

North Merchiston Care Home Service

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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
23 September 2025

Service provided by:
City of Edinburgh Council

Service provider number:
SP2003002576

Service no:
CS2023000137

About the service

North Merchiston is a care home located close to Edinburgh city centre. It was purpose built to provide care for up to 60 older people. At the time of inspection there were 53 people experiencing care in North Merchiston. The service has been registered with the Care Inspectorate since May 2023 and the provider is the City of Edinburgh Council. There is parking within the grounds and it is close to local transport links.

There are three floors with two units on each. Each unit has ten rooms, all of which have en-suite showering and toilet facilities. Each unit also benefits from a communal bathroom with bath. A secure communal garden can be accessed from the ground floor.

About the inspection

This was a full inspection which took place on 15 and 16 September 2025. The inspection was carried out by two inspectors 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 24 people using the service or their relatives
- spoke with 15 staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents
- spoke with visiting professionals.

Key messages

- Interactions between staff and people experiencing care were warm, personalised and at the pace of the individual.
- Care plans considered holistic needs and were person centred.
- The environment was clean and tidy throughout.
- The service was working on ways to improve activities and meaningful engagement.

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?	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?

4 - Good

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

Quality Indicator 1.3 People's health and wellbeing benefits from their care and support

Interactions between staff and people experiencing care were warm, personalised and at the pace of the individual. People we spoke to shared that staff were kind to them and treated them with respect and dignity. One relative shared "All the staff are very friendly to (them). They all know (their) likes and dislikes, it is like family to (them)." This helped to build a culture of compassionate care.

The service was working towards improving their activities schedule and creating more opportunities for meaningful engagement. Following feedback from relatives, a document was developed which will be readily accessible, keeping relatives informed about what their loved one has been doing each day. Following feedback during inspection, the service was exploring ways to make better use of their allocated activities space, enabling more people to participate in group activities. This will enable people experiencing care to maintain their interests and enhance quality of life.

During mealtimes, staff interacted well with people and dining rooms had music playing to create a positive atmosphere. Menus were displayed on each table and people were given a choice of two items for their main course. If people didn't like what was on offer, the chef was willing to prepare other items according to preference. Dietary requirements and allergies were visible for kitchen staff, protecting the safety of people experiencing care.

Care plans considered needs holistically and were person centred. Risk assessments were in place for those who needed them and health assessment tools were mostly completed. People's daily needs were clearly laid out within care plans which made it easy for new or agency staff to find information. Relatives and people experiencing care said they felt included in the care planning process. This meant people's care reflected their wishes and choices.

When staff had any concerns about people, these were escalated appropriately. One professional shared "They are usually quite proactive. If they have any concerns about anyone they are usually pretty good at phoning." This highlighted that staff are responsive, and involve other professionals where needed.

A strong medication policy was in place and medications were stored appropriately. Staff who administered medications were appropriately trained to do so. This protected the safety of people experiencing care.

A strong adult support and protection policy was in place and most staff were up to date with Adult support and protection training. When asked about when to raise and report concerns, the staff we spoke to were confident in the procedures to follow. This safeguarded people experiencing care.

Comments from relatives included;

"I'm really happy in terms of physical needs."

"A while ago we were in the lift and (they) said it is that way, that is my house in there. That made me feel good. (they) feel safe."

How good is our setting?

4 - Good

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

Quality Indicator 4.1 People experience high quality facilities

We found the environment was clean and tidy throughout. Relatives shared that they found the service was clean when visiting loved ones. One person shared "Staff keep it spotlessly clean. Never seen any mess." Cleaning schedules were kept up to date and gloves and aprons were well stocked throughout the service. This meant people lived in a clean environment, where staff had access to suitable protective equipment to support good infection control and protect people's wellbeing."

Most people's rooms were personalised, although some could be improved with more personal items. The service shared that they are were looking at ways to personalise people's rooms whilst protecting the safety of people experiencing care. Bedrooms were ensuite and each unit benefited from a large bathroom for people who preferred baths. The layout of each unit made communal areas easy to find for people living within the service. Each unit had its own lounge and dining room and there was a separate activities room which enabled larger groups to gather for arranged activities. An enclosed courtyard provided an area where people could sit outside safely. A separate sensory room featuring ambient lighting and areas to explore by touch gave people a space they could go that was relaxing and created a sense of comfort. This meant people experiencing care could choose from a range of environments depending on their own preference.

The kitchen was clean, well equipped and each unit had a small kitchen area where staff could prepare snacks and toast for people. The store room in the kitchen area was well stocked and the kitchen had a list of dietary requirements on the wall, making this easy to find.

All relevant equipment checks were up to date and moving and handling equipment such as hoists and stand aids were stored safely in a separate cupboard. Hazardous items and liquids were locked away and necessary doors were locked in most instances. Environmental safety checks and audits such as Scottish fire and rescue audit, gas safety checks and water testing were completed as appropriate within the necessary time frames. This protected the safety of people experiencing care.

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
1.3 People's health and wellbeing benefits from their care and support	4 - Good

How good is our setting?	4 - Good
4.1 People experience high quality facilities	4 - Good

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