

Cherry Blossom Children's Residential Home Ltd Care Home Service

PETERHEAD

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
29 May 2025

Service provided by:
Cherry Blossom Children's Residential
Home Ltd

Service provider number:
SP2021000002

Service no:
CS2021000003

About the service

Cherry Blossom is registered to provide a care home service for a maximum of four young people. The service is provided from a well-maintained and decorated detached house in the village of Stuartfield, Aberdeenshire. The young people have access to two communal areas in the house and an enclosed garden. There is a good-sized dining kitchen and other utility and storage rooms. All areas of the house are maintained to a high standard.

The service also has a throughcare 'house' based in the garden of the service. The young person who lives there continues to be supported by the team while they gradually increase their life skills and readiness for the next stages in their life.

The stated aims of the service are:

- Providing a safe and psychologically secure environment which offers structure and consistency of boundaries within a homely living space.
- Listen to young people's opinions and rights, encouraging them to be involved in all aspects of their care.
- Provide an open and honest environment for young people and staff allied to promote and develop respect for one another and positive relationships.
- Individually tailored care and support plans which ensure the collaborative practises between care, therapy and staff provide the young people with consistency, love and security.
- Focus on young people's strengths and use these as a basis to create achievable targets that address difficulties.
- Safeguard children and young people in a proportionate manner which finds the balance between minimising risk of harm but also allows them to experience positive growth and development.
- Provide realistic expectations of behaviour and sensitive measures of control.
- Work directly and closely with family links and promote where appropriate the maintenance of family relationships for the young person.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Monday 26 and Tuesday 27 June 2025. 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 young people living at the service
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents
- received feedback via MS questionnaires from nine external professionals, two young people, one parent and six staff.

Key messages

- Young people were doing really well. They benefitted from positive and nurturing relationships with the adults who cared for them at Cherry Blossom, and who encouraged them to enjoy new experiences and have fun.
- There had been considerable progress in developing a stable cohesive team to support the young people living at Cherry Blossom. Clear boundaries, expectations and an understanding of young people's needs had resulted in young people thriving.
- The senior management team were open to learning and had developed the service through the use of external resources and various quality assurance processes.
- The staff team felt well supported by leaders to provide high quality care.

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.

Young people experienced relational nurturing care, which promoted their emotional and physical safety. The service had worked hard to support staff to understand the individual risks present for each young person, and the importance of a consistent approach and a stable and safe environment. For some young people, safe care had been met through strong routines and planning, and increased supervision and safety measures around the house. All of these created a safe and nurturing environment where young people were thriving.

Young people had access to external advocacy. Their views were listened to and considered to be important in any discussion and decisions. Staff and other professionals also advocated for young people to ensure their voices were heard.

Procedures were in place to understand and respond appropriately to any safeguarding concerns. Staff had received appropriate training in both child and adult protection.

Young people experienced warm, trusting, nurturing and respectful relationships with those caring for them. Staff were really interested in young people and knew about their personality and interests and enjoyed spending time in their company. Effective planning brought a natural calm and stability which was helpful to reducing anxiety and keeping young people focussed. Activity planners assisted the structured approach that gave young people helpful structure and routine. Feedback from external professionals was very positive about the structures and boundaries which supported young people to engage in their support and education.

Staff had completed various training courses to understand how trauma impacted the young people they supported, with further accredited training organised for later in the year. The team had also completed CALM training which focussed on trauma and helpful responses to young people in crisis. There was no culture of physical intervention, though the rare occasions it was needed could be supported by improved recording.

The young people lived in a lovely, homely house which was well-maintained, and described their bedrooms as decorated to their taste with things of their choosing. There was great use of the surrounding outdoor space, both in the garden and parks in the local and nearby communities. This was of great benefit to young people's overall wellbeing.

Young people were registered with a range of healthcare services and supported to attend any appointments they needed. There was a strong focus on good health - from positive routines which supported good sleeping patterns, to spending lots of time outside expending energy and discovering the world. Where needed young people accessed specialist services to ensure their positive mental health.

Mealtimes were very positive sharing experiences where people came together to prepare and enjoy tasty and well-balanced meals. It was very positive to see good manners being promoted and consideration for others. The whole experience helped develop useful life skills and promoted confidence. Ongoing discussion around the table about people's day demonstrated real interest and enriched relationships.

