

# Achieve Together Limited Woodlands

## Inspection report

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## Ratings

Overall rating for this service	Good ●
Is the service safe?	Good ●
Is the service well-led?	Good ●

# Summary of findings

## Overall summary

We expect health and social care providers to guarantee people with a learning disability and autistic people respect, equality, dignity, choices and independence and good access to local communities that most people take for granted. 'Right support, right care, right culture' is the guidance CQC follows to make assessments and judgements about services supporting people with a learning disability and autistic people and providers must have regard to it.

Based on our review of safe and well led. The service was able to demonstrate how they were meeting the underpinning principles of 'Right Support, Right Care, Right Culture.'

### About the service

Woodlands is a residential care home providing personal care for up to 5 people. At the time of the inspection 5 people were using the service.

### People's experience of using this service and what we found

#### Right Support

Risks were managed and appropriately mitigated by a staff team that were committed to supporting people's independence.

People received their medicines as prescribed. Where possible people were encouraged to manage their own medicines to maximise their independence.

People were empowered to make meaningful decisions and choices. Staff understood people's communication preferences and used a range of communication tools appropriately to support people's decision making.

People were supported to have choice and control in their lives and staff supported them in the least restrictive way possible and in their best interests; the policies and systems in the service supported this practice.

#### Right Care

Staff protected people from all forms of abuse and discrimination, and understood how to raise safeguarding concerns should this be necessary.

The service was fully staffed, and people's individual needs and preferences were recognised and respected. Staff worked with people to identify goals and took pleasure in celebrating people's achievements. Professionals were complimentary of the care and support the service provided.

#### Right Culture

The registered manager had developed a supportive caring culture that valued and celebrated people's achievements. People were comfortable with their staff who they regularly tricked and joked with.

The registered manager provided effective leadership to the staff team who reported they were well supported. Audits had been completed regularly to monitor performance and identify any areas of possible improvement within the service.

The consistent staff team enjoyed spending time with the people they supported. People's requests in relation to staff skills had been acted upon by the registered manager and a member of staff able to compete with people's gaming skills had been recruited.

For more details, please see the full report which is on the CQC website at [www.cqc.org.uk](http://www.cqc.org.uk)

#### Rating at last inspection

The last rating for this service was good (published 17 November 2017).

#### Why we inspected

This inspection was prompted by a review of the information we held about this service.

We looked at infection prevention and control measures under the Safe key question. We look at this in all care home inspections even if no concerns or risks have been identified. This is to provide assurance that the service can respond to COVID-19 and other infection outbreaks effectively.

We undertook a focused inspection to review the key questions of safe and well-led only. For those key questions not inspected, we used the ratings awarded at the last inspection to calculate the overall rating.

You can read the report from our last comprehensive inspection, by selecting the 'all reports' link for Woodlands on our website at [www.cqc.org.uk](http://www.cqc.org.uk).

#### Follow up

We will continue to monitor information we receive about the service, which will help inform when we next inspect.

# The five questions we ask about services and what we found

We always ask the following five questions of services.

<p><b>Is the service safe?</b></p> <p>The service was safe.</p> <p>Details are in our safe findings below.</p>	<p><b>Good</b> ●</p>
<p><b>Is the service well-led?</b></p> <p>The service was well-led.</p> <p>Details are in our well-led findings below.</p>	<p><b>Good</b> ●</p>

# Woodlands

## Detailed findings

### Background to this inspection

#### The inspection

We carried out this inspection under Section 60 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (the Act) as part of our regulatory functions. We checked whether the provider was meeting the legal requirements and regulations associated with the Act. We looked at the overall quality of the service and provided a rating for the service under the Health and Social Care Act 2008.

As part of this inspection we looked at the infection control and prevention measures in place. This was conducted so we can understand the preparedness of the service in preventing or managing an infection outbreak, and to identify good practice we can share with other services.

#### Inspection team

The inspection was carried out by 1 inspector.

#### Service and service type

Woodlands is a 'care home'. People in care homes receive accommodation and nursing and/or personal care as a single package under one contractual agreement dependent on their registration with us.

Woodlands is a care home without nursing care. CQC regulates both the premises and the care provided, and both were looked at during this inspection.

