

Cocklebury Farmhouse Homes Limited

Cocklebury Farmhouse

Inspection report

Cocklebury Lane
Off Darcy Close
Chippenham
Wiltshire
SN15 3QW

Tel: 01249658670

Date of inspection visit:
06 March 2018

Date of publication:
25 May 2018

Ratings

Overall rating for this service

Outstanding 

Is the service safe?

Good 

Is the service effective?

Good 

Is the service caring?

Outstanding 

Is the service responsive?

Outstanding 

Is the service well-led?

Good 

Summary of findings

Overall summary

Cocklebury Farnhouse is a care home providing support for 10 adults with learning disabilities and complex needs. The care service has been developed and designed in line with the values that underpin the Registering the Right Support and other best practice guidance. These values include choice, promotion of independence and inclusion. People with learning disabilities and autism using the service can live as ordinary a life as any citizen.

At our last inspection we rated the service Outstanding. At this inspection we found that the service remained Outstanding. The report is in a shorter format as the service has remained Outstanding.

People using the service received outstanding care and support. Staff often went above and beyond the expectations of their role to enhance the quality of people's lives. People were given opportunity to take part in a wide range of activities tailored to individual likes and preferences. This contributed positively to managing people's complex needs and behaviours. The registered manager told us how keeping people engaged in activities significantly reduced incidences of challenging behaviours. Staff understood people's needs extremely well and had built strong relationships. This built a strong family atmosphere within the service.

People were safe. Careful consideration was given to the use of restraint. Restraint was only used when absolutely necessary for the safety of the person or other people in the service. Any incidences were recorded so that there was transparency and learning could take place. People received safe support with their medicines and had risk assessments in place to provide safe support.

People received support to ensure their health needs were met and had enough to eat and drink. People were involved in planning their menus.

The service was well led. Staff were without exception positive about the leadership of the home and support they received. Staff ideas were listened to and staff felt able to raise their ideas and give their opinions.

The five questions we ask about services and what we found

We always ask the following five questions of services.

Is the service safe?

Good ●

The service remained Good.

Is the service effective?

Good ●

The service remained Good.

Is the service caring?

Outstanding ☆

The service remained Outstanding

Is the service responsive?

Outstanding ☆

The service remained Outstanding.

Is the service well-led?

Good ●

The service remained Good

Cocklebury Farmhouse

Detailed findings

Background to this inspection

We carried out this inspection under Section 60 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 as part of our regulatory functions. This inspection was planned to check whether the provider is meeting the legal requirements and regulations associated with the Health and Social Care Act 2008, to look at the overall quality of the service, and to provide a rating for the service under the Care Act 2014.

This was a comprehensive inspection. The inspection took place on 6 March 2018 and was announced. We gave the service 24 hours notice of our inspection because the service provides a service to adults with learning disabilities who are often out during the day and we needed to be sure somebody would be in.

The inspection was carried out by one Inspector. Prior to the inspection we reviewed all information available to us. This included notification and the Provider Information Return (PIR). The PIR is a form completed by the service to show what the service are doing well and any improvements they plan to make. During our inspection we spoke with four people using the service, four relatives and received feedback from nine members of staff. We reviewed three support plans and looked at other documents related to the running of the home such as quality audits and safety records.

Is the service safe?

Our findings

The service remained Good. People using the service were safe. People didn't comment to us specifically about how safe they felt, however we saw that people were happy and content and interacted freely with staff.

People received safe support with their medicines. These were kept in a locked cupboard, only accessible to staff. Most medicines were delivered from the pharmacy in a monitored dosage system (MDS). An MDS organises a person's medicines according to the days and times they need to be administered. Some people also had 'as required' medicines prescribed. We checked the stock levels of three medicines and found these to be correct according to the home's records. Medicine administration was recorded on Medicine Administration Records (MAR). We checked a sample of these and saw they were completed accurately.

Staff were trained in and understood how to protect people from abuse. The registered manager discussed with us and showed us records relating to situations where they'd acted to ensure people were safeguarded. There were occasions when physical restraints might be necessary to ensure the safety of people and other service users. There were clear instructions in place for how and when this should be used and staff recognised that physical restraint would only be used when there was no other safe, less restrictive option. Staff received training in recognised, safe techniques for restraint. Following any occasions when restraint had been necessary, a full account was written up so that it was clear what had led to the restraint being necessary and why it had been used. This allowed the registered manager to reflect on and monitor the use of restraint so that it was used safely and in the best interests of people living at Cocklebury Farm.

