

Nansen Highland Housing Support Service Housing Support Service

Redcastle Station
Tore
Muir of Ord
IV6 7RX

Telephone: 01463 871 255

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

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1 August 2025

Service provided by:
Nansen Highland

Service provider number:
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CS2011299270

About the service

Nansen Highland Housing Support is a service registered to provide both housing support and care at home services to adults with learning disabilities and autism.

The provider is Nansen Highland, a registered charity based in Easter Ross. Nansen Highland operates other support services to people with a disability, including day care and residential care.

The service supports people with their own tenancy to live independently and safely in their community. The support offered is flexible and tailored to meet the needs of individuals and their personal goals and aspirations. Support packages can range from a few hours a week to 24/7 arrangements.

At the time of our inspection, 13 people were being supported by the service.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 22 to 30 July 2025. 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:

- spoke with four people using the service and four of their family
- spoke with six staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents
- spoke with visiting professionals

Key messages

- Staff developed meaningful relationships with people based on warmth, respect, and trust because they knew them well.
- People receiving support felt cared for and listened to and were confident in how the service responded to their needs.
- People appreciated the flexibility of the service and a creative approach in supporting them to achieve their goals.
- Staffing levels were good, and people's care and support benefited from consistent staff teams.
- Staff were competent, skilled, and knowledgeable within their role due to regular training and supervision.
- People's care and support plans were updated but should be formally reviewed on a regular basis.
- People benefited from regular communication between managers, their support team, and external professionals in promoting their health 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
How well is our care and support planned?	4 - 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 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.

We observed warm and compassionate care based on meaningful relationships between people and their staff team. Staff enabled people to make choices and supported them to identify and achieve their goals by a strong person-centred approach. One example was how a person's confidence developed to try new activities because staff worked at their pace and with their strengths. Other examples were how people gradually reduced their support hours as their independent living skills developed. One person told us "The main thing is staff support me to do what I want to do" and this was confirmed by a family member who told us "Staff do really well in person-centred care, my relative gets listened to and to do what they want and gets a lot of choice".

People benefited from clear and detailed personal support plans which promoted activities and doing as much as they could for themselves. Staff ensured people were involved in all aspects of their care and support and where this was not possible, the relevant legal documentation was in place. This meant people's voice was heard in directing their own support and their rights were upheld. One person told us "I appreciate that staff are very open with communication and very good at explaining what we are going to do" and an external professional told us "People are included in all aspects of the service, and their voices can be heard".

Staff were skilled in recognising changing health needs and supported access to a range of community healthcare services and professionals. This meant people received the right healthcare at the right time from the right people. We heard of examples where technology had been used to support people's independence with personal care and saw evidence of people having as much control as possible over their medication. If staff supported people with medication or finances, there were robust systems in place to ensure this was safely managed.

People's support showed a healthy approach to diet and lifestyles as part of developing their independence. Staff were effective in supporting people to make choices that achieved positive outcomes because of their strong and trusted relationships. One person told us "I'm perfectly happy" and another confirmed "I like the staff."

The service could improve by clearly recording outcomes when using 'as needed' medication and review these regularly to ensure they are being effective in achieving the desired health outcome.

How good is our staff team?

5 - Very Good

We evaluated this key question as very good, where significant strengths supported positive outcomes for people.

Staff were recruited carefully and well to ensure the right people with the right values were supporting people at the right times. Staff were competent, knowledgeable, and skilled based on regular supervision and training. There was a system for assessing staffing and staff hours. People spoke positively about how the service attempted to match staff with them and were flexible in responding to changing situations. This meant people benefited from consistent support from staff who understood their needs.

Staff and managers communicated well as a team and felt supported in their role. This meant the focus of arranging people's support was person-centred and balanced with supporting the wellbeing of staff. Managers were described as responsive, open, and approachable by staff for when they needed guidance and advice. Staff told us "Managers are all approachable, which is rare now, and very visible within the service" and this was confirmed by another who said, "The manager is the 'glue' in the service, always calm and always listens."

There was evidence of a learning work culture and staff felt that they worked within a 'family,' with shared values around making a positive difference to the lives of young adults. This meant staff were confident in building positive interactions and relationships with people. One external professional told us "Staff are warm and compassionate, I appreciate the support and drive that staff provide to encourage the learning of new skills" and when we spoke with others, they shared this experience.

People using the service and staff benefited from a warm atmosphere because there were good working relationships. Staff and management meetings provided opportunities for staff to contribute their views and make suggestions about how to improve outcomes for people. Staff told us "There are strong relationships within the service with a natural ease of communication which is reflected in a low turnover of staff" and this was confirmed by an external professional who said, "Management are easily accessible and always happy to chat."

The service could improve by collating their training plans and developments into an organisational training needs analysis. This would enable clear management oversight of current and future training goals as the needs of people and staff change over time.

How well is our care and support planned?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good, where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for young adults and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Personal support plans were detailed, updated regularly, and used person-centred language that clearly demonstrated the individual's unique likes and dislikes. This meant care and support was delivered effectively. Staff were aware of how to respond in a crisis situation and there were comprehensive risk assessments. One family told us "I'm really happy with the support and it shows in how happy my relative is, they get cared for really well" and this was confirmed by another who said, "The service has been very good."

Communication with families and external professionals was proactive and responsive. One external professional told us "Management will get in touch with any concerns; there is always good and timely communication" and another confirmed "I find the whole service very positive." We heard feedback from some families that it would be helpful to be informed when there are changes to the staff team. We discussed this with the provider.

People's care and support plans needed to be reviewed a minimum of every six months. It was clear that support plans were updated regularly and responsive to changes for people, but formal discussions were not consistently taking place. The provider discussed how they were working with another service to support a person, where managers communicated frequently but more work was necessary on ensuring consistency between the two staff teams. We identified where both these areas should continue to improve (area for

improvement 1).

Areas for improvement

1. To support people's confidence in their care and support being responsive to changing needs, the provider should ensure that personal support plans are formally reviewed a minimum of every six months. This should include, but is not limited to, meeting with providers where support is shared with another service to ensure consistency of approach and clear communication between managers, support staff, families, and professionals.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: 'My care and support is consistent and stable because people work together well' (HSCS 3.19) and 'If I am supported and cared for by a team or more than one organisation, this is well-coordinated so that I experience consistency and continuity' (HSCS 4.17).

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 improvement the provider should undertake a process of self-evaluation. This should result in the development and ongoing reviewing of improvement plans that have measurable outcomes relating to person centred care and support.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice.' (HSCS 4.11); 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 November 2022.

Action taken since then

Each service had developed an action plan in addition to an organisation action plan. Managers detailed where feedback and self-evaluation had been used to drive forward improvements. Clear objectives were included with named managers responsible for monitoring progress within specified timescales. We discussed the Care Inspectorate guidance on self-evaluation for further clarity in embedding quality assurance systems into current audit activities.

The area for improvement was 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 staff team?	5 - Very Good
3.3 Staffing arrangements are right and staff work well together	5 - Very Good
How well is our care and support planned?	4 - Good
5.1 Assessment and personal planning reflects people's outcomes and wishes	4 - Good

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