

Care Management Group Limited

Care Management Group - Tuscany House

Inspection report

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Ratings

Overall rating for this service	Outstanding 
Is the service safe?	Outstanding 
Is the service effective?	Good 
Is the service caring?	Good 
Is the service responsive?	Outstanding 
Is the service well-led?	Outstanding 

Summary of findings

Overall summary

About the service

Tuscany House is a residential home which provides care and support to up to six people living with autism and complex communication needs. At the time of inspection there were 5 people living at Tuscany House.

The service has been developed and designed in line with the principles and values that underpin Registering the Right Support and other best practice guidance. This ensures that people who use the service can live as full a life as possible and achieve the best possible outcomes. The principles reflect the need for people with learning disabilities and/or autism to live meaningful lives that include control, choice, and independence. People using the service receive planned and co-ordinated person-centred support that is appropriate and inclusive for them. There were deliberately no identifying signs, intercom, cameras, industrial bins or anything else outside to indicate it was a care home. Staff were also discouraged from wearing anything that suggested they were care staff when coming and going with people.

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

The outcomes for people using the service reflected the principles and values of Registering the Right Support by promoting choice and control, independence and inclusion. People's support focused on them having as many opportunities as possible for them to gain new skills and become more independent. Staff at Tuscany House were exceptionally skilled and motivated in ensuring these principles were fully embedded at the heart of the service.

There was a distinct will amongst the staff team for people to be living the life they wanted. When speaking about people staff were animated and repeatedly spoke about people's achievements and goals. Staff demonstrated a clear and in-depth understanding of each individual's communication needs, routines and personalities. People appeared relaxed in the company of staff and relatives described staff as caring, committed and approachable.

Staff supported people in a proactive and positive manner to find ways of managing their anxieties in order to maximise their opportunities. Through detailed planning and organisation, staff supported people to take risks and achieve things which had previously been seen as unattainable. Relatives felt that people's lives had improved and been enriched by living at Tuscany House.

The provider ensured staff had the training and resources to support people effectively. The service worked with colleagues from the training and positive behaviour support teams to develop and enhance their skills for the direct benefit of the people they supported. Staff felt incredibly supported in their roles and understood the need for cohesive team work. This was extended to include families, professionals and others central to people's lives.

People had access to a wide range of activities which were personalised to their own interests and skills.

This included a wide range of social activities, college and work experience. Staff worked closely with a range of healthcare professionals to ensure people received their health care in a way which caused them minimum distress and anxiety.

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.

There was extremely strong leadership which focussed on ensuring people received highly personalised care which maximised opportunities. Staff told us they felt listened to and cared for which enabled them to work well as a team and maintain their positive approach.

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 (31 October 2016) insert date last report published in brackets.

Why we inspected

This was a planned inspection based on the previous rating.

The five questions we ask about services and what we found

We always ask the following five questions of services.

Is the service safe?

The service was exceptionally safe.

Details are in our safe findings below.

Outstanding 

Is the service effective?

The service was effective.

Details are in our effective findings below.

Good 

Is the service caring?

The service was caring.

Details are in our caring findings below.

Good 

Is the service responsive?

The service was exceptionally responsive.

Details are in our responsive findings below.

Outstanding 

Is the service well-led?

The service was exceptionally well-led.

Details are in our well-Led findings below.

Outstanding 

Care Management Group - Tuscany 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. We looked at the overall quality of the service and provided a rating for the service under the Care Act 2014.

Inspection team

Due to the small size of the service the inspection was carried out by one inspector

Service and service type

Tuscany House is a 'care home'. People in care homes receive accommodation and nursing or personal care as single package under one contractual agreement. CQC regulates both the premises and the care provided, and both were looked at during this inspection.

The service had a manager registered with the Care Quality Commission. This means that they and the provider are legally responsible for how the service is run and for the quality and safety of the care provided.

Notice of inspection

This inspection was unannounced.

What we did before the inspection

Prior to this inspection we reviewed all the information we held about the service, including data about safeguarding and statutory notifications. Statutory notifications are information about important events which the provider is required to send us by law. This enabled us to ensure we were addressing potential areas of concern at the inspection. We used the information the provider sent us in the provider information return. This is information providers are required to send us with key information about their service, what

they do well, and improvements they plan to make. This information helps support our inspections. We used all of this information to plan our inspection.

During the inspection

During the inspection we observed the care provided to people living at Tuscany House and their interactions with staff. We spoke with five members of staff including the registered manager.

After the inspection –

We spoke with two relatives to gain their views of the service their family members received. We looked at training data and quality assurance records.

Is the service safe?

