

Voyage 1 Limited

Northfield House

Inspection report

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Ratings

Overall rating for this service

Good ●

Is the service safe?

Good ●

Is the service effective?

Good ●

Is the service caring?

Good ●

Is the service responsive?

Outstanding ☆

Is the service well-led?

Good ●

Summary of findings

Overall summary

Northfield House provides accommodation with personal care for up to 11 people. The home specialises in providing a service to adults who have a learning disability or associated mental health needs. The home is staffed 24 hours a day.

At the time of the inspection there were 11 people living at the home.

At the last inspection, the service was rated Good.

At this inspection we found the service remained Good.

Why the service is rated Good

The service continued to be a safe place for people to live. People were supported by adequate numbers of staff who had the skills and knowledge to meet their needs. Staff knew how to protect people from the risk of harm and abuse. There were systems in place to identify and manage risks. People felt safe at the home and with the staff who supported them. A person who lived at the home said "I love the staff and they make me feel very safe." Another person said "I feel very safe. This is my home."

People continued to receive effective care. People were supported by staff who were well trained and competent in their roles. People's health care needs were monitored and met. People were supported to have maximum choice and control of their lives and staff supported them in the least restrictive way possible; the policies and systems in the service supported this practice.

The home continued to provide a caring service to people. People were supported by caring and compassionate staff. The atmosphere in the home was very happy and relaxed. One person who lived there said "The staff are like my family and friends. It really feels like my home. I am so, so happy." Another person said "This is the best home ever. I love it here."

People received a service which was outstandingly responsive to their needs and preferences. People were supported to have an excellent quality of life and had their care needs met in a compassionate, caring and timely way. There was a strong emphasis on enabling people to live their lives to the full and to be fully involved in all aspects of the care and support they received. Care plans were person centred and reflected what was important to each person. Routines in the home were very flexible and were determined by the preferences of the people who lived there. For example staff responded to impromptu requests from people to go out and people were supported to choose and prepare their lunch at a time which suited them. A member of staff told us "The [people who live at the home] have such a fantastic life. It's so person centred here with a real family atmosphere. It's all about them and supporting them to do as much as they possibly can."

A person who lived at the home told us about their achievements. They told us how staff had supported them to gain independence. They explained they had achieved a "lifetime goal" and they now accessed the community independently. The person had also been supported to manage their own medicines. They told us "I never thought it would be possible." Another person explained how their confidence had grown after staff had supported them to lose a significant amount of weight.

People led a busy life and enjoyed a range of activities, social events and holidays. Two people attended college and two people had meaningful and important roles within the organisation. One person explained "I do unannounced visits to other Voyage homes. I love it and feel I make a difference to other service users lives because I look at things from my point of view being disabled." Another person had gained a position as a national representative. They were one of 10 individuals who were chosen throughout the whole of Voyage Care to meet and help shape the future of the organisation. Three people who lived at the home were involved in regular broadcasts on a local radio show.

The service continued to be well led. The registered manager was very visible in the home and knew people very well. Staff morale was extremely good which impacted positively on the people who lived at the home. There was a positive culture within the service where there was an emphasis on empowering and involving people whatever their disability. The registered manager and provider continually monitored the quality of the service and made improvements where needed.

Further information is in the detailed findings below.

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 remains Good

Is the service effective?

Good ●

The service remains Effective.

Is the service caring?

Good ●

The service remains Good.

Is the service responsive?

Outstanding ☆

The service is now Outstanding.

Is the service well-led?

Good ●

The service remains Good.

Northfield House

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 checked 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 an unannounced comprehensive inspection carried out by one adult social care inspector. The inspection took place on 29 September 2017.

At our last inspection of the service in July 2015 we did not identify any breaches in our regulations.

We reviewed the Provider Information Record (PIR) before the inspection. The PIR is a form that asks the provider to give some key information about the service, what the service does well and the improvements they plan to make. We also looked at notifications sent in by the service. A notification is information about important events which the service is required to tell us about by law. We looked at previous inspection reports and other information we held about the home before we visited.

We met with nine people who lived at the home and four care staff. The registered manager was available throughout the inspection. We spoke with three relatives on the telephone after our inspection.

