

National Autistic Society (The) Blackdown House

Inspection report

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Ratings

Overall rating for this service

Inspected but not rated

Is the service safe?

Inspected but not rated

Summary of findings

Overall summary

About the service

Blackdown House is a detached bungalow situated in the extensive grounds of Somerset Court which is owned by the provider. The home accommodates 12 people who have autism and complex support needs. At the time of the inspection five people were living at the home.

The service had not originally been developed and designed in line with the Registering the Right Support guidance. This was because there were five other registered care homes set in the grounds of Somerset Court in close proximity to Blackdown House. The Registering the Right Support Guidance was implemented in 2017 after the service had registered with us. The registered manager had since personalised the service to reflect the Registering the Right Support Guidance.

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

People were supported by staff who had a very good understanding of managing risk safely. Records provided staff with clear guidance on how to manage specific risks identified. Staff were kept informed of changes to people's risk assessments.

Specific risk assessments had been put in place to support people during the Covid 19 lock down, and for managing the return to socialising in the wider community safely.

People were protected by robust infection control policies and procedures. Staff had received training in infection control and the correct use of personal protective equipment [PPE]. Staff had taken into consideration the affect wearing PPE might have on people living in the home.

People were supported to have maximum choice and control of 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.

For more details, please see the full report which is on the CQC website at www.cqc.org.uk

Rating at last inspection

The last rating for this service was Good (published 10 September 2018).

Why we inspected

We undertook this targeted inspection to check on a specific concern we had about a choking incident. A decision was made for us to inspect and examine those risks. The information CQC received about the incident investigation indicated concerns about the management of choking. This inspection examined those risks and the management of health-related risks.

We found no evidence during this inspection that people were at risk of harm from this concern. Please see

the safe sections of this full report.

The overall rating for the service has not changed following this targeted inspection and remains good.

CQC have introduced targeted inspections to follow up on Warning Notices or to check specific concerns. They do not look at an entire key question, only the part of the key question we are specifically concerned about. Targeted inspections do not change the rating from the previous inspection. This is because they do not assess all areas of a key question.

You can read the report from our last comprehensive inspection, by selecting the 'all reports' link for Blackdown House on our website at www.cqc.org.uk.

Follow up

We will continue to monitor information we receive about the service until we return to visit as per our re-inspection programme. If we receive any concerning information we may inspect sooner.

The five questions we ask about services and what we found

We always ask the following five questions of services.

Is the service safe?

At our last inspection we rated this key question good. We have not reviewed the rating at this inspection. This is because we only looked at the parts of this key question, we had specific concerns about.

Inspected but not rated

Blackdown House

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.

This was a targeted inspection to check on a specific concern we had about assessing risk, safety monitoring and management. We also looked at infection control to ensure the correct Infection Prevention and Control measures were in place.

Inspection team

The inspection was carried out by one inspector.

Service and service type

Blackdown House is a 'care home'. People in care homes receive accommodation and nursing or personal care as a single package under one contractual agreement. CQC regulates both the premises and the care provided.

Notice of inspection

We gave the service 48 hours' notice of the inspection to ensure we could manage the risks related to COVID 19.

What we did before the inspection

We reviewed information we had received about the service since the last inspection. The provider was not asked to complete a provider information return prior to this inspection. This is information we require providers to send us to give some key information about the service, what the service does well and improvements they plan to make. We took this into account when we inspected the service and made the judgements in this report. We used this information to plan our inspection.

During the inspection

Due to Covid 19 guidelines around inspecting in a campus setting we carried out a short site visit to the

service to observe infection control practices. We requested the documentation we required be provided for us at a safe location provided by the service. We reviewed the care plans and risk assessments for two people, staff training and supervision records relating to managing risk. During the visit we spoke with the deputy manager, lead manager, area manager and quality manager. We later spoke with four staff members and the home manager using virtual meetings.

Is the service safe?

Our findings

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

At the last inspection this key question was rated as good. We have not changed the rating of this key question, as we have only looked at the part of the key question, we had specific concerns about.

Assessing risk, safety monitoring and management

- At the time of the inspection there was no one living in Blackdown House at risk of choking. However, the manager told us that if a person was identified as at risk they would be assessed by the Speech and Language Therapy Team (SALT) to decide the safest way to support them to eat safely, whilst managing a healthy diet.
- Staff spoken with told us any information or guidance put in place by SALT would be clearly communicated to them and information provided in the kitchen and people's rooms.
- Staff told us they received regular updates about any changes to people's care plans and risk assessments.
- The registered manager explained how people's risks were discussed at handover, staff meetings and staff supervision. Senior team leaders also carried out observation of staff working practices and assessed staff competency.
- The registered manager confirmed how the provider had supported staff to learn from the incident to prevent any reoccurrence.
- The use of agency staff was kept to a minimum with regular agency staff who knew people well. All agency staff completed an induction process and people's risks were discussed with them each time they worked at the service.
- Care plans also contained in depth risk assessments for supporting people during the Covid 19 Pandemic. The risk assessments included how staff could safely support people and whether people were able to use a mask or understand social distancing.
- The risk assessments also considered how people would react to the changes that needed to be put in place. The registered manager and staff told us people had not expressed any anxieties around staff using masks.
- The registered manager had oversight of people's risk assessments and the provider had systems in place to monitor these.

How well are people protected by the prevention and control of infection?

- We were assured that the provider was preventing visitors from catching and spreading infections.
- We were assured that the provider was meeting shielding and social distancing rules.
- We were assured that the provider was using PPE effectively and safely.
- Routine staff testing was not yet available for the service sector. However, we were assured that the provider was accessing testing for people using the service and staff, via alternative means when necessary.
- 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.