Our findings

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

At the last inspection this key question was rated as Good. At this inspection this key question has now improved to Outstanding. This meant people were protected by a strong and distinctive approach to safeguarding, including positive risk-taking to maximise their control over their lives. People were fully involved, and the provider was open and transparent when things went wrong.

Assessing risk, safety monitoring and management

- People were enabled to take maximum control of their lives as staff focused on positive risk taking and support to enrich people's lives. People had achieved goals which were previously considered unattainable. One person rarely left their room due to their anxiety in particular situations and therefore showed behaviours which challenged. Staff had also been informed the person did not respond positively to being supported by female staff members. A positive behaviour support plan (PBS) had been completed for the person which involved following the person's set routines, how they liked to be approached and providing support from consistent staff to build trust. The person was supported to interact more within their home and to take positive risks when accessing the community. The person was now spending more time in communal areas and had also formed positive relationships with female staff. One staff member told us, "(Name) has given all the staff so much happiness in watching him achieve so much. The way he was previously supported meant he didn't have many choices. Now he is able to show us what he wants and is engaging more which is a very big achievement for him."
- Staff used creative ways and worked with other agencies to minimise risks. Staff noted that one person found it difficult to receive help with the safety fastenings in the car as staff needed to be too close to them. This frequently resulted in incidents at the start of a journey which presented risks to staff and also had a negative impact on the rest of the trip. The registered manager approached the car suppliers and found an alternative fastening which meant staff could support the person from a distance. Incidents had reduced and the person now had a positive start to their activities.
- Staff had received specialist training in how to support each individual to manage their behaviours and the importance of positive risk taking. The registered manager told us this training was invaluable in supporting the team to come together and provide positive support to people whilst supporting them to manage risks. One staff member told us, "(Person) is encouraged to make choices by breaking things down in small sections. He's given the opportunity to be anxious and take risks so he can learn how to manage it and be more in control. This has opened up so many opportunities for him." One example of this was one person who was anxious about travelling now being able to travel on the mini-bus with another person and staff. This has opened up a number of social opportunities for the person and enabled them to form more positive relationships with others.
- Staff were fully involved in assessing risks and developing positive behaviour support plans in conjunction with the specialist behavioural support team within the organisation. This meant the in-depth knowledge of people's needs, anxieties and routines were fully incorporated into their positive behaviour support plans. One staff member told us, "Everything we do can be seen as a risk so when we get it right and the person reaches their goal that's such an achievement for us as well. Everything that goes into the positive behaviour

support plan is run by me first. We are the ones who can gauge how they will respond best. If things go wrong, then we have to look to ourselves and say what could we have done differently."

- Staff were skilled at turning risks arising from people's behaviours into opportunities. One person regularly set off the fire alarm system during times of anxiety. The noise and disruption caused also presented triggers to other people's anxiety. Staff offered the person the opportunity to take responsibility for testing the alarm system each week. This gave the person a meaningful reason for sounding the alarm and helped their understanding its purpose. They had a clip board and tabard for use when testing the equipment and enjoyed this responsibility.
- Regular health and safety checks were completed to ensure the environment remained safe for people. Each person had a personal emergency evacuation plan in place (PEEPS) which gave guidance to staff and the emergency service on the support they would require to leave the building in an emergency. Pictorial questionnaires had been completed with people regarding their understanding of fire procedures and this information was used when developing PEEPS. A sprinkler system was fitted in the property which would help to keep people safe if they were finding it difficult to leave the building.

Systems and processes to safeguard people from the risk of abuse; Learning lessons when things go wrong

- People appeared comfortable in the company of staff and approached them for reassurance when needed. One relative told us, "They are all wonderful and we feel he's safe there. Their safeguarding protocols are top notch."
- Staff received training in safeguarding people from the risk of abuse and understood their responsibility in reporting concerns. One staff member told us, "I'd firstly make sure everyone was safe then report to the registered manager or regional manager and write it all down. I would report to safeguarding or the whistle-blowing line. The numbers are all pre-printed on every page of the communication book, so I would look there."
- Staff supported people to build trust and understanding of each other's needs. There was a high risk of safeguarding incidents occurring between people living at Tuscany House. However, due to staff's exceptionally skilled approach and in-depth understanding of people's needs, incidents between people were rare. We observed one person give another person space to leave the house as they understood this was a difficult process for them.
- Where there had previously been incidents between people the staff team had ensured a detailed analysis and investigation was completed. For example, for a period of time there were a number of incidents in communal areas. By completing behaviour observation charts and creating a graph regarding when and where incidents took place, it became clear that mealtimes were a trigger to one person's anxiety. Staff then supported the person to make choices as to where they ate their meal and who they sat with. The person chose to eat their meal in the lounge area or garden. This meant they were still involved but away from the bustle of the dining area. Since this time incidents in communal areas had drastically reduced.
- Where incidents had occurred, these were shared with the local authority safeguarding team and notified to the CQC. Where additional information was requested this was provided.
- Incidents were used as an opportunity to learn and staff were all involved in discussions in order to determine what could have been done differently. The registered manager told us, "If we have an incident or a difficult shift it's discussed straight away so staff don't take it home with them. All staff know we explore how we deal with things in an open and honest way."
- Support in reviewing accidents, incidents and safeguarding incidents was also provided at an organisational level. The registered manager told us that all accidents and incidents were reviewed by the providers clinical, health and safety and safeguarding teams to assess if all appropriate action has been taken. They told us, "They will ask questions and give advice about things which you might do differently or need to action. It's really useful because you can miss things when you're in the situation."
- The provider held regular safeguarding forums to review all safeguarding incidents and lessons learnt.

