

Garvald West Linton Care Home Service

Garvald House
Dolphinton
West Linton
EH46 7HJ

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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
19 February 2026

Service provided by:
Garvald West Linton Ltd

Service provider number:
SP2003001965

Service no:
CS2003009177

About the service

Garvald West Linton provides a residential care home service to adults with learning disabilities and complex needs. The organisational ethos is based on the principles of Rudolf Steiner.

The service is registered to provide care to 35 residential service users and is divided into five distinct houses: Hill Cottage, Rowan, Linden, Sycamore and Willow.

At the time of the inspection there were 32 people resident in the care home.

The day-to-day running of each house is given to the 'House Manager' and their staff team, with the overall responsibility for all areas of the care home being that of the Registered Manager.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection with visits which took place on 11, 12 and 18 February 2026, between 9am-5 pm. 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:

- considered responses to 17 completed care standards questionnaires
- we spoke with ten people using the service and three of their family representatives
- we also spoke with eight staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documentation
- spoke with two involved professionals.

Key messages

- Garvald West Linton offered a pleasant, homely service setting to people who reside there.
- Staff worked with kindness and compassion. They have effective working relationships with supported people, their families and involved professionals.
- The service should improve aspects of medication administration.
- People experiencing care had access to healthy and nutritious home cooked meals.
- There was a wide range of planned activities on offer to people experiencing care. This enabled people to lead active, fulfilling, lives.

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?	4 - 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?

4 - Good

We evaluated the service's overall performance in this key question as good. This meant positive findings significantly outweighed areas for improvement.

People were supported to engage in a wide range of meaningful activities. There was a strong focus on positive well-being and creative expression outcomes, with a range of opportunities for participation in the likes of arts and craft based classes, drama productions, dance and music based events.

The service were good at enabling people to maintain friendships and familial relationships. From our discussions, this was very important to people and their families.

In addition, people were supported to maintain hobbies and interests, and access community resources. People enjoyed attending shows, participating in swimming, horse riding, cinema and dining out. There was also scope for ad-hoc activities. This helped ensure support was flexible, fulfilling and person-led.

Staff knew people well, using their knowledge and insight to build responsive, caring relationships. We observed warm and respectful interactions between staff and people experiencing care throughout our inspection. People living at Garvald West Linton told us they got on well with staff. We heard "staff are good, they know me well and are always friendly and kind". A family member told us "I take great reassurance from the support provided, staff speak about XXXX with knowledge and insight. I know they are well cared for".

The service worked in partnership with a range of community based health and social care services. We spoke with involved professionals, receiving positive feed back. The service were described as pro-active in making referrals for additional support or assessment. We also heard staff were able to follow guidance and work effectively with complex care issues.

The service's documentation outlined that they provided support in a way that adhered to key principles found in the Scottish Government's national strategy for people with learning disabilities, known as The Keys to Life. People were routinely enabled to access the likes of health screening, dentistry, opticians and podiatry services. This focus on well-being helped Garvald West Linton deliver good health outcomes.

We considered how the service administers medication, looking at a range of documentation associated with medication support. There were detailed personal plans, with up-to-date guidance around the use of as required medication, including rescue medication for people with epilepsy and medication used to minimise stress and distress.

Whilst the overall medication administration practice was generally effective, there were some areas for improvement around compliance with some prescribed medication schedules. We made an area for improvement around medication administration (see Afi 1).

There was a strong emphasis on healthy eating in the service. All meals were made using fresh produce. When we spoke to chefs we heard that foodstuffs were organic, seasonal and, where possible, sourced locally.

We observed people's dining experience, enjoying the community aspect of mealtimes. Food was appetising and wholesome. People told us they enjoyed their meals. It was clear to us that the focus on healthy eating contributed to positive health and well-being outcomes.

Areas for improvement

1. The service should develop medication administration practice, ensuring that all medication is given in accordance with the prescriber's instruction.

Detailed root cause analysis should be developed in order for management to obtain greater insight into causes of any medication errors.

Health and Social Care Standards (2018) -My support, my life.

