

## Fitzgerald Centre Support Service

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Type of inspection: Unannounced  
Inspection completed on: 26 January 2018

**Service provided by:**  
Inverclyde Council

**Service provider number:**  
SP2003000212

**Care service number:**  
CS2003016286

## About the service

Inverclyde Health and Social Care Partnership's Fitzgerald Centre is a resource centre for adults with learning disabilities. It is based in Greenock and is open five days per week.

The service offers a range of in-house and community based activities, including arts and crafts, music, dance, IT, hydrotherapy and a garden project. The kitchen is operated by an external social enterprise that offers voluntary work placements for people who attend the service. People choose their own activities programme and have regular reviews.

The centre is being renovated over time to improve its facilities. We saw new bathrooms that were fully accessible with tracking hoists. Further work is planned to make the building more accessible. The centre also sought advice from professionals and made some areas more dementia friendly.

The Fitzgerald Centre aims 'to overcome personal and social disadvantage, inspire optimism, create opportunity, meet the needs and offer choice to those using our service.' It has been registered with the Care Inspectorate since 2011, and was previously registered with the Care Commission since 2002.

## What people told us

We sought the opinion of people who used the service, including family members, through face-to-face interviews, telephone discussions and questionnaires. The feedback we received was generally very positive, and included:

'The centre supports me out. My key workers are nice.'

'I've been coming here for years and I love it. I have lots of friends and the staff are very nice.'

'I like working in the kitchen. I help make salads and drinks...serve and collect dishes. It's great here.'

'We get a lot of choice. We decide what food we want and the things we do.'

'My family member has epilepsy, and the staff have displayed an ability to cope with the condition well.'

'My daughter recently had a difficult period and the care and support of staff really helped. The staff even visited at home and gave lots of encouragement.'

'We feel the care and support available at the Fitzgerald Centre is of a very high standard, and more than meets the needs of people.'

'Staff are great and always helpful.'

'My sister works in the kitchen, and it's been great for her. She has learned a lot and is much more confident now.'

'Communication is good. Any issues then the keyworker or manager contact us. We also go to regular meetings and reviews.'

## Self assessment

The service was not required to submit a self-assessment for this inspection year. We reviewed service documents to identify strengths, areas for improvement and future plans.

## From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	5 - Very Good
Quality of environment	not assessed
Quality of staffing	not assessed
Quality of management and leadership	5 - Very Good

## What the service does well

The Fitzgerald Centre offered people meaningful activities both in house and out in the community. These were varied and stimulating, and helped people achieve very good outcomes. We saw several people improve their confidence, independence and communication skills through voluntary work in the centre's kitchen. A family member explained: 'My sister works in the kitchen, and it's been great for her. She has learned a lot and is much more confident now.'

Another person had developed their mobility through regular hydrotherapy sessions. A media group in which people discuss current affairs had helped improve someone's speech and confidence. And many people had established lasting friendships and felt a valued part of the service. As someone explained: 'I've been coming here for years and I love it. I have lots of friends and the staff are very nice.'

The service was increasingly connected to the wider community. For example, an external social enterprise ran the kitchen and offered voluntary work placements for people. People also accessed a garden project, dance and music classes, and other community-based activities across Inverclyde. This had increased people's social inclusion.

People with a wide range of needs used the service from mild to profound and multiple learning disabilities. We observed staff and saw that they were experienced and capable of meeting the varied needs of people. Staff had worked in the service for many years and demonstrated in-depth knowledge and understanding of people. This offered a consistent approach, long-term positive relationships and a warm, friendly atmosphere in the service.

Management ensured that staff had access to a comprehensive training programme that included input from specialist professionals. This had up-skilled staff and ensured they were following best practice guidance. For example, professionals from speech and language therapy and occupational therapy had recently offered advice on dementia. The service then improved the environment in parts of the building to make it more dementia-friendly, improving the experience of people.

We observed staff interact effectively with someone with limited verbal communication skills. They understood the person's facial expressions, sounds and gestures, and had meaningful exchanges with them. People of all abilities were valued by the service. This demonstrated a high level of staff skill, positive values and understanding of people.

The management team had an open approach to communication. The manager was active within the service and people, families and staff felt comfortable discussing issues. A family member confirmed: 'Communication is good. Any issues then the keyworker or manager contact us. We also go to regular meetings and reviews.'

The centre, and the wider learning disabilities service, was undergoing review. We saw that management had held a number of consultation events with people, families and staff to include them in decision-making and keep them up to date. There were also questionnaires and events held by an independent third party to maximise people's inclusion, and promote constructive feedback. We saw this as an example of very good practice.

The service was embarking on a period of change, but continued to support people consistently to have very good outcomes. This was achieved through meaningful activities and a skilled and experienced staff team.

## What the service could do better

Every person that used the service had a personal support plan. These were traditional and largely based on health and risk issues. We encouraged the service to develop more person centred plans that highlighted strengths, goals and interests as well as primary needs.

Similarly, reviews were traditional in nature and we asked the service to include people more meaningfully by using person-centred tools. We were pleased to see that management had recently developed a new review process that was far more inclusive.

We recommended that the service complete a community mapping exercise to identify all activities, events and opportunities in the local area. This could further improve social inclusion.

The service should review the building and make it more dementia friendly. Whilst it was very good that people living with dementia had appropriate spaces for activities, their overall experience would be even better if the whole environment was improved.

We asked the management team to continue to include people, families, and staff in decision-making, and keep all informed about any changes in service. We saw that there had been questionnaires, newsletters and events facilitated by an independent, third-party body. The service should continue its open channels of communication throughout this period of transition.

## Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

## Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

## 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).

## Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings	
20 Nov 2014	Unannounced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	5 - Very good
14 Dec 2011	Unannounced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	Not assessed
11 May 2010	Announced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	5 - Very good
		Staffing	Not assessed
		Management and leadership	Not assessed
4 Jun 2009	Announced	Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	3 - Adequate
		Staffing	4 - Good
		Management and leadership	4 - Good
1 Sep 2008	Announced	Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	3 - Adequate
		Staffing	3 - Adequate
		Management and leadership	4 - Good

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