This learning was then shared with services throughout the organisation and used to influence policy and procedures.

Using medicines safely

- Staff worked proactively with people to reduce the amount of medicines they were taking and to minimise the use of PRN (as and when required). People's medicines were regularly reviewed and the service had signed up to the STOMP initiative (stopping over medication of people with a learning disability, autism or both). This is a national project involving many different organisations which aims to help stop the over use of psychotropic medicines. By working alongside health care professionals and developing strategies to support one person to manage their anxiety, they had been able halve the amount of medicines they were taking.
- People's medicine support plans gave staff clear direction regarding how they liked to take their medicines and the support they required. One person found this process particularly difficult in the evenings and required support for up to two hours to take their medicines. Staff were able to describe in detail the persons routine and how to support them in making their decisions regarding taking their medicines.
- Safe medicines practices were in place and regular checks and audits were completed. People received their medicines in line with their prescriptions and guidance for the use of PRN medicines was clearly recorded. Medicines were securely stored and staff competence in administering medicines was assessed. An action plan had been implemented where errors in recording had been noted and additional monitoring implemented to ensure systems were safe.

Staffing and recruitment

- Sufficient staff were deployed to ensure people's needs could be responded to promptly. We observed staff were able to immediately respond to people's requests. Rotas showed that staffing levels were consistent. Staff told us that although additional staff were being recruited the team pulled together to ensure people received the support they required. One staff member said, "We have enough staff to cover the rota. (Registered manager) also steps in when we need her which really helps us.
- Two people living at Tuscany House required one to one support. Staff understood how to provide this in the least restrictive way possible for each person whilst ensuring they felt supported and safe.
- The registered manager told us they looked to recruit staff keeping in mind the individuals needs and personalities. One staff member told us, "The age range of people fits with the age range of the team which makes it easier to cater to people's needs and give as many opportunities as possible."
- Where agency staff were used this was on a contract basis to ensure consistency for people.
- Staff were recruited safely. Staff were required to complete an application form and attend a face to face interview prior to their employment. Staff files showed that references and disclosure and barring service checks (DBS) were completed prior to staff starting their employment. DBS checks identify if prospective staff have a criminal record or are barred from working with people who use care and support services.

Preventing and controlling infection

- The service was clean and well-maintained. There was a cleaning schedule in place which was followed and staff involved people wherever possible.
- Staff had access to personal protective equipment such as gloves for use when supporting people with their personal care.
- Staff received training in safe infection control and regular audits were completed.

Is the service effective?

Our findings

Effective – this means we looked for evidence that people's care, treatment and support achieved good outcomes and promoted a good quality of life, based on best available evidence.

At the last inspection this key question was rated as Good. At this inspection this key question has remained the same. This meant people's outcomes were consistently good, and people's feedback confirmed this.

Assessing people's needs and choices; delivering care in line with standards, guidance and the law

- People's needs were assessed prior to them moving into the service to ensure they could be met. The registered manager told us, "The CMG team do the initial assessment. Then I go to visit with the PBS team and observe people in different environments to check they will fit in here. If it's not right I will say. I don't want to let that individual down or the guys here. We need to be realistic."
- Following assessment people moving into the service had a transition plan developed to support them with the move. This was an individualised plan which went at the pace of the person involved. The registered manager told us, "We'll invite people for a drink, for a meal, maybe sleep-ins. Staff will visit where they are and join them in activities to get to know them."

