ensure they are robust, clearly outline responsibilities for staff and the correct ones are being made available to staff.

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 based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice' (HSCS 4.11).

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
7.2 Leaders and staff have the capacity and resources to meet and champion children and young people's needs and rights	3 - Adequate

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