We looked at a sample of records relating to the running of the home and the care of individuals. These included the care records of the two people who lived at the home. We also looked at records relating to the management and administration of people's medicines, health and safety, quality assurance and staff recruitment and training.

Is the service safe?

Our findings

The service continued to be a safe place for people. A person who lived at the home said "I love the staff and they make me feel very safe." Another person said "I feel very safe. This is my home." A relative told us "I am more than happy with everything and I know [name of person] is well looked after." Another relative said "I don't have any concerns whatsoever."

People were supported to live their lives in a safe way. Risks to people were reduced because there were systems in place to identify and manage risks. These included accessing the community, travelling in a vehicle and participating in certain activities outside of the home. Other risk assessments were in place which enabled people to develop and maintain independent living skills. A plan of care had been developed to minimise risks and these were understood and followed by staff.

People received their prescribed medicines when they needed them. Through robust risk assessments, two people were able to self-administer their prescribed medicines. Risk assessments had been regularly reviewed to ensure people remained safe and competent to manage their medicines. One person showed us a lockable cabinet in their bedroom. They told us "This is where I keep my medicines. I have a key so they are locked away safely." People's medicines were safely managed and administered by staff who had the skills and training to carry out the task. All staff received medicine administration training and had to be assessed as competent before they were allowed to administer people's medicines. Medicines were securely stored and people's medication administration records (MAR) showed when medicines had been administered. Some medicines were prescribed on an 'as required' basis and there were clear protocols in place which meant people received their medicines when they needed them.

People were supported by a staff team who knew them well. Staff had been trained how to recognise and report abuse. Their knowledge and understanding of these procedures were monitored through regular staff meetings and supervisions. Staff were knowledgeable and confident about reporting concerns. Where allegations or concerns had been brought to the provider's attention they had worked in partnership with relevant authorities to make sure issues were fully investigated and people were protected.

There were adequate numbers of staff to keep people safe and make sure their needs were met. Throughout the inspection we saw staff were available when people needed them. Staff had received training in the management of actual or potential aggression (MAPA). This helped staff to respond appropriately to resolve conflict at the earliest possible stage where there was a risk of a person's behaviours escalating.

All new staff were thoroughly checked to make sure they were suitable to work at the home. These checks included seeking references from previous employers and carrying out disclosure and barring service (DBS) checks. The DBS checks people's criminal record history and their suitability to work with vulnerable people. Staff did not start working at the home until all required information had been received.

To ensure the environment for people was safe, specialist contractors were employed to carry out fire, and electrical safety checks and maintenance of moving and handling equipment. The service had a

comprehensive range of health and safety policies and procedures to keep people safe. Management and staff also carried out regular health and safety checks.

There were plans in place for emergency situations. People had their own evacuation plans if there was a fire in the home and a plan if they needed an emergency admission to hospital. Staff had access to an on-call system within the organisation; this meant they were able to obtain extra support to help manage emergencies.

Is the service effective?

Our findings

The service continued to provide effective care. People were supported by staff who had the skills and knowledge to meet their needs. Staff received regular training in health and safety topics and subjects relevant to the people who used the service such as epilepsy, autism and communication. Staff were confident and competent when they interacted with people and they demonstrated a very good knowledge of people's needs. One member of staff told us "We get loads of training. It's brilliant." Another member of staff said "You get everything you need plus more. You don't do anything unless you have been trained and feel confident."

People were supported to maintain good health and wellbeing. Each person had a health action plan and a 'hospital passport'. This is a document containing important information to help support people with a learning disability when admitted to hospital. Care plans showed that people had received annual health checks by their GP and had access to other healthcare professionals including opticians and dentists. People also saw professionals to meet their specific health needs such as epilepsy and mental health needs. Staff recorded the outcome of people's contact with health care professionals in their plan of care. One of the relatives we spoke with explained how staff supported them and their relative when the person was unwell and had to go to hospital.

Staff sought people's consent before they assisted them. We heard staff asking both people what they would like to do. Staff had received training about the Mental Capacity Act 2005 (MCA). The MCA provides the legal framework to assess people's capacity to make certain decisions, at a certain time. When people are assessed as not having the capacity to make a decision, a best interest decision is made involving people who know the person well and other professionals, where relevant.