Staff support: induction, training, skills and experience

- We observed staff supported people with skill and a clear understanding of their specific needs. Staff received an induction into the service which included completing a training programme, spending time with the registered manager and shadowing experienced staff members. We spoke with two staff members who had recently joined the team. They told us they had found the induction useful and staff had been supportive throughout the process. One staff member told us, "(Registered manager) said right from the beginning if there were any problems we can go to her. All the staff have been great. I feel comfortable in asking questions."
- Staff had access to a comprehensive training programme to support them in their roles. This included specific training from the PBS team in relation to supporting each individual living at Tuscany House. One staff member told us, "What's great is they have lots of different training. All the mandatory stuff then particular training for the particular house."
- Staff had the opportunity to meet with their manager on a regular basis. This gave staff the opportunity to discuss any difficulties they were experiencing, receive constructive feedback on their performance and look at their own professional development.

Supporting people to eat and drink enough to maintain a balanced diet

- People were fully involved in decisions regarding what they had to eat and drink. A menu was displayed in the kitchen. Staff told us people chose a dish each for the menu but this was flexible and people were able to choose something different. They told us, "It's all flexible. Some people like to follow a menu and others like to choose what they want on the day."
- Care plans contained details of their favourite foods, dislikes and any specific dietary requirements. Guidance was available to staff on how people chose what they wished to eat.
- Staff understood the importance of good hydration and the impact this could have on people's health and

behaviours. Each person had a fluid chart in place which staff monitored and prompted people with through the day.

Staff working with other agencies to provide consistent, effective, timely care; Supporting people to live healthier lives, access healthcare services and support

- The service worked in a proactive way to ensure people received the healthcare support they required. Links had been established with the learning disability liaison nurse for the area who had supported them in organising appointments in a way which caused people minimal anxiety.
- Staff had worked with one person who required dental treatment to make regular visits so they were aware of where they would go and became familiar with the staff there. Communication with the person was clear and consistent from both staff and the healthcare professionals involved. This resulted in the person receiving the treatment they required without the need for restraint or the use of PRN medicines. Following the person's treatment, the dental service wrote to the service to compliment them on the support they provided.
- When one person was diagnosed with a specific condition the registered manager requested a specialist nurse visit the service to give guidance to staff on how to support them.
- People's care records contained detailed records of appointments and health care needs. Health action plans were in place which gave guidance to staff on people's health needs and the support they required to maintain good health.

Adapting service, design, decoration to meet people's needs

- The service was suited to the needs of the people living at Tuscany House. Rooms were spacious which gave people the option of sitting with others or spending time alone.
- There was a large garden with seating and a trampoline which people enjoyed using.
- People were supported to personalise their rooms. People had access to the internet which was important in enabling people to be in control of what they viewed and the music they listened to.

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 Act 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, and whether any conditions on authorisations to deprive a person of their liberty had the appropriate legal authority and were being met.

- People's legal rights were protected as the principles of the MCA were followed. Capacity assessments had been completed in relation to specific decisions. Best interest decisions were recorded and took into account the persons known preferences and family views.
- Staff had a good understanding of the responsibility to ensure people received support in the least restrictive way. One staff member told us, "In this type of service it's really important to look at the least restrictive options but still consider people's safety."
- Staff were skilled at supporting people in a way which gave them choices but did not overwhelm them. By developing trusting relationships with staff, people had developed coping strategies to deal with their

anxiety which led to a reduction in the restrictions in place. Staff used to need to use blocking techniques to limit one person's movements and keep others safe. As the persons trust in staff and confidence had grown they were now able to remove themselves from situations which had resulted in fewer restrictions.

- Staff had a good understanding of the MCA process and told us this was part of their thought process when supporting people with day to day decisions. Staff were aware of the impact of one to one support on people's freedom. One staff member told us, "We're very conscious how we provide this. We're aware of the impact and staff not wanting to over restrict (the person)."
- DoLS applications had been submitted appropriately as required. The registered manager had ensured these were updated in line with review dates and had informed relevant teams of any changes in people's support or the restrictions in place.

Is the service caring?

Our findings

Caring – this means we looked for evidence that the service involved people and treated them with compassion, kindness, dignity and respect.

At the last inspection this key question was rated as Good. At this inspection this key question has remained the same. This meant people were supported and treated with dignity and respect; and involved as partners in their care.