1.19 My care and support meets my needs and is right for me.

1.24 Any treatment or intervention that I experience is safe and effective.

3.14 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.

How good is our setting?

5 - Very Good

We made an evaluation of very good for this key question. The service environment had major strengths and supported positive outcomes for people. There were very few areas for improvement. Those that did exist had minimal adverse impact on people's experiences.

People had access to a wide range of facilities within the care home. There were dedicated arts and crafts resources, including a range of musical instruments, a dedicated weavery and a skills development workshop. In addition, there was a fantastic bakery where people worked with staff in order to make a range of healthy breads and scones. We heard "I love my work in the bakery, it's really fulfilling, I like the food we make".

Communal areas of the home were clean, well maintained and well provisioned, with a range of comfortable furnishings, televisions and games tables. Staff routinely undertook domestic cleaning in order to minimise risk of infection.

People's rooms were decorated and furnished according to their preferences and needs. We saw some lovely examples of this. When we met people it was evident that personalisation was hugely significant to them. We were shown rooms where people derived great pride and satisfaction from how they decorated and maintained their personal spaces.

The care home setting affords people access to garden areas. Each house had a garden with a range of furnishings. In addition, there was a "Paradise Garden" where people were supported and encouraged to participate in planting activities, crafting and general garden maintenance.

We considered the service environment holistically. It was evident to us that Garvald West Linton offered people a safe, nurturing and homely setting.

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 maintain high standards of infection prevention and control, the service should ensure that records which detail essential cleaning are maintained and fully documented.

Health and Social Care Standards-My Life, My Support

5.24 I experience an environment that is well looked after with clean, tidy and well maintained premises, furnishings and equipment.

See also:

Scottish Health Facilities Note-Safe Management of the Care Environment Cleaning Specification for Care Homes, v2 2023. <https://www.nss.nhs.scot/media/4211/cleaning-specification-for-care-homes-shfn-01-05-v2.pdf>

&

<https://www.nipcm.scot.nhs.uk/>

This area for improvement was made on 24 October 2024.

Action taken since then

The service have improved documentation which evidences cleaning work undertaken. There were still some gaps in recordings, but it was clear that the home was suitably clean and that IPC was well managed overall.

This AFI was met.

Previous area for improvement 2

In order to ensure people's health and well being the service must ensure that all protocols are up-to date, involve appropriate professionals in assessment and where applicable, address fundamental best practice around rights, restrictions and limits to freedom.

Health and Social Care Standards, My Support, My Life.

2.1 I can control my own care and support if this is what I want.

2.2 I am empowered and enabled to be as independent and as in control of my life as I want and can be.

2.3 I am supported to understand and uphold my rights.

2.7 My rights are protected by ensuring that any surveillance or monitoring device that I or the organisation use is necessary and proportionate, and I am involved in deciding how it is used.

See also;

Rights, Risk and Limitations to Freedom-Scottish Mental Welfare Commission, 2021
<https://www.mwcscot.org.uk/publications?type=39>

&
<https://www.mwcscot.org.uk/sites/default/files/2021-/DecisionsAboutTechnology2021.pdf>

This area for improvement was made on 24 October 2024.

Action taken since then

We saw improvement around updating protocols and had no concerns around involvement of appropriate professionals and right, restrictions or limits to freedom.

This AFI was met.

Previous area for improvement 3

Staff should undertake a range of training relevant to the needs of people they support. This should include, but not be limited to, learning relevant to Autism, medication administration and managing stressed and distressed presentation.

Health and Social Care Standards-My Life, My Support

3.14 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.

4.11 I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice.

This area for improvement was made on 24 October 2024.

Action taken since then

There was variation around the levels of staff compliance with the uptake of mandatory refresher training.

From the training matrix, we could see that some staff undertaken training associated with managing people's stress and distress.

This AFI was unmet.

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?	4 - Good
1.2 People get the most out of life	5 - Very Good
1.3 People's health and wellbeing benefits from their care and support	4 - Good
How good is our setting?	5 - Very Good
4.1 People experience high quality facilities	5 - Very Good

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