

Care Quality Commission (CQC) Assessment of Rotherham Adult Social Care

May 2026

Governance relating to CQC outcome

Event	Date
Report governance: SMT	01/04/2026
Report governance: DLT	14/04/2026
Report governance: SLT	21/04/2026
Health Select Commission	14/05/2026
Cabinet	08/06/2026

Background

From April 2023, The Health and Care Act 2022 gave CQC new regulatory powers to undertake independent assessment of local authorities' delivery of regulated care functions as set out in Part 1 of the Care Act 2014. Local authorities are assessed against four domains:

- i.) Working with people
- ii.) Proving support
- iii.) How the local authority ensures safety
- iv.) Leadership



Adult Social Care (ASC) began work to ensure preparedness for the regulatory assessment. This assurance work included two peer reviews – one December 2023 by the Local Government Association (LGA) and a second January 2025 by the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS). Both peer reviews supported ASC's improvement journey as well as its readiness for assessment by the CQC.

Key assessment dates

CQC assurance visit notice – 10 February 2025

CQC onsite assessment – 14-17 July 2025

CQC draft report received – 3 February 2026

CQC final report received – 4 March 2026

CQC outcome report published – 20 March 2026



Overall Scores

Our challenge during factual accuracy has led to increased scores for assessing needs and safeguarding.

Now both rated 'Good' when they were previously 'Requires Improvement'.

Quality Statements	Assessing needs	Supporting People to live healthier lives	Equity in experience and outcomes	Care Provision, integration and continuity	Partnerships and communities	Safe systems, pathways and Transitions	Safeguarding	Governance, management and sustainability	Learning, improvement and innovation
Evidence Categories									
Peoples experience	2	3	2	2	3	3	3	3	3
Feedback from staff and leaders	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	3
Processes	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Feedback from Partners	2	3	2	2	3	3	2	3	3
Rating	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	3
Overall % QS Score	63%	75%	57%	63%	75%	75%	69%	75%	75%


Overall score: 73%

Overall rating: Good

The percentages in relation to the ratings are: 23-38% = inadequate, 39-62% = requires improvement, 63-87% = good, 88% and above = outstanding.

Overall Grade

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

Good 

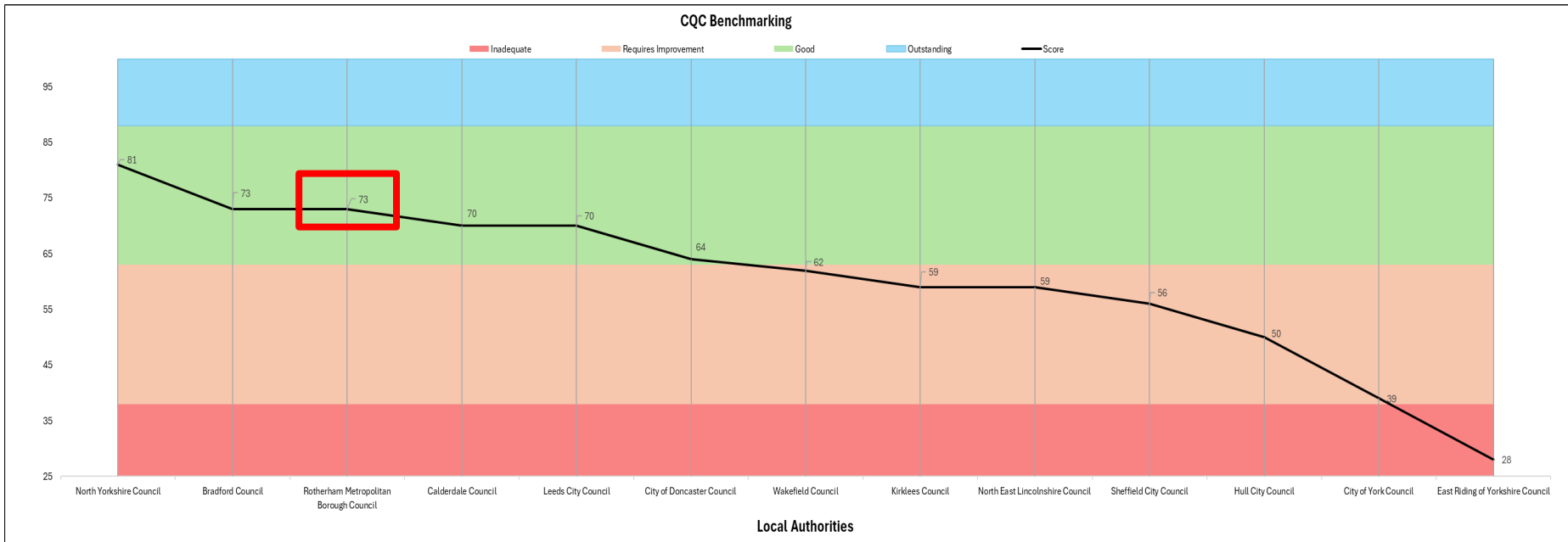
 73 Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council