Ensuring people are well treated and supported; respecting equality and diversity

- Feedback received from relatives reflected the strong ethos of providing people's care in a respectful, kind way which was meaningful to them. One relative told us, "I think they're outstanding. They are kind, caring, approachable and genuinely care. They would do anything in their power to facilitate what he wants."
- Staff were extremely caring in their approach to people and understood the need to approach each person in the way they responded to best. We observed staff making eye contact when speaking with people, sharing jokes and using appropriate touch to reassure them. There was a relaxed atmosphere throughout the day.
- People lived in a caring and nurturing environment where their individual needs, personalities and wishes were at the centre. Staff were committed to seeing people achieve their potential and took pleasure from watching people achieve their goals. One staff member told us, "Everyone (staff) wants to have a personal connection with the guys and know their strengths."
- Staff demonstrated a commitment to people feeling Tuscany House was their home. They spoke to people with respect and gave people space where they wanted this. One staff member told us, "The best thing about it here is they're free to do what they want to do and make what choices they want. I want them to live in a place I'd like to live in."
- People were supported by staff who demonstrated an understanding of people's cultural and religious needs. One person chose to practice their religion when they visited their family. Staff were aware of the persons culture and supported them to cook specific foods they enjoyed and share them with others.

Supporting people to express their views and be involved in making decisions about their care

- Staff followed people's lead in ensuring their care was provided in the way they wanted. Although staff would encourage people to push boundaries in order to enhance their quality of life, this was done at the pace of the individual and kept under constant review. One person chose to go to a particular place for lunch each week. The transition to going out caused the person extreme anxiety throughout the day. We observed staff followed the person's very clear routine but did so at a pace the person could manage on that particular day. Despite the persons anxiety, they clearly wanted to continue with this activity and staff understood the importance of supporting them in the right way to achieve that.
- When offering choices or asking questions staff respected people's responses. One person was going shopping in the afternoon. Staff asked if they could go into their room with them to check what toiletries they needed to which the person responded, "No." Staff told the person that was okay and they would return later to ask again. The second time the person agreed to the staff member supporting them.
- We observed staff offering support in a manner which showed understanding of people's need for

structure whilst offering people choices such as how and where they spent their time, who supported them, what they wore and what they ate.

Respecting and promoting people's privacy, dignity and independence

- Staff respected people's privacy. We observed staff always knocked on people's doors and waited for a response. We observed one person would come to the door and staff would explain why they were knocking to enable the person to decide if they were happy for the staff member to go in.
- Each person's individual room had a keypad entry system which meant people did not have the need to carry a key but knew their space was secure. Staff supported people to recognise the number or pattern to gain access to their room and help people understand this meant other people could not enter without their permission. One staff member told us, "They know others aren't going to come in. They have their own secure space and independence."

Is the service responsive?

Our findings

Responsive – this means we looked for evidence that the service met people's needs.

At the last inspection this key question was rated as Good. At this inspection this key question has now improved to Outstanding. This meant services were tailored to meet the needs of individuals and delivered to ensure flexibility, choice and continuity of care.

Meeting people's communication needs

Since 2016 onwards all organisations that provide publicly funded adult social care are legally required to follow the Accessible Information Standard (AIS). The standard was introduced to make sure people are given information in a way they can understand. The standard applies to all people with a disability, impairment or sensory loss and in some circumstances to their carers.

- The staff team were exceptional in ensuring that they met the Accessible Information Standard in order to communicate effectively with people and tailor the service to the needs of individuals. Staff had an in-depth understanding of people's communication needs, how to support their understanding and how to present information in a meaningful way.
- Staff prepared individual social stories to support people's understanding. A social story is a means of clearly communicating information about a context, skill or concept in a way that is meaningful to someone with autism. Due to a particular health condition, one person was required to have regular blood tests. They had previously always resisted this intervention and there were concerns this may have a negative impact on their health. Staff worked with the surgery to take photos of the process and prepare a social story to communicate what would happen. Following a number of visits to build up the persons understanding of the process, they started to have regular blood tests enabling their health to be monitored more accurately.
- Staff found that another person health condition was being negatively impacted by a lack of sleep as they were using the internet during the night. Due to the risks involved a best interest decision was taken with health professionals that the internet would be turned off at night. A social story was prepared to support the person to understand what would happen and the reasons for this. Staff found the person continued to be anxious so displayed the social story in a prominent place as a reminder to the person. This method of communication had a positive impact and gave the person the reassurance they needed. They were now sleeping better which had led to improvements in their health.
- People communication needs were central to people's support plans and PBS plans. Detailed information was in place to guide staff on the most effective way to communicate with each person. This included how communication should be adapted to meet people's needs when they were anxious or upset. We observed one person using touch to communicate to the staff member they required space and reassurance. The staff member immediately responded to the person and they went to the garden together. The staff member told us, "It has taken a lot of work from us all but now we understand what even the little gestures mean." The ability of staff to show they understood the person and listened to their communication had enabled them to build trust. This had led to the number of incidents being greatly reduced and the quality of the persons life improving.
- Each person's daily plan was broken down into small steps and displayed in picture format. This communicated the structure of their day and gave reassurance regarding what they were doing and what

would happen next.