Staff spoken with were aware of the need to assess people's capacity to make specific decisions. Where appropriate they had involved family and professional representatives to ensure decisions made were in people's best interests. Care plans contained assessments of people's capacity to make certain decisions and where necessary, for example health care treatment and the management of people's finances.

People who lack mental capacity to consent to arrangements for necessary care or treatment can only be deprived of their liberty when this is in their best interests and legally authorised under the MCA. The procedures for this in care homes and hospitals are called the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS). The registered manager had liaised with appropriate professionals and made applications for people who required this level of support to keep them safe.

Is the service caring?

Our findings

The service continued to provide a caring service. The atmosphere in the home was very happy and relaxed and there was lots of laughter with people engaging in and enjoying friendly banter with the staff. One person told us "The staff are like my family and friends. It really feels like my home. I am so, so happy." Another person said "This is the best home ever. I love it here." One person who had difficulty in communicating, beamed when the registered manager spoke to them. When we asked one person what the staff were like they said "Beautiful they are. Beautiful. I am very happy here. I don't want to live anywhere else. I love it here. I am very happy." The relatives we spoke with were also complimentary about the staff and the service provided. One relative said "The staff are always helpful and friendly. There is always a happy atmosphere. It's like a home from home." Another relative told us "The manager and staff are exceptionally good. Very kind and supportive."

Staff spoke with a great deal of care and compassion when they told us about the people they supported. It was evident they cared about people a great deal and were committed to ensuring people lived happy and fulfilling lives. One member of staff said "The people we support are amazing and they have a fantastic life. Everything we do is for and about them. The home is their home and there is a real family atmosphere here." Another member of staff told us "It's a very happy home with happy staff and happy people. This is their home and we help them to live their lives the way they want. They do so much which is wonderful." Another member of staff told us "Northfield house is an amazing place to work, we have a strong staff team that know the [people who live at the home] really well. The people we support at Northfield House are like one big happy family and working there doesn't feel like work, it's like a home from home."

The home had received many compliments from people's relatives praising the service provided to their loved ones. Comments included "I would like to thank you for the exceptional care my [relative] receives. I was delighted to see them looking so well and I know this is due to the skilled and devoted attention they continue to receive." And "I would like to make a statement about the excellent care and support offered to my [relative]. The staff are kind, helpful and supportive."

The registered manager led by example and promoted a very caring and person centred environment for the people who lived at the home. It was apparent that this ethos had been embraced by the staff team. We observed people were very much at the centre of life at the home and they were supported and encouraged to live their lives in the way they wanted.

The registered manager and staff team would overcome any obstacles to enable people to fulfil their dreams and aspirations. For example one person who was unable to weight bear and used a wheelchair to mobilise had always dreamed of going swimming as they had not been able to do this for many years. The registered manager contacted a local hydro-therapy pool and arranged training for multiple staff members so that the person could use the pool safely. We heard that this had been a great success and the person now attended the hydro-pool every week. The person was keen to show us photographs of them enjoying the swimming sessions.

We heard about another person who used to spend many hours in isolation in their bedroom not taking part in any activities. The registered manager told us they spent a great deal of time with the person encouraging them to discuss their interests and to pursue hobbies that they enjoyed and wanted to do. This resulted in the person enrolling in a weekly college course and being part of a weekly amateur dramatics club. We heard how the person had found their true passion for acting and had performed on stage to a large audience and had stolen the show.

Staff treated people with respect. Staff communicated with people in a very kind and respectful manner and respected people's right to privacy. Each person had their own bedroom which was decorated and furnished in accordance with their tastes and preferences. People could access their bedrooms whenever they wanted.

People were able to choose which staff member they wanted to support them. In their Provider Information Return (PIR) the registered manager stated "Residents have full choice about which staff member they would like to provide their personal care, this is reflected on the weekly planner and documented in their day to days." We saw this to be the case when we visited. We heard one person asking a particular member of staff if they would help them to have a bath later in the day. The staff member responded "Of course I will [name of person]. Let me know when and I will help you." Another person who lived at the home said "I chose my keyworkers and who I want to take me out. I love the staff."