Overall Grade

'Good' with a total score of 73%.

This ranks Rotherham as **highest scoring Local Authority in South Yorkshire*** and **joint second across Yorkshire and the Humber** (out of 13).



Summary of Peoples Experiences

- Overall, we heard **positive** feedback from people about their **experiences** of contact with and receiving support from the local authority. However, we did hear that some people had **waited** considerable time for **assessments**.
- There were a variety of ways in which **information** about the services available could be **accessed**, including talking directly with a wellbeing advisor who provided initial contact and assessment. The website included signposting people to other organisations for support which some people told us was helpful for them.
- People were **communicated with** whilst they **waited** for an **assessment**, with a letter explaining the process and guiding people to contact alternative sources and emergency services should their needs change. The Supporting Independence Team could visit people whilst they were waiting.
- **Assessments** were **person centred**, with a focus on **working with** people, not 'doing to' people and a good use of **advocacy** and person-centred safeguarding practices ensured people retained control.
- **Carers** told us their **needs** were **assessed** in their own right as a carer and that there was **good support** provided through Carers support in Rotherham. However, some carers had found it **difficult** to find out about the support **available** to them and found the amount of information overwhelming at times whilst others told us that they had found it really helpful.

Summary of Strengths and Areas for Development

- There was a broad range of **early intervention** services in place, with practical support to improve people's wellbeing, offered through the Supporting Independence Team. This early intervention sought to direct people to draw on community resources and maintain independence for longer.
- The Complex Lives Team offered **trauma informed support** for people who needed preventative and risk management support. This team provided a **holistic, person-centred** service for people experiencing multiple challenges including histories of trauma, homelessness, drug and alcohol misuse and offending behaviour. Support was available to people who did not meet the eligibility criteria for support under the Care Act.



Summary of Strengths and Areas for Development

- Assessments were **strength based**, and **person centred**, considering a **whole family approach**, however there were some **waits** for people to receive an **assessment**. Unplanned and annual reviews showed waits for people, which meant the local authority were not fully appraised of a service meeting needs in a strength-based person-centred way. However, people were **prioritised on risk** to ensure those most in need received timely support.
- The local authority had opportunities to **strengthen** its approach to **co-production** to create meaningful partnerships with people and communities. **Outcomes** for unpaid **carers** had the **opportunity to improve** with closer partnership working. **Section 75 agreements** and the use of the **Better Care Fund** provided opportunities for **joined up, system working**. There was a **strong** use of **enablement**, equipment and telecare to maximise **independence**.




Summary of Strengths and Areas for Development

- **Safeguarding** was everyone's business, with a strong emphasis on the **Making Safeguarding Personal** principles. Support was available 24/7 and there was a strong focus on **partnership** working to keep people **safe**. **People** were **supported** to grow and thrive through the employment service which was redesigned with people through co production activities.
- People experienced **safe transitions between services**, for example between Children's to Adults services and through hospital discharge activity. Staff were **co-located** to reduce the number of teams people were referred to, **improving communication** and **outcomes**.



Summary of Strengths and Areas for Development

- Rotherham **staff** and **leaders** knew its **community well**. Staff felt **connected** to the **leadership team**. They were encouraged to share ideas and innovation as systems changed to **improve processes** and **outcomes for people**. Staff were nurtured to **thrive** in a positive and encouraging culture with opportunities to develop careers led by **compassionate** and available leaders. The local authority sought to **improve** by gaining **feedback** from **peer reviews** and **audits** of performance.

MOST AGREEMENT 	% POSITIVE
Q1.2 In my job I make good use of my skills and abilities	95%
Q1.5 I look for ways to do my job more efficiently	95%
Q9.1 My line manager trusts me to do my job properly	94%

Key strengths

Theme One – Working with People

OT and AT accessible at Front Door.