Planning personalised care to ensure people have choice and control and to meet their needs and preferences

- Care was planned for people to ensure that what is most important to each person to achieve a good life and ensure that the support they receive was designed and coordinated around their desired outcomes. One relative told us, "He is so happy and a lot more confident. He's doing so much more. His life has been enriched by being there."
- People's success in reaching their goals was celebrated, giving people a sense of pride and achievement. One person was informed they had won an award recognising 'Positive Risk Taking' as part of the organisation's annual awards for people and staff teams. Although the person struggled in noisy, crowded environments staff supported them to make an informed choice regarding attending the presentation ceremony. Staff visited the hall with the person over several months, prepared a social story about what would happen on the night, and worked with the venue to make adjustments. The photographs of the person receiving their award showed they were clearly proud of their achievements. The chief executive posted in their blog, 'This is such an amazing achievement and I am very proud of (name) and the team at Tuscany House. It shows what careful planning, time and consideration can do towards the personal outcomes of an individual.'
- People's support plans and PBS plans were extremely person-centred. The level of detail included demonstrated to staff people's exact routines and the level of communication required to ensure people received their support in the way they wanted. Staff told us they worked together to ensure that each staff member supported people in the same way in order to provide the person with reassurance they knew what was going to happen. One staff member told us, "If I have any problems picking up part of someone's routine then I just have to say and they (staff members) will go through it with me until I'm confident."
- People's care plans were regularly reviewed to take into account people's goals, achievements and where staff observed useful information regarding how people liked their support.
- Staff worked with people and their families to understand what skills they wished to develop and maintain. One relative told us their loved one had learnt to write when at school but this skill had been lost over the years. Staff had supported the person with this skill. Their relative told us, "His Gran received a birthday card which he had written himself. I can't even begin to tell you how much that meant to us all."
- Staff used people's interest in technology creatively to support them developing skills. One person enjoyed watching videos on you tube. When the person required support with their dental hygiene staff supported them to watch YouTube videos on mouthcare and using mouthwash. This resulted in the person gaining understanding and taking better care of their teeth. Staff told us on a recent visit to the dentist the person was praised for their dental hygiene.
- Staff were skilled at involving people in planning and decision making in order to achieve positive outcomes. One person did not like changes being made to their personal space but required new furniture. Staff understood this would be a challenge for the person to accept as they had previously always broken new furniture. Staff spent long periods supporting the person to make choices regarding the furniture they would like. They approached the delivery driver and agreed the person would be able to help them unpack and assemble the furniture, so they were fully involved in the process. This approach helped the person take ownership of their environment. All of their new furniture remained intact and they have indicated they are pleased with the outcome.

Supporting people to develop and maintain relationships to avoid social isolation; support to follow interests and to take part in activities that are socially and culturally relevant to them.

- People were supported in developing interests and work opportunities to enable them to live as full a life as possible. One person had been referred to the employment opportunities scheme and had found

voluntary employment one day per week. The level of achievement this represented for the person was recognised by them winning an organisational award for 'Best Achievement in Voluntary Employment.'

- One person had found going out difficult and would only go out for a drive. After many months of planning and support the person was going to their favourite place for lunch and going shopping each week. Staff used a staggered approach to the person achieving their goal to ensure they were comfortable with each stage before progressing. The registered manager told us, "We drove to the restaurant for about eight weeks before we got out of the car and then took small steps until they ordered their meal and ate it there. It's such a big achievement for him." The confidence the person had gained had led to this opening up additional opportunities for them.
- Each person had a person-centred activity programme in place which included individual activities they enjoyed such as shopping, walks, bowling, disco's and attending college. One relative told us, "He does such amazing activities now." Although people mainly preferred to do activities on their own with staff, they were also encouraged to socialise together.
- Staff used creative ways to support communication between people and those who were important to them. A number of people had communication books to share with their families which they prepared with staff. People chose photographs they wanted to be included in their books showing what they had been doing since they last saw each other. Staff and/or people would then write a narrative describing what had been happening in the persons life. Families were also able to use the book to communicate to staff.
- Other people would work with staff to prepare regular personalised newsletters containing photographs of what they had been doing. This was shared with families but also served as a visual reminder for people of things they had enjoyed and achieved.
- Staff supported people and their families by completing social stories about any significant events to minimise the persons anxiety around change. When one person's family moved to a new house, staff helped prepare the person for the change by using a social story with photographs of the family's new home. This worked extremely well for the person and they accepted the change in a positive way.