#### Registered Manager

This provider is required to have a registered manager to oversee the delivery of regulated activities at this location. A registered manager is a person who has registered with the Care Quality Commission to manage the service. Registered managers and providers are legally responsible for how the service is run, for the quality and safety of the care provided and compliance with regulations.

At the time of our inspection there was a registered manager in post.

#### Notice of inspection

This inspection was unannounced.

### What we did before the inspection

We used the information the provider sent us in the provider information return (PIR). This is information providers are required to send us annually with key information about their service, what they do well, and improvements they plan to make. We reviewed information we had received about the service since the last inspection. We used all this information to plan our inspection.

### During the inspection

We met and spoke with all 5 people living at Woodlands. We also spoke with 3 care staff, the deputy manager and registered manager. Following the site visit, we received feedback from 1 person's relatives and 3 health and social care professionals on the service's current performance.

We reviewed a range of records, including 2 people's care records, medication records, staff recruitment records, rotas and policies and procedures.

# Is the service safe?

## Our findings

Safe – this means we looked for evidence that people were protected from abuse and avoidable harm.

At our last inspection we rated this key question good. The rating for this key question has remained good: This meant people were safe and protected from avoidable harm.

Systems and processes to safeguard people from the risk of abuse

- People told us they felt safe and said, "I like it here. The staff are nice" and "[The staff] are looking after me". While relatives said, "[My relative] regards everyone there as, 'Family', is 'secure' about going back 'Home' as 'everyone will be waiting for [them]'".
- The registered manager and staff team understood their roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting people from all forms of abuse and discrimination. Staff told us, "We raise safeguardings if needs be" and records showed appropriate safeguarding alerts had been submitted to the local authority to ensure people's safety.
- People were also protected from the risk of financial abuse. Receipts were maintained for all purchases made by staff for people. Where people had capacity to manage their own finances staff offered support and assistance when requested.

Assessing risk, safety monitoring and management

- Risks in relation to people's care and support needs had been assessed and appropriately mitigated. Staff had a good understanding of specific risks relating to people's individual needs and professionals were complementary of how specific risks were managed.
- Staff knew people well and understood how to support and reassure each individual to help them manage their anxiety or challenging situations. Restraint was not used and staff were skilled at proactively supporting people to manage their emotions.
- Fire risk assessments had been completed and Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPS) had been developed detailing the support each person would require in the event of an emergency. Where specific risks had been identified during these processes, action had been taken to minimise and mitigate these risks as far as possible.
- All necessary check had been completed by appropriately skilled contractors on the service equipment and utilities to ensure people's safety.

Staffing and recruitment

- The service was fully staffed, and rotas showed staffing levels were planned to ensure people's needs were met and community engagement supported. Staff told us, "Woodlands is a settled service and the people who live here and staff team are happy", "We are fully staffed and we have bank staff", "We have not needed agency staff for years and years" and "We are completely, fully staffed". Visiting health professionals told us, "When I have visited, the home is appropriately staffed."
- People got on well with their staff team and relatives told us, "In the last few years, there has only been a small turnover of staff which has proved invaluable in [My relatives] trust and happiness. We feel

comfortable that the staff really care for the [people] and encourage each one to live to the best of their abilities."

- Staff recruitment practices were safe. All necessary pre-employment checks had been completed to ensure staff were suitable for employment in the care sector.

#### Using medicines safely

- People received their medicine as prescribed. Medicine Administration Records (MARs) were accurately completed and in line with national guidance. When medicines were prescribed to be given 'when required', person-centred protocols were in place to provide staff with guidance on when it would be appropriate to use these medicines.
- Staff had completed medicines training and their competency to support people with medicines was monitored and assessed regularly. Managers and staff had a good understanding of the STOMP principles (Stopping over medication of people with a learning disability, autism or both with psychotropic medicines) and had worked collaboratively with prescribers to reduce the amount of medicine people received regularly. This had significantly improved 1 person's wellbeing.
- The service had engaged positively with pharmacists and prescribers to manage and mitigate risks to people's wellbeing as a result of national shortages of specific medicines.
- Where possible people were supported and encouraged to take on responsibility for managing their own medicines. Systems had been developed to support people to do this safely.
- The service had systems in place to ensure people received their medicine as required during educational or work placements away from the service. The manager intended to review these processes and current staff practices to ensure people's medication needs were also met during recreational trips.

