The Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority

Inspection Report

Name of Service: Ballyowen Day Centre

Provider: Belfast HSC Trust

Date of Inspection: 24 October 2025

Information on legislation and standards underpinning inspections can be found on our website https://www.rqia.org.uk/

1.0 Service information

Organisation/Registered Provider:	Belfast HSC (Health and Social Care) Trust
Responsible Individual/Responsible Person:	Mrs Maureen Edwards
Registered Manager:	Mr Rory John Paul Kavanagh
Service Profile: Ballyowen Day Centre is a day care setting that provides care and daytime activities for people over 65 years of age living with a range of medical needs. The day care setting is operational Monday to Friday.	

2.0 Inspection summary

An unannounced inspection took place on 24 October 2025 between 9.45 a.m. and 3.30 p.m. by a care Inspector.

The last care inspection of the day care setting was undertaken on 30 July 2024 by a care Inspector. No areas for improvement were identified. This inspection was undertaken to evidence how the day care setting is performing in relation to the regulations and standards; and to determine if the day care setting is delivering safe, effective and compassionate care and if the service is well led.

The inspection evidenced that safe, effective and compassionate care was delivered to service users and that the day care setting was well led. Details and examples of the inspection findings can be found in the main body of the report.

It was evident that staff promoted the dignity and well-being of service users and that staff were knowledgeable and well trained to deliver safe and effective care. Discussion occurred with Head of Service for the day care setting in relation to staff feedback received.

Service users said that the care and support provided by Ballyowen Day Centre was a good experience however made some suggestions as to how the service could be improved. Again, this was discussed with Head of Service during feedback. Refer to Section 3.2 for more details as to service user feedback received.

No areas for improvement were identified during this inspection.

3.0 The inspection

3.1 How we Inspect

RQIA's inspections form part of our ongoing assessment of the quality of services. Our reports reflect how Ballyowen Day Centre was performing against the regulations and standards, at the time of our inspection, highlighting both good practice and any areas for improvement. It is the responsibility of the provider to ensure compliance with legislation, standards and best practice, and to address any deficits identified during our inspections.

To prepare for this inspection we reviewed information held by RQIA about this day care setting. This included registration information, and any other written or verbal information received from service users, relatives, staff or the commissioning trust.

Throughout the inspection process inspectors seek the views of those attending, working in, and visiting the day care setting; and examine a sample of records to evidence how the day care setting is performing in relation to the regulations and standards.

3.2 What people told us about the service

Through active listening, RQIA aims to ensure that the lived experience is reflected in our inspection reports and quality improvement plans.

Service users consulted told us that the staff are "very friendly", that they "encourage and support" them, whilst one service user when asked about their thoughts about the staff told us, "Oh they are all great folks". Service users told us that they felt safe whilst attending Ballyowen Day Centre with a service user explaining, "staff make me feel secure, also I feel secure on the bus – I like the driver".

It was positive to hear directly from service users that they felt the staff were attentive with one service user stating, "they [staff] would regularly ask me if I am okay and is there anything they can do for me." Another service user told us, "the staff are excellent; they go above and beyond for everyone here".

Service users told us that they enjoyed attending Ballyowen Day Centre with one service user providing a list of everything they liked; "company, food, games, bus, physio, outings, staff are helpful". Service users told us how important attendance at the day care setting was to them as it offered opportunity to engage and socialise with their peers. Service users told us that they enjoyed meeting new people, whilst others commented about the friendships they have established as a result of attending Ballyowen Day Centre and that they "like the craic."

Mixed feedback was received with regards to the food with some service users advising that the food is "good" and "tasty with choice" whilst one service user told us they were "not keen on the food". This feedback was shared with the person in charge during feedback.

With regards to activities, again service user feedback received varied. This was discussed with the person in charge during feedback; they advised the activity programme was currently under review.

Staff felt that the service users attending Ballyowen Day Centre received a high quality service. Staff told us that they felt confident in their own competencies and skills, and that of their colleagues, to appropriate meet and respond to the presenting needs of the people they support. Staff spoke knowledgably about service user plans and how to respond to emergency situations. Those staff consulted with understood responsibilities associated with safeguarding procedures. Staff stated that they felt training provided was adequate and did not feel that any additional training was required.