There was a good understanding of the importance of family and the unique and individual arrangements needed for children and young people, and for parents and significant family members. Friendships were encouraged with young people having time with their friends in the local community and in their home.

Young people's goals and ambitions were recognised and supported, with many opportunities to have new experiences, including holidays abroad. They were encouraged and supported to be in education, work experience or employment. Feedback from education staff was positive and there was strong advocacy for young people's right to receive the support they needed to be fully engaged in their learning.

Young people spent a lot of time with staff sharing their views, in both formal and informal ways. They were engaged in formal support planning at various levels, which reflected the wide range of ages across the household.

The service had made considerable progress in creating a more stable and cohesive team. A new manager and the creation of senior practitioner posts had been supportive and created a solid foundation for a strong team. Feedback from staff and external professionals were complimentary about positive changes which had led to young people experiencing consistent routines and expectations from adults who knew them well.

Senior practitioners and managers modelled good practice and were keen to further develop the skill and confidence of the team, and empower them to make decisions. Communication amongst the team was good with numerous opportunities throughout the day to share information and ensure plans were followed to help young people have a successful day.

A range of quality assurance systems had been developed which ensured that tasks were completed, that young people were well supported and that the service complied with various best practice expectations. Various documents had been reviewed to ensure they reflected current and best practice.

A development plan considered service improvement. It was SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time bound) and therefore identified timescales and review dates to ensure identified areas for improvement were monitored in relation to progress. Greater involvement of the wider team, and young people, would ensure that they all had a voice in the future of Cherry Blossom.

Staff benefitted from regular advice and guidance through effective supervision, team meetings and shift handovers. Team meetings and shift changeovers were well structured to ensure these were helpful and supportive to people sharing their views. The senior team were keen to develop the use of reflective practice to enhance learning. A competence matrix had been recently developed to support individual growth and professional development. While in its early stages it seemed like a positive tool to support and encourage the team. Staff training had been identified to further upskill the team to meet the needs of the young people they cared for.

The service had developed a comprehensive staffing needs assessment which considered the skill, experience and training of the team and allowed good planning to ensure young people's needs were met by the right people with the right qualities.

Young people's support plans and associated documents detailed the support young people needed to achieve their own identified goals, or to progress in areas where they need to. They were regularly reviewed, and quality assured, to ensure the best possible outcomes for young people.

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

In order to ensure that staff have the knowledge needed to protect adults in their care from harm, the provider should develop an adult protection policy which follows local and National guidelines.

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 22 November 2024.

Action taken since then

The service had developed an adult protection policy and staff had received training.

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 2

In order to ensure that consideration is given to the needs of anyone new moving into the service, and the needs of those already living there are fully considered, the provider should:

- a) develop an admissions policy and procedure
- b) complete an impact assessment.

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 meets my needs and is right for me' (HSCS1.19).

This area for improvement was made on 22 November 2024.

Action taken since then

The service had developed an admissions policy and procedure. They had considered the impact of anyone new moving into the house on the group already living there.

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 3

In order to ensure that staffing levels and skills are right to meet the needs of young people, the provider must develop a formal staffing needs assessment.

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

'My needs are met by the right amount of people' (HSCS 3.15).

This area for improvement was made on 22 November 2024.

Action taken since then

The service had developed a comprehensive staffing needs assessment which ensured staffing levels, and skill, were right to meet the needs of the young people.

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 4

To ensure that the staff can effectively meet the needs of the young people they care for, the provider should develop a formal training plan.

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).

This area for improvement was made on 22 November 2024.

Action taken since then

The service had developed a training plan which reflected the training needs of the team, including core and additional training.

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 5

To support the continuous improvement of the service, the provider should ensure there is a development plan in place.

This should include but is not limited to:

- effective quality assurance
- reviewing and updating policy documents
- reviewing and updating the aims and objectives of the service.

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

'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurances process' (HSCS 4.19).

This area for improvement was made on 22 November 2024.

Action taken since then

As detailed in the report the service had developed a SMART improvement plan.

This area for improvement has been met.

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?	4 - Good
7.1 Children and young people are safe, feel loved and get the most out of life	4 - Good
7.2 Leaders and staff have the capacity and resources to meet and champion children and young people's needs and rights	4 - Good

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