

Firrhill Housing Support and Care at Home Service Housing Support Service

Firrhill Day Centre
257 Colinton Road
Edinburgh
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Telephone: 0131 441 7162

Type of inspection:
Announced (short notice)

Completed on:
23 February 2026

Service provided by:
City of Edinburgh Council

Service provider number:
SP2003002576

Service no:
CS2022000002

About the service

Firrhill Housing Support and Care at Home is registered as a combined housing support and care at home service to provide a care service to adults with learning disabilities in their own home and in the community. The service is provided by the City of Edinburgh Council. The level of support provided varies depending on people's assessed care and support needs.

At the time of the inspection four people living in Edinburgh were using the service.

About the inspection

This was a (short notice) announced inspection which took place on Tuesday 17 February between 10:00 and 15:00, Wednesday 18 February between 10:00 and 15:00 and on Thursday 19 February between 09:00 and 15:00. The inspection was carried out by an 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:

- observed two people being supported in their homes
- spoke with seven staff, attended a team meeting and reviewed feedback questionnaires
- met with the leadership team
- contacted two visiting professionals and reviewed feedback questionnaires
- reviewed documents in connection with people's care and support
- reviewed documents relating to staffing and the management of the service.

Key messages

- People benefitted from relaxed trusting relationships with the staff team.
- There was a strong focus on a holistic approach to enhancing people's wellbeing.
- A positive approach to people's behaviours had resulted in a reduction in their expressions of stress.
- People were able to engage in activities they really enjoyed at home and in the community.
- The staff team were well supported in their role and wellbeing.

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 staff team?	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 evaluated the performance of the service under this key question as very good. We found significant strengths in aspects of the care and support provided and how these supported positive outcomes.

Interactions between staff and the people they supported were respectful and calm. Staff used the knowledge they gained from individual's support plans, from family and from each other's experiences to understand the individuals well. They used humour appropriately and spoke highly of people's achievements. As a result people enjoyed a friendly supportive homely environment and trusting relationships with staff.

A visiting professional told us: "People seemed familiar with the individuals in their care, and they responded to the individuals appropriately and professionally."

Support plans were extremely strength based. This meant that staff took people's positive attributes and skills into account when considering the support approach that would suit them best. As staff followed clear guidance on reporting incidents, including behaviours that challenge others, the leadership team were able to review and evaluate possible triggers and responses. The staff team also used a Positive Behaviour Support model to anticipate and respond helpfully to people's expressions of stress. Positive communication between staff helped them give people a consistent response to their stressed behaviours. This meant that individual's experiences of distress had reduced significantly, and that they took part in community based activities with confidence. Some staff felt this could be improved further.

People were given as much control over their finances as suited their abilities. Where staff supported people with their finances this was well organised and recorded. Arrangements to support people to take their medication had improved recently. This meant that people could be confident that they received the right medication at the right time. The reasons for administering as required medications were well recorded. This included a note of the outcome of the medication. This helped monitor the use of as required medications.

The staff team promoted a healthy life style with a real focus on exercise, good mental health and nutrition. They worked closely with people and their families when planning menus and considering the activities that people would enjoy. People were supported to look after their long term health, for instance by attending general health checks or dentist appointments. There was a positive focus on supporting people to take part in activities that they really enjoyed whilst maintaining and enhancing their life skills. This could be enhanced further by setting and reviewing achievable agreed goals in people's support plans.

The staff team worked closely with other professionals, for instance the learning disability nursing team and mental health workers to provide a holistic approach to people's care and support. They communicated well with people's families, advocates and legal guardians, to share experiences, and achievements. The staff team showed a good understanding of the complexities around people's capacity, rights and choices. This evidenced their approach to protecting people from harm whilst promoting their right to a full life.

How good is our staff team?**5 - Very Good**

We evaluated the performance of the service under this key question as very good. We found significant strengths in aspects of the staff team and how these supported positive outcomes.

Since the last inspection the staff team had doubled in size, but very few staff had left the service. Where people were supported by agency employed staff this was usually staff who had worked for the service before. This meant that there was a stable staff team who knew the four service users well. We saw relaxed and respectful interactions amongst staff members and with people who use the service. Staff were enthusiastic about their role.

The leadership team understood staff's skills and the positive relationships they had with people. They used this to ensure that where ever possible there was a good match between staff and the individual they were supporting. This maximised opportunities for people to have positive experiences and take part in activities they enjoyed.

A staff member commented that a further improvement would be to: "create inclusive opportunities that enable service users with common interests to connect and engage in shared activities."

To promote consistent care and support staff made the most of a range of ways to share their experiences and approaches to supporting people. This included hand over times, written information and team meetings. Communication was being further enhanced by the introduction of the use of Microsoft Teams for all staff members. It was clear from discussions with staff and from attending a team meeting that they enjoyed learning from each other. They worked well as a team to provide positive outcomes for the people they supported. One visiting professional commented that this could be improved further to ensure that actions that were agreed were carried through.

A staff member of commented that on the value of: "the team meetings in evaluating events each week."

The leadership team had created a positive culture of continual professional development and shared learning. Staff had access to a good range of e-learning as well as in person training options to support them in their role. In addition we saw positive use of supervision, annual appraisals, the input from the Positive Behaviour Support specialist and the medication lead. This encouraged staff to take on new tasks, develop new skills and gain confidence in their achievements.

Attention to staff safety and wellbeing was addressed by a lone working policy and clear guidance on what do should an incident occur outside usual working hours. Staff were also given the skills necessary to keep themselves safe. The leadership team were actively supporting staff during a period of organisational change. Staff felt well supported in their role as well as their wellbeing.

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 staff team?	5 - Very Good
3.3 Staffing arrangements are right and staff work well together	5 - Very Good

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