People were fully involved in all aspects of life in the home. Staff were exceptional in supporting people to be as independent as they could be. For example we heard about one person who had displayed unusual behaviours which indicated they were unhappy. The registered manager and staff initially spent time with the person to try and establish what was making them unhappy. They also liaised with the person's family. It was agreed to increase the frequency of visits to the person's family which resulted in a positive outcome. The person's mood improved significantly and with staff support and encouragement, they now attended a local day centre independently. This was a significant achievement for the person and they enjoyed this activity very much.

People were fully involved in all decisions about the care and support they received. One person told us "I can do what I like. I love my life." Another person said "I like to stay up late with the night staff. We do knitting. It's great." Another person told us "I make my own decisions about everything and the staff support me. If I want to see the doctor, I make the appointments then I tell the staff." We heard how this person was taught the skills to manage their epileptic seizures and to make their own decisions relating to their health care. This gradual support process resulted in the person making the safe and informed decision to come off of their epilepsy medicines successfully.

People played an active part in the home's daily tasks and activities which promoted their independence and well-being. People were asked if they would like a specific day when they could cook. Nine people wanted to take part and were supported on a weekly basis to choose a meal to cook for everyone. People were supported to fully participate in preparing and cooking the meal. People were also supported to lay tables, serve the meals and wash up.

House meetings were held every month where topics such as respecting others, keeping safe in the community and health and safety were discussed. The meetings were facilitated by staff and the people who lived at the home.

The registered manager and staff recognised the importance of people's relationships with their loved ones. We were told about one person who, with staff support, regularly went on the train to visit one of their

relatives which was very important to them. When a visit was unable to take place due to the relative being unwell, the registered manager arranged for the person to take a train to visit another relative.

People's religious beliefs were respected and facilitated. Some people attended a church service every Sunday. People were asked if they wanted to attend church services at Christmas where they were able to take part and complete readings. One person was supported to attend a Roman Catholic feet washing service once a year which was associated with the Mass of the Lord Supper. This meant a great deal to the person.

Staff understood the need to respect people's confidentiality and to develop trusting relationships. Care plans contained confidential information about people and were kept in a secure place when not in use. When staff needed to refer to a person's care plan they made sure it was not left unattended for other people to read. Staff treated personal information in confidence and did not discuss personal matters with people in front of others.

Is the service responsive?

Our findings

The home provided an outstandingly responsive service. Our observations, discussions with the people who lived at the home and staff demonstrated people received responsive and flexible care and support on a regular basis that was far beyond expectations. Staff supported people to have an excellent quality of life and had their care needs met in a compassionate, caring and timely way.

The results of a recent satisfaction survey completed by people who lived at the home, their relatives, health and social care professionals and staff, had been extremely positive. A person who lived at the home had commented "They help me be independent and do brilliant activities." Another person said "We are always busy and staff take us out." A visiting professional commented "I found the support and care at Northfield House was a very positive experience for the service user and was person centred. Their views, likes, dislikes and wishes are taken into account within all aspects of the care and support provided." A relative commented "Excellent. Individual needs and interests are met with enthusiasm and sensitivity."

There was a strong emphasis on enabling people to live their lives to the full and to be fully involved in all aspects of the care and support they received. Care plans were person centred and reflected what was important to each person. For example, one person's appearance was very important to them and their care plan provided clear information for staff about how to support them to buy their toiletries, clothes and how the person liked to have their hair regularly coloured. We saw staff delivering care that met needs very well. They were aware of people's needs and worked hard to meet them in a comfortable, relaxed atmosphere that people enjoyed, as demonstrated by people continually laughing and smiling throughout our visit.

Routines in the home were determined by the people who lived there. We observed staff responded to each person on an individual basis. For example each person was supported to choose and make their lunch at a time that suited them. Staff sat and ate with people and the atmosphere was very happy and relaxed. One person who lived at the home regularly offered and made us hot drinks throughout day. They also did the same for the other people who lived at the home and staff. It was evident this meant a great deal to the person. A member of staff told us "The [people who live at the home] have such a fantastic life. It's so person centred here with a real family atmosphere. It's all about them and supporting them to do as much as they possibly can." Another member of staff said "I've never worked anywhere like this. They [the people who lived at the home] get to do so much. It's wonderful. This is their home where they can live their lives as they want to."