Staff expressed concerns regarding leadership within the day care setting, interpersonal relationships between team members and team morale. Staff did however express optimism, advising that they felt able to raise concerns with senior leaders who had made them feel listened too. Staff spoken with stated that they were confident matters could effectively be resolved. Concerns shared by staff were discussed with the Assistant Service Manager. They confirmed awareness as to staff concerns and shared information regarding the action plan to address concerns raised. The plan developed was robust; this will be examined at a future inspection.

Service user representative feedback was positive. One service user representative stated that they viewed the service provided by Ballyowen Day Centre as “a blessing” and that their loved ones’ attendance had also improved aspects of their home life; “our home life is much better and enjoyable as he feels he is getting out and being independent which is important”.

Feedback from service user representative’s regarding staff was positive. One service user representative stated “Rory the manager keeps me updated regularly, very, very approachable and I know my husband is well cared for here, it is the only centre out of all the centres we visited he would come to”. Another said, “from Rory [Registered Manager], to all the girls and fellas, including the drivers, I could not fault the centre at all.”

Commissioners told us they were happy with the service provided by the day care setting with one social worker advising that they had several service users who attended Ballyowen Day Centre and for them attendance was “a lifeline”. We were told they found staff to be “very responsive” and another social worker said from their observations they felt the staff treated the service users well.

3.3 Inspection findings

3.3.1 Staffing Arrangements

Safe staffing begins at the point of recruitment and continues through to staff induction, regular staff training and ensuring that the number and skill of staff on duty each day meets the needs of service users. There was evidence of robust systems in place to manage staffing.

It was noted that there was enough staff in the day care setting to respond to the needs of the service users in a timely way; and to provide service users with a choice on how they wished to spend their day. Staff also advised that they felt staffing levels within the day care setting were sufficient and satisfactory.

There was evidence that staff had completed a structured orientation and induction to ensure they were competent to carry out the duties of their job in line with the agency's policies and procedures.

Review of training records identified that the day care setting had proficient governance arrangements in place to monitor staffs' training compliance. The majority of training elements were noted to be up to date or alternative dates for training had been secured. It was positive to note that additional training had been provided to the staff, for example delirium and medical device training. The Registered Manager advised that at point of referral consideration is given as to any additional training or skills development that may be required to safely meet the needs of individuals.

Procedures were in place for appraising staff performance and review of records confirmed these had been undertaken as expected. All staff received regular supervision, however some minutes reviewed illustrated that not all sessions were completed on a one to one basis. This was highlighted to Head of Service who provided assurances that there was a plan in place to ensure all staff would receive supervision in line with the Standards by the end of the financial year. This will be examined at a future inspection.

3.3.2 Care Delivery

There was a daily handover at the beginning of each shift, which included information about any changes to the service users' care that the staff needed to assist them in their roles. The handover template utilised by the day care setting aided effective communication amongst the staff team.

Discussion occurred with both the Registered Manager and Head of Service regarding the frequency of team meetings. Assurances were provided that dates had been secured to ensure regular team meetings would be facilitated within the day care setting, with the Head of Service expressing intention to attend team meetings until January 2026.

Staff were knowledgeable of individual service users' needs, their daily routine, wishes and preferences. Throughout the day, staff confirmed awareness as to the current needs and risks of service users and were able to describe responsibilities placed upon them in responding to accidents, incidents or safeguarding concerns.

Activities planned for the week ahead were clearly displayed on a large whiteboard located within the main hall. This provided service users with advance knowledge, allowing them time to consider what activities they wished to participate in. Suggestion shared with the inspector from service users as to how the activity programme could be expanded and improved upon were shared during feedback. The activity programme will be reviewed at a future inspection.

Examination of care records and discussion with staff confirmed that the risk of falling and falls were well managed and referrals were made to other healthcare professionals as needed.