#### Preventing and controlling infection

- We were assured that the provider was preventing visitors from catching and spreading infections.
- We were assured that the provider was supporting people living at the service to minimise the spread of infection.
- We were assured that the provider was admitting people safely to the service.
- We were assured that the provider was using Personal Protective Equipment effectively and safely.
- We were assured that the provider was responding effectively to risks and signs of infection.
- We were assured that the provider was promoting safety through the layout and hygiene practices of the premises.
- We were assured that the provider was making sure infection outbreaks can be effectively prevented or managed.
- We were assured that the provider's infection prevention and control policy was up to date.
- People were encouraged and supported to take on responsibility for cleaning tasks in their own rooms and other domestic chores within the service.

#### Visiting in care homes

- Visiting was actively encouraged and friends and family were encouraged to visit when they wished. Staff also supported people to regularly visit their relative at home.

#### Learning lessons when things go wrong

- All accidents and incidents that occurred were recorded and investigated by the registered manager. Opportunities for learning were identified and action taken to prevent similar events reoccurring.

#### Ensuring consent to care and treatment in line with law and guidance

The Mental Capacity Act 2005 (MCA) provides a legal framework for making particular decisions on behalf of



people who may lack the mental capacity to do so for themselves. The MCA requires that, as far as possible, people make their own decisions and are helped to do so when needed. When they lack mental capacity to take particular decisions, any made on their behalf must be in their best interests and as least restrictive as possible.

People can only be deprived of their liberty to receive care and treatment when this is in their best interests and legally authorised under the MCA. In care homes, and some hospitals, this is usually through MCA application procedures called the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS).

We checked whether the service was working within the principles of the MCA, whether appropriate legal authorisations were in place when needed to deprive a person of their liberty, and whether any conditions relating to those authorisations were being met.

- People's capacity to make individual decisions had been appropriately assessed. Where people lacked capacity in relation to specific decisions, these decisions had been made in the person's best interests with appropriate involvement of relatives and health professionals.
- Where people lacked the capacity to consent to restrictions to their freedoms, necessary applications had been made to the local authority and authorised under the deprivation of liberty safeguards.
- Staff understood people's capacity to make specific decision could vary and ensured information was presented appropriately to enable people to make meaningful decisions and choices. People told us, "I am in control, I have my own keys".
- People were able to change their minds in relation to decisions previously made and to make unwise choices safely. Professionals told us, "[Person's name] has been supported to develop [their] sense of identity and empowered to make decisions around all aspects of daily living to promote autonomy".

# Is the service well-led?

## Our findings

Well-led – this means we looked for evidence that service leadership, management and governance assured high-quality, person-centred care; supported learning and innovation; and promoted an open, fair culture.

At our last inspection we rated this key question good. At this inspection the rating has remained good. This meant the service was consistently managed and well-led. Leaders and the culture they created promoted high-quality, person-centred care.

Managers and staff being clear about their roles, and understanding quality performance, risks and regulatory requirements; Continuous learning and improving care

- The service has a full-time registered manager who was supported by a full-time deputy manager. The roles and responsibilities of each manager were clearly defined and well understood by staff and relatives. People told us, "The managers are nice." Relatives said, "Under the current leadership of [the manager and deputy manager's names], there is a positive management team in place. This has given stability in the home over the last few years, leading to ongoing positive developments."
- Staff were constantly complimentary of the service's management team and the leadership they provided. Staff comments included, "I always feel I can go to the manager, she is lovely", "Management are really supportive, I could not ask for better. This is the best place I have worked" and "The registered manager is the best manager I have ever had."
- Professionals were highly complementary of Woodlands and the quality of support people received. Their comments included, "Personally, I find whenever I walk into Woodlands the team and the residents have a delightful effervescence. It feels really well run, a great team that, with the residents, is run like an effective close family" and "The Staff are extremely person-centred, thinking of creative ways in order to meet needs. My client has had the opportunity to attend a Little Mix concert, join a football club, attend a wrestling match and ride in a supercar." One professional said, "Woodlands are amazing, I wish I could place everyone there".
- Audits were completed regularly to monitor performance, identify any issues and drive improvements in the service's performance. Prior to the inspection these audits had identified that carpets on the stairs and in some communal spaces were starting to deteriorate. This issue had been reported to the provider, funding sourced for replacements and quotes for the necessary works had been received.
- The registered manager reported that the service was well supported by the provider. The senior manager visited regularly and the registered manager said, "My manager is very hands on. She visits here and provides reassurance and advice. I can phone her with whatever I need."
- There were effective systems in place to share information between staff shifts. Handover meetings were held at each shift change and provided opportunities for staff to discuss any observed changes in people's needs or wellbeing. Records were stored securely when not in use.