One person was keen to tell us how their life and confidence had flourished over the past year with the support of the registered manager and staff team. They explained that in the 20 years they had lived at the home they had achieved a "lifetime goal" and they now went out and did things without the support of staff. They told us they loved drama and were completing a performing arts course at a college in Taunton. They said "I get myself sorted and catch the bus there and back on my own. I love it and really look forward to it." The registered manager expressed to the person how proud they were of them. They explained how this had been the person's goal and they had developed a plan with the person which had resulted in a very positive outcome. The registered manager told us "It was all done at [name of person's] pace. Staff initially went with

them on the bus. During the next stage [name of person] went alone on the bus and staff followed in a car. This continued until the person felt confident in making the journey on their own.

The same person told us how they were further supported to work towards greater independence. They said "I never thought it would be possible. Now I look after my own medicines. I know what they are for and when I should take them. The staff have supported me really well." The person went on to tell us how staff had supported them to explore further opportunities for activities. They said "I wanted to do activities that were more adult based. I go to a drama group now which is great."

Another person told us how staff had supported them to lose a significant amount of weight by teaching them and supporting them to eat a healthy diet whilst still enjoying their meals. They said "I feel great. I love clothes shopping now. The staff take me shopping. They take me to Boots in Taunton because that's where I like to buy my toiletries."

Three people who lived in the home were involved in broadcasting on a local radio show. One person told us "It's great fun and I have made good friends. We play music and talk about all sorts of stuff. We have a laugh." The person also told us they had recently been involved in campaigning to keep the radio station going.

In their completed Provider Information Return (PIR) the registered manager told us "Two residents of Northfield House have recently gained significant success in developing their skills knowledge. One resident has gained a position within Voyage Care as a Quality Checker and regularly visits homes on a monthly basis along with a Quality and Compliance Manager from Voyage to conduct the yearly quality audit. This involves regular trips up to Lichfield to meet with the other Quality Checkers to include get togethers and external training. Another Resident has gained a position as a 'National Representative'. Ten individuals were chosen throughout the whole of Voyage Care to meet a few times a year to discuss Voyage Care as a company and to shape the future of this organisation. Both achievements have been an outstanding success for Northfield House, with both Residents being the only ones in the south west to achieve this success."

We had the pleasure of meeting with the person who held the position of quality checker for the provider. They were obviously very proud of their achievement as was the registered manager. The person told us "I do unannounced visits to other Voyage homes. I get a call the day before to tell me which home. Staff drive me there and wait for me. I love it and feel I make a difference to other service users lives because I look at things from my point of view being disabled." The person gave us an example of where they had made a difference. They said "I noticed there was no grab rail by the door to the garden. I told the manager of the home and later heard this had been addressed. That felt good."

The person who was one of the provider's "national representatives" was not available when we visited. The registered manager explained there were regular events where people who used the services "Get to decide the future of Voyage [the provider]." The home, along with the provider's other homes hosted quarterly "growing together" events for the people who used the service. The events provided people with opportunities to express their views and also provided them with information and updates on a range of topics. Topics covered included safeguarding and more recently, recruitment where people were asked if they were involved in interviewing potential staff and whether their opinions were valued. The registered manager told us "We value our residents' opinions. Those who want to sit in on interviews and they are involved in deciding who we employ." This was confirmed by a person we met with.

People were supported to follow their interests and take part in a range of activities, trips and holidays. One person told us "You have a life here. I love it. I am busy every day." They said "I go to the gym, swimming,

discos, trips out, shopping and I had great fun on holiday this year. I also like cleaning. I keep my room nice and can Hoover and clean." Another person said "I had great fun on holiday with [name of staff member]. We danced all night. It was fun." On the day we visited people were busy coming and going. During the morning several people went out with staff to do the weekly shop for the home followed by a coffee. In the afternoon four people went swimming with staff. Staff responded to one person's request to go out to the local shops to purchase a particular item.

