

# Barnardo's Caern - Pentland Way Care Home Service

penicuik

**Type of inspection:**

Unannounced

**Completed on:**

28 May 2026

**Service provided by:**

Barnardo's known as Barnardo's  
Scotland

**Service provider number:**

SP2003003405

**Service no:**

CS2019374061

## About the service

Barnardo's Caern - Pentland Way is a care home for up to three children and young people with learning disabilities and/or autism. The service is located in a residential area of Penicuik, Midlothian, and is in close proximity to local amenities and transport links.

The property is on one floor, with bedrooms for each child or young person, a kitchen/dining area, communal areas, and a sensory room. There is a large secure back garden. At the time of our inspection two young people were living in the service.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 26 May 2026 between the hours of 09:50 and 17:50 and on 27 May 2026 between the hours of 07:00 and 13:00. The inspection was carried out by one inspector from the Care Inspectorate.

To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about the service. This included registration and complaints information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year. To inform our evaluation we:

- spent time with young people using the service
- spoke to seven members of staff and management
- spoke to one relative
- spoke to one visiting professional
- reviewed survey responses from four staff members
- observed practice and daily life.

**Key messages**

- Young people were safe and appeared to enjoy living at Pentland Way.
- Collaboration with other agencies helped to reduce risk and identify strategies to best support young people.
- Time with family members was well supported and nurtured.
- Young people were active and encouraged to develop new skills.
- A high staff turnover and regular use of agency staff impacted on stability for young people.
- There were gaps in the skills and knowledge of the staff team which should be addressed.

**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 evaluated this key question as good, with several notable strengths that had a positive impact on outcomes for young people and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Young people were kept safe at Pentland Way. Young people benefitted from consistency in routines, and had made progress in many areas since living in the service. One relative told us, "Really, really happy...[they're] thriving there, doing really well". Clear behaviour management strategies helped to keep young people safe, and when risks increased, these were well assessed and managed. Any protection concerns were responded to robustly, and the service followed national guidance. Safety was a priority, which helped young people to build resilience.

Young people had strong and trusting relationships with some staff members. Some staff had worked with young people over a long period of time and knew their needs well. However, staffing challenges had led to a number of new staff recently starting and an increase in the use of agency staff. This had been unsettling at times for young people and also led to gaps in staff knowledge in key areas. The team appeared to be in a transitional phase, with further work required by leaders to unify the team and develop consistent care practices (see area for improvement 1).

The service collaborated well with other agencies to keep young people safe and meet their needs. This had included establishing a regular consultation opportunity with CAMHS to ensure best practice, and regular meetings with schools. When there were changes for young people, these were communicated with family members and other professionals. A multi-agency approach helped to ensure young people were safe and being well looked after.

The service aspired to provide a stable, therapeutic environment. However, staffing issues had led to instability in the approach at times. When incidents of concern took place, these were well analysed by leaders, responded to appropriately, and additional monitoring or supports were quickly put in place. It was also beneficial that all incidents were reviewed by an external safeguarding lead. Some notifications were made late to the Care Inspectorate and the service was asked to review the relevant guidance. Further work is required to fully build and embed a therapeutic approach to care.

There was commitment to restraint reduction, but greater clarification is required on when this approach may necessary. Not all staff had been trained in restraint in a timely way since starting at the service, and these gaps were not well reflected upon in staffing assessments. Work is required to ensure the service has a coherent approach to restraint, and that staff are equipped and confident (see area for improvement 2).

Relationships between staff and young people were observed to be warm and nurturing. Individual interests were supported and young people were afforded choice in their day-to-day care. This approach was supported by the use of communication tools where required. Young people were encouraged to develop independent life skills, including cooking and shopping. Education was also highly valued, with young people attending school each day and receiving the support they required. Young people were supported to get the most out of life.

The physical home environment provided a nurturing setting for young people. Each young person had sufficient space around the house, with a sensory room and additional sitting room now being available. The home had also been personalised as far as possible and resources were well planned to ensure these

reflected young people's needs and interests. The physical home environment portrayed a message of respect to young people.

Young people's health needs were being well supported. The service sought out necessary support and advice from health professionals in a timely way. There was however a need to ensure all staff had up-to-date information on young people's health needs (see again area for improvement 1). Medication errors had occurred recently, with the service identifying key learning to improve this. We also made suggestions to the storage of medication to help minimise risk in this area.

Young people were supported to have meaningful connections with family members. Family frequently visited the house and young people also returned home for visits and outings with their family. The service kept in touch with family members regularly and had built up positive relationships. This enabled young people to feel nurtured.

There was commitment to young people remaining in the service as they entered adulthood. Young people who had recently moved on from Pentland Way experienced a comprehensive transition. The service valued the importance of continuing care and well-planned transitions to adult services.

Young people had individual support plans which reflected their needs and circumstances. In conjunction with young people's 'outcomes records', these gave a clear overview of the outcomes being worked towards, and actions required. We suggested six-weekly reviews be shared with parents to further promote partnership working. Planning and risk assessments were being utilised to achieve positive outcomes and to keep young people safe.

### Areas for improvement

1. To ensure children and young people's needs are fully met, effective systems of communication should be established across the service so that all staff have a clear understanding of young people's needs, and any changes to their circumstances.

This is 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).

2. To ensure children and young people are safe, the service should review the training needs of staff, and provide all staff with the necessary training to carry out their roles in a timely way after they start working with the service.

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).

## 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

To ensure young people are empowered to understand their rights and have strong voices in relation to their care and support, the service should promote the use of independent advocacy.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HCSC) which state that, 'I am supported to understand and uphold my rights, (HSCS 2.3), and 'I am supported to use independent advocacy if I want or need this' (HSCS 2.4).

**This area for improvement was made on 27 August 2024.**

#### Action taken since then

After the last inspection, independent advocacy was put in place for young people. However, at the time of our inspection advocacy was no longer available due to absence of advocacy staff and difficulty in identifying a new provider. We were reassured this was being addressed as part of the service development plan, and there was improved awareness of the importance of independent advocacy.

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

#### Previous area for improvement 2

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.

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 27 August 2024.**

#### Action taken since then

A continuing care policy is now in place and this reflects the relevant national guidance and legislation. A pro-forma to help the service contribute to continuing care/transition assessments had also been developed to help ensure a strong and collaborative approach to planning for continuing care.

**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](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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