Improving care quality in response to complaints or concerns

- The provider had a complaints policy in place which was clearly displayed and available in an easy read format. Tuscany House had not received any complaints within the last year.
- There were good lines of communication between people, relatives and staff which meant any questions or concerns were discussed openly and responded to promptly. One relative told us, "If I have any concerns I get a swift and appropriate response."
- Staff were able to describe how they would address concerns people or relatives raised and demonstrated a commitment to responding to concerns. One staff member said, "If they have a concern they are happy to say so and we are happy to address it."

End of life care and support

- At the time of our inspection, no one living at Tuscany House was receiving end of life care.
- The registered manager and staff were being supported by others in the organisation in developing care plans in this area. As this was a particularly sensitive area due to people's young ages plans were being discussed with families as part of the review process to enable an open discussion. The registered manager had sought advice regarding good practice in approaching this issue with colleagues and other professionals.
- The registered manager and staff worked sensitively with people to acknowledge the impact of the grieving process. Following a person passing away suddenly, people at Tuscany House had found it difficult to understand and find a way to express their grief. The registered manager worked with the persons family to organise a gathering in memory of them. Staff compiled videos of the person, made their favourite foods and spoke about the person. This had helped people in coming to terms with their grief and to remember

the persons positive impact on all their lives.

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 the last inspection this key question was rated as Good. At this inspection this key question has now improved to Outstanding. This meant service leadership was exceptional and distinctive. Leaders and the service culture they created drove and improved high-quality, person-centred care.

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

- There was an exceptionally positive culture throughout the service which was promoted by strong and effective leadership. Staff members all spoke of the same shared vision, "Seeing them have a great day and knowing you've been able to help. Seeing people achieve and full-fill their potential." Relatives reflected that this ran through the culture in the staff team, "(Registered manager) and the whole staff team are fantastic. They want to get things right and they are person-centred like no service I've ever come across before."
- There was a strong commitment to team work with an emphasis on communication being essential to achieving positive outcomes and keeping everyone safe. Staff understood the need to be able to rely on each other if they were going to provide the consistency of approach that people needed. Staff worked hard to develop relationships with colleagues in order to understand how they could best support each other. One staff member told us, "We all want to support each other and we're good at communicating with each other. We have the same values so we pull together and help each other which is how we stay so positive."
- This outstanding team work and commitment to the people they supported had led to people achieving goals which had previously not been considered attainable. The positive and trusting relationships formed with staff had led to people's horizons being widened and them taking increased control over their lives. Through opening avenues such as using transport, attending health appointments, engaging in community activities and making choices about how they lived, staff had ensured people's lives had been enriched.
- Effective systems were in place to ensure the ethos and values of the service were embedded within the staff team. Staff shared their experiences of induction, shadowing and training which delivered a consistent message that people and their achievements were always at the heart of the service. This created an environment where staff looked to create opportunities for people. This message was continually re-iterated by ensuring staff received the support and mentoring they required. Each staff member had created a personal well-being CV which they shared with colleagues. This highlighted the support they may need during difficult times to help them remain positive.
- Staff were highly complementary about the support they received from the registered manager. One staff member told us, "We are 100% supported. (Registered manager) is a fantastic manager. I don't know how she does it. She knows us all individually and knows how we all need to be supported to grow and develop." A staff member who had initially worked at the service through an agency told us, "The support is very very good. The support I saw for staff and for the service users is what gave me the willingness to stay here."
- Staff told us they were proud to work at Tuscany House and the support they were able to provide to people. One staff member told us, "I like to tell everyone what I do. Seeing their (people's) achievements makes me want to come to work and be a part of that."

- People benefitted from the leadership of a registered manager who was exceptionally skilled in both supporting people with autism and in acting as a strong role model for the staff team. When starting their role at Tuscany House the registered manager was told one person was reluctant to work with women and this increased their anxiety. The registered manager challenged this perception. By using effective communication systems and building trust with the person they had built a strong relationship. The registered manager had been instrumental in supporting the person with all their achievements over the past year. This had also led to other female staff members providing support which had in turn led to increased opportunities and changed perceptions about the person.
- The registered manager led by example and supported people and staff through difficult times. This demonstrated to staff they were part of the team and modelled good practice for them to follow. One staff member told us, "She will spend time with us supporting the guys so she knows how things are running. There are times when it can be draining but she is always there to check if we are okay. You feel as though she really understands and that had a big impact on me."
- The provider and registered manager demonstrated commitment in ensuring staff had the opportunity to develop their skills and share their learning. One staff member told us, "You're supported to shine here and develop your interests. They (the organisation) give you the opportunity to grow and provide you with the training to develop how you want to."
- Staff were encouraged to complete coaching courses to support their teams in particular areas. One staff told us, "You can also do additional training like the Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) coaching. It's a fantastic care model and three guys here have PBS plans. Having that wider knowledge of PBS and sharing it with colleagues has been great for us as a team."
- The provider ensured the service had the resources and access to expertise they required to provide highly person-centred and responsive care. The registered manager had the support of a specialist positive behaviour support team who supported the team in developing support plans and continually evaluating how they could progress in supporting people to achieve positive outcomes. The registered manager told us, "The training they give us every year is specific to each person. They listen to me and consult with staff so we can all move forward as one team. I can call them for advice whenever I need to."
- The registered manager told us they had a strong support network which included their direct line manager and other registered managers who they could call upon for support whenever they needed. The chief executive for the organisation visited the service regularly and knew people well.