There were risk assessments in place to guide staff in providing safe support for people. These enabled people to take part in a range of activities safely without unnecessary restriction. For example we saw risk assessments detailing the measures required for a person to take part in a canoeing activity. This included ensuring the person had the correct clothing and safety equipment.

The home was clean and free from odour and there were checks in place to ensure the cleanliness of the home was monitored. People were protected in the event of fire. Regular checks of fire alarm systems took place and we saw that the fire service had visited the service and written to the provider to confirm they were happy with the arrangements in place.

There was sufficient staff to ensure people were supported safely and to enable them to take part in plenty of activities outside of the home.

Is the service effective?

Our findings

The service remained Good. People received effective care that met their needs.

People's rights were protected in line with the Mental Capacity Act 2005 (MCA). The MCA is legislation that protects the rights of people who aren't able to make decisions about their own care independently. There were Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) authorisation in place for some people in the home and others for whom applications were in place. The registered manager was aware of any conditions placed on the authorisations and was monitoring those applications that were still in progress.

Staff worked with healthcare professionals to ensure that people got the right support to maintain their health. One person was supported to see the dentist on the day of our inspection. We also saw how one member of staff supported a person at the hospital to have an operation. The member of staff stayed with the person during their time in hospital, helping to ensure that nursing staff understood the person's needs and how best to support them. The member of staff made a book about the person's experience in hospital to help them remember it. For another person, staff had been concerned about their declining health and had instigated investigation to ensure they got the right support. The person's support plan had been amended in light of these concerns and changes in the person's behaviour.

People were supported to eat healthily and to have choices about their meals. There was a visual timetable on display to help ensure people knew what was on offer that day. Staff told us they sought feedback on people's preferences and would always offer alternatives if a person wanted one. There was a pleasant atmosphere at the midday meal, with staff sitting down with people to eat their meals and people from the provider's other homes coming to join them too. There was guidance in individual support plans about individual's particular needs, for example one person needed encouragement to cut up their food appropriately so they could eat their meal safely.

The registered manager told us that people using the service had complex needs that often included aggressive and challenging behaviour. However through understanding how to best support people and ensuring they were engaged in meaningful activity, the incidence of physical aggression had reduced significantly over the last four years. The registered manager told us that as a result of better managing one person's needs, their antipsychotic medication dosage was halved. Over the last two years behaviour support plans had been reviewed and developed with a focus on positive behaviour support. This had led to a reduction in the need for physical intervention and PRN (as required) medication.

Staff gave positive feedback about the training and supervision they received. There were some mandatory topics that all staff had to complete, but the registered manager also looked at training to meet the specific needs of people in the home. For example, they told us they were looking to organise Makaton training to support communication in the home. Staff told us they had regular meetings to discuss their performance and development needs. This was supported by opportunities to discuss and talk about issues at any time. Staff told us there was an open door policy and that the registered managers were freely available to talk to when required.

Is the service caring?

Our findings

The service was Outstanding. It was evident that people were happy and content in their surroundings, interacting and sharing humour with staff. The registered manager told us that people had complex histories and had come from other services who had found it difficult to manage their complex needs and behaviours. The atmosphere during our inspection was calm and relaxed demonstrating how well staff were able to support them and meet their needs. Relatives also commented positively about the care provided at the service. Comments included "they look after him so well, he's very happy" and "it's a lovely home". Another relative told us "it's a marvellous place". Another person commented "couldn't think of a better place". One member of the community who was closely involved in the home had completed a questionnaire as part of the provider's quality monitoring. They commented 'I feel honoured to be part of a good well balanced group of people'. A health professional had written, a part of the home's own quality monitoring 'offer their residents an excellent supportive environment with a high level of professional care'.

Staff were committed and regularly went above and beyond the expectations of their role to provide care to people and their families. This included staff supporting people in their own time and homes. One member of staff for example told us how they welcomed one person back to their home because they enjoyed walking their dogs. The member of staff told us this helped keep the person's mood stable. This member of staff also told us how on one occasion they had supported a person to visit their relative and on arrival found that the relative needed medical assistance. The member of staff took the relative to receive treatment and told us that the person they were supporting had been keen to ensure their relative was ok. This meant the person avoided becoming anxious and demonstrating behaviours that challenged as a result.