Promoting a positive culture that is person-centred, open, inclusive and empowering, which achieves good outcomes for people

- The registered manager had fostered and encouraged the development of a compassionate culture focused on supporting people to live their best lives. People and staff were fully engaged with the concept of

the, 'We are Woodlands' ethos which was designed to celebrate successes and promote independence. Staff took pride in people's achievements and spoke with pleasure when describing how people had achieved their goals. Staff comments in relation to the services current performance included, "I would say the last 2 years are the best the home has ever been", "People have much more of a voice. The guys are happy and fundamentally that is why we are here" and "I genuinely do feel this is the best the home has been."

- People were relaxed and happy in the service and comfortable playing tricks and pranks on the staff team. Staff interacted with people as their peers and people exercised full control over how they spent their time. Planning of activities and events was a collaborative process and people were able to change their minds and alter agreed plans when they wished. For example, during the inspection, 4 people decided to go to a local pub to play pool. One person chose to return early as they had wanted to purchase additional ingredients for a dessert they planned to cook. This demonstrated the staff team's commitment to respecting people's individuality.
- Staff and managers had high expectations for people and supported people to achieve their goals. Each week people met with their key worker to plan activities and records showed people had been successfully supported to access educational placements and voluntary work opportunities. One person had expressed an interest in a particular career, and the registered manager was actively researching ways to support this person to achieve their goal. Professionals told us, "Managers are passionate about the service users. They work with an advocate accordingly when required."
- People's communication needs and preferences were understood by all staff and information about people's specific communication needs and preferences was recorded within their care plans. Staff used communication aids and tools effectively to support people's decision making.

Engaging and involving people using the service, the public and staff, fully considering their equality characteristics

- The service actively and regularly engaged with people and their relatives to gain feedback and an understanding of people's experiences. Regular meetings were held between the registered manager and people who used the service. These meetings had been named in accordance with people's wishes. Feedback received had been acted upon, for example, people living at Woodlands all enjoyed gaming but found that some of the current staff team lacked sufficient gaming skills to provide challenging competition. In response the registered manager had completed a targeted recruitment campaign which had resulted in the appointment of a staff member who was an avid gamer.
- Surveys were also completed regularly to provide opportunities for people and relatives to give individual feedback on the service's performance. Feedback received in response to the most recent survey had been consistently positive with comments including, "I like everything about Woodlands."
- The service had appropriate complaints procedures available. Records showed the manager proactively addressed any concerns or issues people raised.

Working in partnership with others

- The service worked in partnership with people's relatives and friends to support people to achieve their goals and aspirations. Relatives told us, "They keep us informed by phone and know we are happy to discuss anything to help [person's names] growth. Equally, we feel totally able to call if we have a concern, and we are always made welcome there. Newsletters with happy "Woodlands Family" photos are a joy for us as we see [our relative] happy in [their] own 'other' family."
- The service worked effectively and collaboratively with involved health care professionals and supported people to attend appointments as necessary. Professionals were complimentary of the service's leadership and performance. They told us, "Managers are passionate about the service users they work with and advocate accordingly when required" and "The management team endeavour to attend all professionals' meetings and communicate any changes / concerns promptly via email or phone. Interprofessional

collaboration with partner agencies has been extremely positive."

How the provider understands and acts on the duty of candour, which is their legal responsibility to be open and honest with people when something goes wrong

- The registered manager and staff team understood the requirements of the duty of candour. There were systems in place to ensure people's relatives were kept informed of all significant events that occurred within the service.