Timely and effective advocacy.

Transparent decisions. No appeals made in the prior 12 months to CQC being onsite.

Complex Lives team delivers rapid and flexible trauma-informed support.

Person-centred and strength-based ethos, competent assessment teams, and responsive OOH arrangements.

Key strengths

Theme One – Working with People

Inclusion tools and feedback loops to shape services.

Clear strategies including EDI and Digital Inclusion.

Supported Employment team provides person-centred, bespoke support.

Diverse workforce that aids cultural competence.



Key strengths

Theme Two – Providing Support

Understanding of local need to align supply.

Quality oversight of services.

Effective brokerage which supports provision.

Work on sustainability of the market, including a redesigned homecare model.



Key strengths

Theme Two – Providing Support

Mature and aligned system partnership.

VCS relationships are strong.

A one-team ethos approach.



Key strengths

Theme Three – Ensuring Safety

Safety is prioritised with clear escalation, shared records and robust guidance.

Contingency planning is strong and out-of-area placements are tightly risk-managed.

Transitions and pathways are timely and work well.

Timeliness around DoLS referrals which are screened based on risk.



Making Safeguarding Personal is embedded and advocacy use is high.

A central safeguarding hub with triage, clear application of 3-point test, and strong multi-agency board oversight.

Key strengths

Theme Four – Leadership

Strategic planning that is data driven
and co-produced.

A culture of learning and improvement.

Clear governance and accountability
with stable leadership.

Adult Social Care

FREEDOM TO SPEAK UP

SPEAKING UP

We all have the right and responsibility to speak when we have concerns. This can be anything that gets in the way of you undertaking your duties professionally or that affects your working life, safety or happiness. For example:

- A way of working or a process that isn't being properly followed.
- You feel you or a colleague is being discriminated against.
- You feel the behaviour of others is affecting your wellbeing, that of your colleagues or those who use our services.

WHAT SPEAK UP CHAMPIONS CAN DO

- Signpost suitable routes for raising concerns, advise on the options available, relevant policies and contacts.
- Explain what sources of support are open to you if you've experienced or witnessed unacceptable behaviours.
- Promote awareness of speaking up and develop ways to encourage colleagues to raise concerns as soon as possible.
- Help ensure that the speak up message reaches any groups that may face barriers to their voice being heard.
- Raise concerns to the speak up guardian or more senior members of staff where appropriate.

WHAT SPEAK UP CHAMPIONS CANNOT DO

Speak Up Champions are a source of knowledge and support for you when things aren't right, however they're not able to:

- Take on responsibility (on your behalf) or act as your representative.
- Tell you what to do.
- Do things on your behalf.

For further information or to access your Speak Up Champions scan the QR code.



SPEAK UP CHAMPIONS



www.rotherham.gov.uk

Areas for development

Theme One – Working with People

Assessment delays, particularly relating to annual reviews.

No agreed local standard for financial assessment decision timescales.

Some moderate waits for assessment relating to equipment.

Strength-based approaches not always evident in unpaid carer assessments. Mixed outcomes.

Sustained action is needed to reduce inequalities across seldom-heard groups.

Proportion of 65+ year olds receiving enablement/rehab after discharge from hospital is below national average.

Accessibility to be strengthened.

Areas for development

Theme Two – Providing Support

Gaps in provision for working-age residential, early age dementia and specialist MH/LD provision. Some waits for complex cohorts.

Quality team capacity means assessments can be less frequent than intended.

Low number of carers accessing services.

Areas for development

Theme Three – Ensuring Safety

Carers reporting that they feel safe is below England average.

Not all S42 enquiries are complete within 80 working days.

Initial screening can exceed 2 working days in some cases.

Some read-only constraints limit cross-agency updating.

Areas for development

Theme Four – Leadership

Audits highlighted practice improvements needed around contingency planning, advocacy use, and MCA decision recording.

Partner feedback indicates a need for strengthening of communication.

Co-production arrangements do not always enable meaningful involvement.

Next Steps

Reflection sessions and a celebration event are taking place to acknowledge areas of strength and inform development actions to be progressed.

- Senior Management Team CQC away day – 25 March 2026
- Operational managers, team managers and service leads CQC planning session – 22 April 2026
- Celebration event – 22 May 2026
- Development plan finalised and progressed