The registered manager told us about one person who had experienced bereavement. The registered manager went to great lengths to manage this in a sensitive and caring way. This included supporting the person to be with their relative to spend time with them before they passed away. Following this, the registered manager took the person back to their own home to allow them time to manage their emotions away from other people and give them time to reflect. Staff had made a memory book to support the person to remember their loved one. Although this had occurred at the time of our last inspection, the ongoing impact for this person was clear as they were keen and eager to show us their memory book.

One member of staff told us about the 'amazing parties' that were thrown for residents. This could be in relation to people's birthdays or other special occasions. For example, for the provider's 30th anniversary celebrations, the registered manager was able to organise for the coach of the Welsh National Rugby team to attend the home. The local MP had also visited and written to the service to express how impressed they were with the home. The member of staff told us how professionals involved with the service would often come along, such as tradesman and staff from local shops. This helped establish the home as part of the community and for people in the home to establish links and relationships outside of the service. Christmas was a particularly joyful time for the service. In the last two years, changes had been made to how this was celebrated to allow people at all three care homes to join together and celebrate. Last Christmas, the provider hired out a local venue for everyone to attend and arranged for presents to be delivered to

everyone. The presents were delivered by well known personalities from the rugby world. The registered manager told us how much the event had been enjoyed by all concerned.

Another member of staff told us how they had taken a particular interest in two people at Cocklebury who didn't have quite as much family contact as others had. These two people would go to the staff member's house once a month for Sunday lunch and then go for a walk or make cakes. The staff member said "It doesn't sound like much but we have a great time and it's a slice of life that they normally wouldn't have."

Due to the close relationships staff had built with the people they supported, staff understood and were able to respond to people's communication needs. One person for example used signs to convey what he wanted to say, staff understood this and relayed to us what the person was communicating. One member of staff commented "After going to boomerang we usually then end the day by going for something to eat at McDonald's, this is something (x) really enjoys and always talks about it using his body language and Makaton, the communication I now share with (x) has developed due to my time working at Cocklebury and I know that it is an important way for him to express his views and feelings."

People were able to stay in contact and regularly visit their families. Relatives were all happy with the contact and communication they had with the service. Comments included "They always keep in touch" and "always kept in the loop". One person was supported to visit their relative each week. On one occasion, the relative had commented that they enjoyed fish and chips and so the following week the person and staff brought fish and chips for them. Following this, each week the person and staff took the relative a meal for them to enjoy. The registered manager told us how much the person enjoyed doing this for their relative.

People were given opportunity to give their views and provide feedback. For example, through questionnaires and group discussions. The registered manager told us how through these methods, feedback had been gained that people had enjoyed a local theatre production and so arrangements could be made to attend the theatre more often. People also had access to an advocate should they need one. An advocate is an independent person who acts to ensure that a person's views and feelings are heard. In one Advocate's report, we read how happy the person was at Cocklebury Farmhouse.

Is the service responsive?

Our findings

The service provided outstanding support that was responsive to people's needs. Staff understood what was important to individuals and ensured these needs were met. People using the service were given opportunity to take part in a range of activities which contributed positively to their wellbeing. As part of the home's own quality monitoring, one health professional had written 'Cocklebury staff team give a great deal of thought to the resident's needs and work extremely well with professionals to develop person centred care plans'.

During our inspection we saw how one person enjoyed computer games but their console had broken. By the end of the inspection, staff had sourced an affordable replacement and were going out to collect it for him. One member of staff told us how they would research the particular games the person enjoyed in order to support them to play and help them when they got stuck. The staff member, in their own time, helped the person sell old games so they could purchase new ones. Another member of staff told us how, in their own time, they supported a person in playing golf because they'd expressed an interest in this. The member of staff told us how carrying out this activity had improved their relationship and the person concerned was very proud of how they'd progressed.

Another person expressed a keen interest in football when they arrived at the service. Staff were able to find him a place on a local football team but the person wasn't able to afford all the equipment needed. One member of staff told us how they arranged a collection to enable the person to purchase all the items they needed. Further links with the community had been built through the provider sponsoring this football team. This ensured that the team had all the kit and resources they required as well as being of personal benefit to the people at the home who were part of the team.

This member of staff also told us about another individual who took pride in their appearance but due to limited finances weren't able to buy new clothes very often. The provider gave this person money for their birthday and Christmas and the staff member took them shopping so they could purchase items that wouldn't usually be affordable for them.

