

VSA, 450 Holburn Street Care Home Service

Queen Mother House
18 Claremont Place
ABERDEEN
AB10 6RH

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
10 February 2026

Service provided by:
Aberdeen Association of Social
Service, a company limited by
guarantee, trading as VSA

Service provider number:
SP2003000011

Service no:
CS2003000172

About the service

VSA, 450 Holburn Street is a registered care home providing support for up to 20 people with mental health, alcohol or drug problems.

At the time of the inspection, people had been living at Queen Mother House since 2022, whilst work was ongoing to install air conditioning to the main care home location, at 450, Holburn Street.

Queen Mother House is centrally located in Aberdeen and close to local amenities. The service provider is VSA (Aberdeen Association of Social Services).

Accommodation at Queen Mother House is provided over two floors and is made up of single bedrooms, each with en-suite facilities, a sitting room, kitchen and dining room. There is a garden area which is accessible and outdoor spaces for people to enjoy.

At the time of the inspection there were 16 people living at the service.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place between on 9 and 10 February 2026. 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 previous inspection findings, registration and complaints information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- met nine people using the service
- spoke to three family members
- met members of staff and the management team
- received feedback from two external professionals
- received feedback to surveys sent out prior to the inspection from eight staff members
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- People were treated with dignity and respect which had a positive impact on their wellbeing.
- People's care and support was planned and reviewed regularly. This meant that people's health and wellbeing needs were being met very well.
- The management team had very good oversight of the service and there were a range of quality assurance tools and processes in place which meant the service was well led.
- Staff spoke positively about working at the service, that they felt supported and got the training they needed to carry out their roles.
- The home was clean, homely and well-maintained.

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 people's wellbeing?	5 - Very Good
How good is our setting?	5 - Very Good

Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

How well do we support people's wellbeing?

5 - Very Good

We observed kind and caring interactions between staff and the people they supported and there was a relaxed, homely atmosphere. People said they were happy living in the home and staff supported them with the things that mattered to them. This meant people were being treated with dignity and respect. People said they could come and go as they wished, which promoted independence and choice.

Families spoke positively about the service. They said staff were friendly and approachable, and that they felt comfortable raising any concerns. Families felt the service met their relative's needs. One family member said their relative now had a "sense of purpose, things to do and real companionship" since moving to the home.

External professionals also gave positive feedback. They said staff interacted well with people, that the service provided "excellent care", and it was run professionally with a clear focus on meeting people's needs. This feedback showed the support provided had a positive impact on people's health and wellbeing.

People received person-centred care informed by their needs and preferences, and they were well supported with their health and wellbeing needs. External professionals told us that people's assessed needs were being met and described the support as "person centred and responsive". They also said there were strong working relationships with staff, which ensured good communication. One professional said that liaising with staff was "an easy process", and that they were kept up to date. This feedback confirmed that staff worked proactively and collaboratively to support people's health.

Staff knew people well, and personal plans contained clear and detailed information about their needs. Plans were reviewed regularly which meant they remained up to date and meaningful. Each person had a Wellness Recovery Action Plan, which they were actively involved in developing. These plans empowered people to take control of their mental health, focusing on what helped them stay well.

External professionals said personal plans accurately reflected people's needs, which showed that staff recorded information effectively and used it to guide practice. People were supported to develop personal goals, which were regularly discussed and reviewed. Plans included "about me" information, as well as personal stories, which helped staff understand what mattered to people. This meant people felt involved and ensured staff supported them in the right way.

There were effective processes in place to keep staff informed and up to date about people's needs. This ensured a consistent, coordinated approach that promoted people's wellbeing and contributed to the quality of support provided.

The service had taken steps to improve how people were supported with their medication. An electronic medication administration record (eMAR) system had been introduced, which had improved accuracy and recording. Auditing processes were in place, and the management team used these effectively to identify areas for development. As a result, medication was managed safely, with procedures in place to ensure people received the right medication at the right time. Support was tailored to individual needs, reflecting a person-centred approach. (see 'What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement made at or since the last inspection')

The service had improved the quality of meals provided, which enhanced people's mealtime experiences and access to nutritious food. A cook had been employed, and people benefited from having one home-cooked main meal each day. Weekly menus were displayed, and healthy options, including fruit and vegetables, were available. People could help themselves to breakfast items and snacks, and they also had opportunities to prepare their own food. Bedrooms were equipped with kettles, fridges and microwaves, which promoted choice and independence. People said they enjoyed the meals, and took part in cooking and baking activities, which supported skill development and enriched daily routines. (see 'What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement made at or since the last inspection')

People were supported to maintain contact with family and friends. A programme of activities was in place, with information displayed about upcoming events. People were able to participate in group activities and spend one-to-one time with staff, which supported social connection and individual choice. External professionals and families confirmed that people were supported to participate in activities that were meaningful to them. This had a positive impact on people's health and wellbeing.

How good is our setting?

5 - Very Good

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

The service was clean, tidy and homely which provided a comfortable and welcoming environment for people.

Communal areas, including the dining room and lounge, offered opportunities for people to spend time together if they chose to. People also benefited from access to the garden, which had seating areas, a greenhouse and planting spaces that enhanced their wellbeing by enabling them to spend time outdoors and take part in gardening activities.

People had their own en-suite bedrooms, each with a fridge, kettle and microwave. These facilities enabled people to develop and maintain their independence by being able to prepare their own snacks, and people could also use the kitchen to make meals. People were able to personalise their bedrooms and have their personal belongings around them. This meant people felt at home.

People could choose where to spend their time, whether that was on their own or with others, which supported privacy, choice and social inclusion.

People gave positive feedback about the environment, and the location meant they could easily access local shops and community amenities. People were free to come and go as they wished which promoted autonomy and confidence.

The service was well maintained, and essential and routine checks were completed within required timescales. This meant people could be assured that the environment was 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

To support people's health and wellbeing and improve upon the satisfaction of their day, the provider should improve the quality of the meals they provide for people.

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' (HSCS 1.19).

This area for improvement was made on 7 August 2024.

Action taken since then

Since the last inspection the service had taken steps to improve the quality of meals provided. They had employed a cook, and people benefited from having one home-cooked main meal each day. In addition to this, they could make their own breakfast and snacks in their bedrooms or in the kitchen which promoted choice and independence. (see key question 'How well do we support people's wellbeing?').

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 2

To support people's health and wellbeing and improve the quality of their care, the provider should improve how they support people to take their prescribed medication to reduce errors. This should include but not be limited to, continuing auditing and action planning to support further reduction in medication errors and supporting all people to take their medication as prescribed.

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' (HSCS 1.19);
and

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

This area for improvement was made on 7 August 2024.

Action taken since then

Since the last inspection, the service had made several improvements in how people were supported with their medication. The team had reviewed medication practices, strengthened oversight and embedded safer, more consistent systems.

Staff competence and confidence in safe medication administration had increased, practice was more consistent and medication errors had reduced. (see key question 'How well do we support people's wellbeing?').

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 people's wellbeing?	5 - Very Good
1.3 People's health and wellbeing benefits from their care and support	5 - Very Good
How good is our setting?	5 - Very Good
4.1 People experience high quality facilities	5 - Very Good

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