The dining experience was an opportunity for service users to socialise and the atmosphere was calm, relaxed and unhurried. Prior to the mealtime staff held a safety pause to consider those service users who required a modified diet.

An area of good practice was identified with the day care setting found to complete a daily template relating to discussions arising during the safety pause about IDDSI diet levels.

3.3.3 Management of Care Records

Service users care records were held confidentially in line with data protection regulations.

Service users' needs were assessed when they were first referred to the day care setting and before care delivery commenced. Following this initial assessment care plans were developed to direct staff on how to meet service users' needs and included any advice or recommendations made by other healthcare professionals.

Service users had agreements in place between themselves and the day care setting; these agreements outlined responsibilities of both parties as well as costs, rights etc. Review of records identified that service users consent was sought in relation to the staff contacting or requesting information from other healthcare professionals on their behalf. Service users were given the choice as to whether or not they wanted their image captured, via either photographs or video, and used as part of the day care settings documentation and/or any organisational promotional material or social media posts.

Care records were person centred, well maintained, regularly reviewed and updated to ensure they continued to meet the service users' needs. A review of a sample of care records evidenced that service users, where possible, were involved in planning their own care and efforts had been made to ascertain service users' preferences and choices around how their support was provided. Inconsistencies were evident in respects to one service user records, however, once highlighted these were immediately addressed.

There was evidence that service user plans were updated following a change in need and/or risk and regular reviews were happening.

3.3.4 Quality and Management of the Environment

The day care setting was observed to be clean, suitably furnished, warm and comfortable. Suitable storage of items utilised by staff in facilitation of activities and following completion of particular tasks were discussed and addressed on the day. There were Halloween decorations created by the service users displayed within the main hall, which was large and spacious.

There was evidence that systems and processes were in place to manage infection prevention and control which included policies and procedures and monitoring of the environment to ensure compliance.

Hazardous substances were noted to be stored appropriately in accordance with Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) guidance.

A fire risk assessment had been completed and there was evidence that regular fire safety checks were being completed. Throughout the inspection, fire doors were observed to be unobstructed and fire signage was clearly displayed.

3.3.5 Quality of Management Systems

There has been no change in the management of the day care setting since the last inspection. Mr Rory John Paul Kavanagh has been the manager in this day care setting since 4 October 2017.

Those service users consulted with spoke positively about the manager describing him as friendly and approachable. Staff feedback regarding management was discussed with the Head of Service.

There was a system in place to ensure that complaints were managed in accordance with the day care setting's policy and procedure.

There was a protocol in place for staff to follow where service users did not attend as planned. It was evident via discussion with staff that they had knowledge of this protocol.

Review of incident records identified that they were managed appropriately. There was evidence that incidents were audited on a regular basis, to establish any patterns/trends. It was good to note that these were reviewed in detail as part of the monthly quality monitoring process and additional assurances provided that all notifiable incidents had been appropriately reported.

Day care settings are required to have a person known as the Adult Safeguarding Champion (ASC), who has responsibility for implementing the regional protocol and the day care setting's adult safeguarding policy. It was established that good systems and processes were in place to manage the safeguarding and protection of adults at risk of harm.

The day care setting was visited each month by a representative of the registered provider to consult with service users, their relatives and staff and to examine all areas of the running of the day care setting. The reports of these visits were completed in detail and found to appropriately drive service improvement.

The annual quality report was reviewed and noted to include a detailed breakdown of incidents that had been reported by the day care setting over the previous year. It was positive to note objectives bespoke to Ballyowen Day Centre had been established for the year ahead. Both the Registered Manager and Head of Service spoke passionately about achieving improvements for the benefit of service users of the day care setting.

4.0 Quality Improvement Plan/Areas for Improvement

This inspection resulted in no areas for improvement being identified. Findings of the inspection were discussed with Thomas McCorry, Assistant Service Manager as part of the inspection process and can be found in the main body of the report.

The Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority

The Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority

James House
2-4 Cromac Avenue
Gasworks
Belfast
BT7 2JA

Tel: 028 9536 1111

Email: info@rqia.org.uk

Web: www.rqia.org.uk

Twitter: @RQIANews