

# Dala

## Care Home Service

Lockerbie

**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
18 June 2025

**Service provided by:**  
Radical Services Ltd

**Service provider number:**  
SP2003002568

**Service no:**  
CS2007155419

## About the service

Dala is a care home service for children and young people provided by Radical Services Ltd.

The service is based in a bungalow within a small village in Dumfries and Galloway, close to Lockerbie. The house provides spacious accommodation for up to two young people, with each having their own bedroom and access to a shared bathroom. There two further bedrooms, which are used by staff as sleepover rooms and office space. Within the house there is a kitchen, dining room, large living room and snug room for children and young people. There is a large garden to the rear of the property as well as a small area at the front that young people have access to.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 12 and 13 June 2025 between the hours of 10:30 and 18:00, and 09:45 and 13:00 respectively. 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 one person using the service and one of their family/representatives
- Received six completed questionnaires
- Spoke with six members of staff and management
- Observed practice and daily life
- Reviewed documents

## Key messages

- Young people were cared for by a caring and committed staff team who knew them well.
- Positive relationships were a strength within the service and helped staff to support young people at times of crisis.
- Young people were supported to maintain relationships with those important to them.
- There were regular opportunities for young people to access new and exciting experiences.

## 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?	5 - Very 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?

5 - Very Good

### 7.1: Children and young people are safe, feel loved and get the most out of life

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for young people, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

Young people were kept safe by a caring and committed staff team. A family member referred to their young person being '*extremely safe*' whilst living at Dala. Staff worked effectively with other agencies, to promote the overall safety and wellbeing of young people.

Young people had access to external advocacy, should they wish and their views around this were respected. Staff were confident and passionate about advocating on behalf of young people, because of the strong relationships that had developed. This supported young people in expressing their views and feeling listened to.

Young people experience therapeutic and stable care as a result of staff having a very good understanding of trauma informed care. Staff recognised the importance of looking beyond behaviours of young people and acknowledged these as being a form of communication. Instances of restrictive practice were limited within the house as staff effectively utilised relationship skills to support de-escalation at times of crisis.

Staff had a very good knowledge of young people's needs and preferences which ensured that support provided was tailored to young people. Relationships were led by young people and it was pleasing to see positive relationships developing for new young people in the house. We observed many fun, playful interactions during inspection, which were reflective of the safe and nurturing relationships that had developed. This contributed to young people feeling comfortable and settled at Dala.

Young people were encouraged to be part of decisions and plans made about them. Their views were evident within care plans and risk assessments, demonstrating their involvement in these. Staff continued to develop confidence around care plans and risk assessments, recognising the need to be creative to engage young people in meaningful conversations.

Young people's physical and mental health were given priority within the service. Young people were registered with local health services, to ensure they could access relevant health care as required. The organisation's psychology team also provided support to staff and young people based on identified needs. This led to young people receiving support in a timely manner.

Staff worked alongside other professionals to ensure young people had opportunities to spend time with those important to them. Family members found staff shared information as required about their young person which helped them build relationships and feel involved.

Young people's individual interests and ambitions were supported by the team, such as visits to various skateparks or go-karting. Activities were often led by young people, however, staff were proactive in making suggestions, as young people may not be aware of opportunities available to them. We concluded young people had access to new and exciting experiences.

Whilst living at Dala young people have access to the organisations education provision where bespoke plans are developed based on their needs and interests. Staff worked alongside education colleagues to promote attendance and engagement in these opportunities. This contributed to young people achieving improved outcomes.

Young people had individualised care plans and risk assessments which assisted staff in providing support which was focused and consistent. There was evidence of SMART goals being identified with young people and any changes or reviews being recorded. Risk assessments were person-centred and recorded strategies that could be used to support young in a variety of circumstances. This helped staff in keeping young people safe.

## 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

1. To support the young people's wellbeing, outcomes and choice the service should review their care planning. This should include but is not limited to:

a) Ensuring young people are actively consulted on deciding their goals, and that these are clear and visible to them.

b) Ensuring that goals are SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely). These should be reflective of young people's words, and should clearly describe the supports required to achieve these. Goals should be actively tracked and subject to regular review.

c) Ensuring that all staff are aware of the needs and focus of work for all young people within the service and know exactly what is needed from everyone to support young people to reach their goals.

d) Ensuring that staff are trained and able to write effective care plans for young people, and that the manager has oversight and analysis of this. This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:

'My personal plan (sometimes referred to as care 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 24 August 2023.**

#### Action taken since then

Documents sampled during the inspection evidenced young people being consulted on their goals and views around care planning. Staff had a good awareness of young people's needs and how best to support these. The service is continuing to develop practice around care planning and assessment through implementation of a new approach to support person centred planning.

**This area for improvement has been met.**

#### Previous area for improvement 2

2. To support the young people's wellbeing and outcomes the service should review their risk assessment processes. To do this, the provider must, at a minimum, but not exclusive to:

- a) Ensure that risk assessments explain clearly the roles and supports required by staff to minimise risk, and support young people. This should be especially the case with higher risk situations
- b) Ensure that all staff are aware of all possible risks for young people, and the supports required from them to minimise these. 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)

**This area for improvement was made on 24 August 2023.**

#### Action taken since then

Risk management plans sampled during inspection were detailed and informative, containing information regarding a variety of presentations and strategies to be used. The service is continuing to develop practice around care planning and assessment through implementation of a new approach to support person centred planning.

This area for improvement has been met.

## Complaints

Please see Care Inspectorate website ([www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com)) for details of complaints about the service which have been upheld.

## Detailed evaluations

How well do we support children and young people's rights and wellbeing?	5 - Very Good
7.1 Children and young people are safe, feel loved and get the most out of life	5 - Very Good

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