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 created a culture of openness and transparency between people, relatives and staff. When incidents occurred the registered manager and staff ensured that this information was shared giving as much detail as possible. This enabled people and relatives to receive the support they required and to be involved in looking at potential solutions to prevent the same thing from happening again.
- The registered manager saw creating an open and honest culture was essential to the success of the service and the well-being of people and staff. They told us, "We talk to staff right from the beginning of their induction and carry on telling them we do things in an open and honest way." One staff member told us, "If we hide things or don't ask questions when we need to then it will all go wrong. We all listen to each other."
- Regular gatherings and parties were held at Tuscany House involving people, their relatives and staff. This gave families the opportunity to develop relationships and gain greater insight of each person's personality and needs. This had led to a caring and understanding approach to how families supported everyone living at the service.

Managers and staff being clear about their roles, and understanding quality performance, risks and regulatory requirements

- Quality assurance processes were embedded in the service. The registered manager supported and empowered staff in taking responsibilities for completing quality checks and audits. They told us, "All staff do audits and take it in turns to do different ones. If they're involved they understand more about the responsibilities of the service and how things are planned.
- A full audit of the service was completed every three months by the regional director. A comprehensive action plan was developed where any shortfalls were identified. The action plan was displayed on the office notice board so staff were aware of the areas which required work.
- The registered manager continued to work shifts to ensure they had a thorough knowledge of people's needs and how staff were working. They told us, "I try to do one two late shifts each week so I know what's going on."
- Records were completed in a personalised way which was meaningful to people. Photographs were used throughout people's care records to support their involvement. Detailed guidance and descriptions of how people referred their support was available to staff.
- In recognition of their commitment and outstanding leadership the registered manager had been nominated and selected as a finalist Registered Managers Award at the National Learning Disabilities and Autism Awards. One of the reasons for the nominations stated, '(Registered manager) is constantly looking at ways to improve quality of life for the people we support, she is also very focused on developing her staff team. (Registered manager) will go above and beyond to ensure needs of the people we support are met and has cancelled holidays to ensure she is active in supporting people to reach their goals.'

Engaging and involving people using the service, the public and staff, fully considering their equality characteristics; Working in partnership with others

- People were at the centre of all decisions made at the service. People's choices were fully respected and staff considered the impact to people's well-being in all they did. This resulted in Tuscany House feeling like people's home. Central to people's involvement in the service was staff's skill at listening and observing people's reactions and ensuring they responded quickly.
- People were continually encouraged to contribute to the running of their home and to develop their independent living skills. Staff had received training in providing active support and looked at ways in which people could be supported to maximise their involvement. We observed staff asking one person if they would like to clean the kitchen after breakfast. Staff supported the person through this process. The registered manager told us, "We work on the principle of every moment is a potential opportunity to engage someone. We talk about it at staff meetings and regularly when we're working."
- People were encouraged to give feedback about how they felt living at the service and anything they wanted to change. Staff supported people to complete monthly reviews which showed people were asked if they were happy. People were also supported to complete surveys which were designed in an easy read format.
- Relatives were involved wherever possible in sharing achievements, ideas and problem solving and difficulties involving their loved ones care. Person-centred reviews were held and records reflected these were open forums where ideas could be shared.
- Staff meetings were used as an opportunity to review practice, share learning and discuss ideas. Staff told us they felt able to discuss anything openly in team meetings and felt their ideas would be respected and listened to.
- The service was committed to working with other agencies and within the community to ensure people's needs were met and opportunities opened for people. Staff had worked with a wide range of health care professionals, employment agencies, colleges and community resources to promote equal opportunity of access for the people living at Tuscany House. In doing so in a positive and proactive way this was also supporting the wider community in understanding the needs and rights of people living with autism.