People had opportunity to go out frequently on trips and excursions. The registered manager told us how they had worked hard with one person in particular who didn't used to enjoy going out in groups but over the years this had changed so that the person was now joining in and no longer staying in their room when others went out. The registered manager explained how this represented significant progress for the person and helped prevent a deterioration in their mental health. One member of staff told us how took two people to the zoo every year, as this was something they very much enjoyed. Another member of staff told us how a person they supported was a fan of Elvis, and so they had arranged an outing for them to go and see an Elvis impersonator. This reflected how well staff tailored activities and outings to suit people's individual needs and interests.

People were encouraged to develop particular skills and interests. During our inspection there was a person from one of the provider's other services cooking meals for everyone. The registered manager told us how they had designed the menu that week to ensure it included meals that the person was able to prepare.

Another person was encouraged to do some gardening at the home and received payment for their work. The registered manager told us how two people at the home had an interest in cats and dogs and so arrangements had been made for them to occasionally visit an animal centre in a local town.

The service responded positively to people's interests and requests. The registered manager told us how people had been reminiscing about an activity on the water they had previously enjoyed but was no longer possible due to health and safety reasons. The provider had sourced another similar activity so that people could continue to enjoy this and benefit from the excitement of something 'out of the ordinary'. Over the years people had also enjoyed canoeing and in response to this, further indoor sessions had been added to the activity programme. The registered manager told us how much of a success these had been. This reflected how well the service listened to people and worked hard to find a wide range of activities and opportunities for them. It also demonstrated the provider's 'can do' approach.

Staff were responsive to people's changing needs. One person had been experiencing changes in their health that could indicate a particular condition. This had been identified at an early stage by staff and the relevant health professionals informed, ensuring that the person gets the right diagnoses and support. The way in which staff had managed and responded to this, had meant the person was not distressed or anxious about the changes in their health.

People were supported to make complaints if they needed to. We saw an example of where a person had been encouraged to do so. Staff also told us that for those people who were not able to express their views verbally, they would express their concerns or complaints in other ways such as through their body language or behaviours.

People had clear, person centred support plans in place that covered a range of support needs including communication, nutrition and managing behaviour. Although not everyone took an active interest in discussing or planning their own care, staff understood people's needs and wishes and incorporated these in to their plans.

There were plans in place for people's end of life care. One person for example had discussed the food and drink they would like to be available at the wake and their favourite colour.

Is the service well-led?

Our findings

The service was well led. Staff were all positive about working for the organisation and the support they received from the management team. There was an atmosphere of transparency and openness where staff felt able to offer their ideas and opinions. Comments included "I can always talk to them at any time with any problems or any concerns, I feel comfortable to ask them any questions no matter how simple or complex they may be" and "Cocklebury Farmhouse runs an open door policy. Transparency and accountability are key to how the business is run. The manager's support means that there is always someone to escalate to, ask questions or learn from to continue my development."

One member of staff told us how they had made a suggestion in relation to communication methods amongst staff across the provider's three homes. This suggestion was to use a particular communication app. The member of staff told us this idea had been welcomed and implemented. Staff also commented "Phil (manager/owner) is always happy to provide resources such as transportation, paid overtime or advise if it will benefit the customers. This allows us to organise activities/outing that may not normally be possible. An example of this would be the Longleat Festival of Light where care staff were offered overtime and free transportation to allow the customers to experience this event."

Several staff members commented on the "open door" policy of the registered managers and how there was always someone available to answer queries or discuss problems as they arose.

There were systems in place to monitor the quality and safety of the service. This included gathering feedback from people and health professionals visiting the service. One professional who'd visited the service wrote in their feedback "during my regular meetings with Cocklebury residents, it is clear that they have very positive relationships with the staff". Audits and checks were used to identify any concerns and make improvements where necessary. One example of this was when through their medicines audit, the registered manager had identified some errors in recording. Although these were recording issues and people hadn't been put at risk, the registered manager told us they took steps to make improvements. This included updating MAR sheets to facilitate accurate recording and ensuring all staff had annual checks to ensure they were administering medicines safely.

The service had also, in the last year implemented a computer based system for collecting feedback from people using the service. This would highlight any actions that need to be taken. This would also support working across the three services run by the provider, as it was a central system that could be accessed remotely.

The registered manager told us they attended a manager's forum as a means of keeping to touch with other registered managers in the sector; this was organised by Skills for Care. They had also been supported in their professional development through attending courses. In the last year, this had included manager's safeguarding training and a training event incorporating seminars on a range of subjects.