

Hamlet Farm Care Home Service

Dalry

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
14 November 2025

Service provided by:
Imagine Care Ltd

Service provider number:
SP2022000146

Service no:
CS2022000205

About the service

Hamlet Farm is a residential care home provided by Imagine Care, a private limited company. Hamlet Farm is a six bedded new built house set in North Ayrshire and provides care for up to two children and young people in a semi-rural setting.

The house provides a modern home to the young people. They have access to a large open plan kitchen/diner and lounge, a music/sensory room, and living room on the ground floor. All of the young people's bedrooms are upstairs, one has an en-suite and there is a shared bathroom. The house has a garden and is surrounded by farmland. At the time of inspection there were two young people residing in Hamlet Farm

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 11 November 2025 between the hours of 11:00 and 22:30 and 12 November between the hours of 11:00 and 19:00. The inspection was carried out by two inspectors from the Care Inspectorate. To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about the 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 young person using the service
- spoke with eight staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents
- spoke with four visiting professionals.

Key messages

- Young people experienced care that prioritised safety and wellbeing with staff showing strong understanding of individual needs.
- Staff embedded the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and The Promise principles in daily practice, supported advocacy, and used communication tools to ensure young people's voices were heard and respected.
- Staff prioritised relational care, empathy, and trauma-informed practice, fostering trusting relationships.
- Family connections were very well supported.
- The registered manager provided empowering leadership, promoting staff development and reflective practice.
- Staffing levels were appropriate, but assessments could be made more detailed and specific to better evidence how staffing meets young people's needs.
- Quality assurance systems and external oversight supported a culture of learning and improvement.
- Although the service improvement plan followed a Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timebound (SMART) framework, we suggested greater clarity in its content to strengthen continuous improvement planning and monitoring of progress.

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

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.

During our inspection we found that children and young people experienced care that was safe, nurturing, and strongly focused on their rights and wellbeing. The staff team understood each young person's individual needs, preferences, and personal histories very well. This knowledge enabled staff to provide proactive and responsive care, ensuring that young people felt valued and understood. Families and external professionals told us that staff communicated positively and effectively and worked in strong partnership with them. This collaborative approach gave us confidence that staff kept young people safe both emotionally and physically.

Recently, the staff team faced difficulties with the dynamics of young people living together. Staff reflected openly and said leaders had listened when they raised concerns. Leaders took action to reduce risk and improve safety, which led them to consider admissions and matching more robustly when young people moved into the service. We encouraged the service to continue strengthening these processes to minimise future risks and promote safety for both young people and staff.

We found that staff actively promoted young people's rights. They demonstrated a clear understanding of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and The Promise and embedded these principles in daily practice. Staff supported advocacy well and ensured young people had access to responsible adults outside the service to act in their best interests. The use of a communication app provided an additional platform for engagement, allowing young people and families to share updates, photographs, and plans. This approach ensured that staff heard young people's voices and respected their wishes.

Safeguarding practice was very good. The child protection policy was aligned with national guidance and clearly outlined staff responsibilities. Staff demonstrated confidence in child protection procedures and were aware of upcoming training. The staff team had learned from previous concerns and took appropriate and timely action to support a young person during our inspection, which assured us that they prioritised safeguarding.

The service's involvement with the Scottish Physical Restraint Action Group (SPRAG) and their therapeutic approach to care had supported a reduction in the use of restraint. Staff were clear that restraint was only used as a last resort and that reflective debriefs and team discussions followed any incidents. We were confident that when restraint was used it followed best practice guidance. Training in therapeutic parenting, delivered by the organisation's assistant psychologist, had enhanced staff understanding and confidence. Plans to extend similar training to parents reflected a holistic approach to care.

Young people enjoyed warm, trusting, and nurturing relationships with staff. Relational care was a priority, and staff consistently demonstrated respect, empathy, and a genuine desire to support young people to achieve positive outcomes. Staff spoke confidently about understanding behaviours as communication and showed awareness of the impact of trauma. They were keen to continue developing their knowledge in this area, recognising that each young person was an individual.

Young people were actively involved in their care and support. They contributed to setting goals, planning activities, and preparing meals. Staff supported attendance at meetings and encouraged young people to express their views. Education was prioritised, with a dedicated education worker supporting engagement and attainment. Staff worked to understand and address barriers to learning, ensuring aspirations were supported.

The environment was homely and inclusive. Young people contributed to improvements and personalisation of the space. Family relationships were supported very well, including overnight stays where appropriate, and staff worked hard to maintain connections.

The service demonstrated a commitment to continuing care, and staff maintained relationships with young people who had moved on. We suggested that the service make this commitment clearer from the point of admission and support staff to feel more confident in maintaining relationships while adhering to professional codes of conduct.

Care plans and risk assessments were clear, informative, and updated promptly. Staff described them as dynamic documents, and they amended strategies as they got to know young people better. This demonstrated a team approach to ensuring information was accurate and relevant.

We found that leadership at Hamlet Farm was a key strength of the service. The registered manager led confidently and earned respect by supporting and empowering staff. Staff consistently reported that they felt valued and well supported. It was evident through our discussions that staff were encouraged to develop their practice, knowledge, and skills. The manager's commitment to achieving the best outcomes for young people was matched by her recognition of the importance of nurturing and developing her staff team. Staff spoke positively about being encouraged to progress and appreciated the manager's ability to guide reflective thinking without providing direct answers, which fostered autonomy and professional growth.

A strong culture of praise and recognition was evident, contributing to a positive and inclusive atmosphere within the service. Quality assurance processes were robust, with both internal and external monitoring used effectively to evaluate young people's experiences, safeguarding, and outcomes. These systems supported continuous improvement and helped embed a learning culture. Staff described external managers as approachable and visible, which further enhanced confidence and openness across the team.

Staffing levels were consistently appropriate to meet the needs of young people. The team's diverse skill set - including a chef, horticulturist, and fitness coach - added value, and there were plans to further utilise these skills to support young people's life skills development. Staffing assessments were reviewed, and while no significant impact on care was noted, improvements were suggested to make these more specific. The service responded positively to this feedback, and we felt confident they would make progress in this area.

A wide range of training opportunities were available, including online and face to face sessions. Therapeutic parenting training delivered by the assistant psychologist enhanced staff understanding of trauma, attachment, and resilience. Training was highly valued by staff. Structured supervision, reflective sessions, and inclusive team meetings with short training inputs tailored to young people's needs further supported professional development and enabled staff to apply learning in practice.

Despite a relatively high staff turnover in 2024, the staff team was stable and cohesive at the time of inspection. This provided consistent care and fostered trusting relationships with young people.

Supervision practices had been revised to include clear agendas and planning, which staff recognised as beneficial despite the additional workload. Staff spoke genuinely about the support they received from leaders and colleagues, which was also evident during inspection.

Recruitment processes were safe and compliant. It was encouraging to see young people being given the opportunity to be involved in interviews, with their questions put to candidates. Continuous evaluation of outcomes and experiences was evident through quality assurance systems, locality risk assessments, and improvement plans. These contributed to high quality care and support.

The registered manager, with support from external leaders, demonstrated a strong commitment to improvement. There was openness about challenges and a clear drive to learn and grow. Child centred planning was evident, and development plans were aligned with the five foundations of The Promise. While the improvement plan followed a Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timebound framework (SMART), we suggested that the service could further improve this with greater clarity in content and monitoring of progress.

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?	5 - Very Good
7.1 Children and young people are safe, feel loved and get the most out of life	5 - Very Good
7.2 Leaders and staff have the capacity and resources to meet and champion children and young people's needs and rights	5 - Very Good

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