A person who lived at the home told us how they had really enjoyed a trip to London to see the X Factor with the registered manager and staff. The person also told us other trips had included a live performance of Mrs Brown's boys and Strictly Come dancing. People attended a summer ball with people from the provider's other homes. Photographs showed this was thoroughly enjoyed by all and people looked very smart and ladies enjoyed having their hair and make done by staff. A member of staff said "Northfield House always have opportunities to do activities that are meaningful and go above and beyond." and "The staff at Northfield have enabled these opportunities to happen. [Name of registered manager] is always trying to find new activities for the [people who lived at the home] to do and that they can progress at."

People were encouraged and supported to develop and maintain relationships with people that mattered to them and avoid social isolation. The relatives of the people who lived at the home regularly visited them and staff also supported people to visit their families at their home. On the day we visited two people were on leave with their relatives. Each year the home hosted a 'family day' for the people who lived there and their relatives. We heard how much a recent event was enjoyed by all. A member of staff told us "It was a fantastic day. We had a band in the garden and we got an ice cream van too. We did a bar-be-que and it was all brilliant. Great fun." A relative told us how a member of staff had "Gone above and beyond the call of duty." They said "[Name of person] really wanted to have a holiday abroad so [name of staff member] and [name of registered manager] organised everything and I was able to go too. It was wonderful."

The registered manager regularly produced a newsletter (Northfield Times) which was sent to people's relatives which provided them with updates about life at the home and what people had been up to. A recent newsletter contained numerous photographs of people enjoying trips out, a holiday, talent show and summer ball.

The home also hosted events along with other of the provider's homes. This provided people with opportunities to meet other people who used the provider's services. We heard about, and saw photographs of a talent show which was held at the home earlier in the year. This had been a great success and people were keen to show us photographs and told us how much they had enjoyed it. One person who lived at the home presented the show and also performed a song as did three other people. One person said "It was such fun. It was brilliant." The home had received numerous compliments from other homes about the event. People had recently attended a beach party which had been hosted by another of the provider's home. One person told us "It was the first time I had been on the sand because of my wheelchair. It was amazing. The sun was shining and we had a laugh."

Is the service well-led?

Our findings

The service continued to be well-led. There was a registered manager in post. A registered manager is a person who has registered with the Care Quality Commission to manage the service. Like registered providers, they are 'registered persons'. Registered persons have legal responsibility for meeting the requirements in the Health and Social Care Act 2008 and associated Regulations about how the service is run.

The registered manager led by example. They were very visible in the home and it was very evident that people were comfortable in their presence. The registered manager had an excellent knowledge about the needs and preferences of the people who lived at the home and they were passionate about ensuring people had fulfilling lives. Staff morale was extremely good which impacted positively on the people who lived at the home. Throughout our visit the home was filled with laughter and people experienced positive interactions with staff and their peers. A member of staff described the registered manager as a "Great role model." They explained the registered manager would often come to the home on their days off. They said "[Name of registered manager] walks through the door with a smile on her face. Amazing." A relative we spoke with said "[Name of registered manager] is very good. She is efficient, approachable and committed. You just know she is interested in the residents and really cares." Another relative said "I would recommend this home to anyone and that says a lot."

There continued to be a very positive culture of supportive, clear, honest and enabling leadership that recognised the importance of people's rights to be treated equally, fairly, and with dignity and respect. There was an emphasis on empowering and involving people whatever their disability. For example, the registered manager was not risk averse and was proactive in enabling people to have control over their lives and to receive care and support which was personal to them. The registered manager said "This is their home. We want to support people to do as much as they can and to live their lives to the full. It's not about routines here; it's about supporting and enabling the residents to get the best out of their lives. We saw people were treated equally, with compassion; staff listened to them and were not condescending. The impact of this was that people were enabled to live happy and fulfilling lives with their needs fully met.

The registered manager ensured that people were at the heart of the service. They had developed a very positive culture. Through listening to the staff team and spending time with the people who used the service, the registered manager highlighted the need for communication training for staff members at Northfield House. As a result staff members had recently been given the opportunity to complete Level 2 MAKATON training to meet the complex needs of one individual who lived at the home. Makaton is language which used signs, symbols and voice to support spoken language. This was used with the person on a daily basis which helped them to communicate effectively. We heard how this had been positive and incidents of challenging behaviour had greatly reduced.

People were supported by a staff team who were highly motivated, well trained and well supported. Through our observations and discussions with staff we saw staff cared passionately about the people they supported. A member of staff told us "The training is brilliant. We get so much. [Name of registered manager]

is so supportive and everything you say is taken seriously."" Another member of staff told us "There have been some really difficult times during my time at Northfield but [name of registered manager] has really changed that. [Name of registered manager] is an amazing manager. She has worked hard on making sure staff follow person centred approaches. She provides all training and has also arranged outside training that staff have requested or that she feels would be a positive to the home. [Name of registered manager] is big on progression and will push staff to progress within the company."

The registered manager told us every month the people who lived at the home were asked to nominate a member of staff in recognition of their achievements. This empowered people to encourage staff to provide care and support in a way people wanted. The registered manager told us about a staff member who completed a college placement at the home before being offered employment. They said "I nominated her and now she has got through to the finals of the Voyage care awards for learner of the year."

The provider is a national learning disability specialist, which meant staff could access relevant advice and support on managing people's complex needs, on equipment and the environment of care. They promoted best practice through membership of a number of national organisations. For example, the provider was a member of the British Institute of Learning Disabilities (BILD), through which they accessed a range of evidence based training for staff. They were also members of Care England and the Learning Disability Alliance England (LDA). This organisation was created to stand up for the rights of people who have a learning disability. The provider also had achieved the Investors in People award This is an accreditation system which recognises best practice in people management standards.

The registered manager kept themselves up to date with current legislation and best practice. In their completed provider information return (PIR) they told us "Monthly managers' meetings take place where managers have the chance to share good practice, gain advice and hear about company decisions that may or will affect the home. The manager is currently registered with the Registered Care Providers Association (RCPA) and attends local events and seminars. Northfield House receives regular magazines from Somerset Sight, and Compass Disability Services. Northfield House and the home manager are signed up to receive regular CQC newsletters and the home manager regularly browses the CQC website for useful tools and information. Social Workers actively send through information via email and post that may benefit the home. The home manager regularly checks information on relevant websites such as The Department of Health and NICE. Voyage's policies and procedures are reviewed and updated to reflect any changes in legislation." The registered manager undertook a three month leadership and development course which has now been rolled out to senior staff. They have also been trained to train staff in safe moving and handling techniques.

The registered manager and provider promoted the ethos of honesty, learned from mistakes and admitted when things had gone wrong. This reflected the requirements of the duty of candour. The duty of candour is a legal obligation to act in an open and transparent way in relation to care and treatment. Care staff were honest and open; they were encouraged to raise any issues and put forward ideas and suggestions for improvements. A member of staff said [Name of registered manager] takes everything you say seriously and is really open to any ideas we have." In a recent survey a person's care manager had said "I am particularly impressed with your [registered manager] prompt response to various requests and your openness in trying to resolve issues when they arise."

There were quality assurance systems which monitored and improved the quality of the service provided. The registered manager carried out monthly audits on all aspects of the running of the home and the quality of care people received. One of the provider's operations managers also carried out regular audits. The registered manager ensured actions were taken to address any areas for improvement. The outcome of an in-depth annual audit completed by the provider's quality and compliance team was very positive with the

home achieving almost 100% compliance in all areas with only a few minor areas for improvement. These had been actioned by the registered manager.

Annual satisfaction surveys completed by people who lived at the home, their representatives, visiting professionals and staff. The completed surveys showed a very high level of satisfaction with the quality of the service provided. In answer to the questions about what the home could do to improve; there were no suggestions. A person who lived at the home wrote "I would like to say that [name of registered manager] and all the staff have done a really good job of running Northfield and they deserve a pat on the back." A relative commented "Everything is of the highest standard and there are no reasons I can see for changes." A person's care manager commented "I am very impressed with the commitment and dedication of the manager and staff at Northfield House."

The home had notified the Care Quality Commission of all significant events which had occurred in line with their legal responsibilities.