

Ansar Projects

Highgrove

Inspection report

High Grove
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Date of inspection visit:
01 March 2023
09 March 2023

Date of publication:
13 April 2023

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?

Good ●

Is the service well-led?

Good ●

Summary of findings

Overall summary

About the service

Highgrove is registered to provide accommodation and personal care to people with a learning disability, some of whom may have complex needs. Highgrove provides short stay breaks for people who live in the family home. The home can accommodate a maximum of 3 people at any time. At the time of our inspection the service provided short stays for 10 people at varying times.

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

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

Right Support

Due to the complex needs of people they were not able to share their views with us. We observed positive, polite interactions between people and staff. Staff clearly knew people well and were able to anticipate their needs. The families of people told us their relatives were supported in a way they wanted and needed, by staff who knew them well. Support was planned and delivered in a personalised way, promoting people's choice and independence. People's prescribed medicines were managed safely. People's social and emotional needs were considered to help promote their health and well-being. 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.

Right Care

People's human rights were upheld. Staff were seen to treat people with dignity and respect. Thorough assessments and personalised support plans provided detailed information to guide staff. Good staffing levels were maintained, offering continuity and reliability in support. Appropriate recruitment checks were completed. New staff completed a comprehensive induction and training programme on commencement of their employment. Staff understood their role and responsibilities and felt supported by the management team.

Right Culture:

Quality monitoring systems were in place, providing oversight of the service. Areas of development were identified and planned for. The management team had a clear vision and were working collaboratively with the local authority to remodel the current service provision. Staff were aware of their responsibilities to report any concerns; where necessary these were acted upon to help inform on-going learning and development.

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 the service under the previous provider was good (published on 30 November 2018).

Why we inspected

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

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

Follow up

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

The five questions we ask about services and what we found

We always ask the following five questions of services.

Is the service safe?

Good ●

The service was safe.

Details are in our well-led findings below.

Is the service effective?

Good ●

The service was effective.

Details are in our well-led findings below.

Is the service caring?

Good ●

The service was caring.

Details are in our well-led findings below.

Is the service responsive?

Good ●

The service was responsive.

Details are in our well-led findings below.

Is the service well-led?

Good ●

The service was well-led.

Details are in our well-led findings below.

Highgrove

Detailed findings

Background to this inspection

The inspection

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

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

Inspection team

The inspection was carried out by 1 inspector.

Service and service type

Highgrove is a 'care home.' People in care homes receive accommodation and nursing and/or personal care as a single package under one contractual agreement dependent on their registration with us. Highgrove is a care home without nursing care. CQC regulates both the premises and the care provided, and both were looked at during this inspection.

Registered Manager

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

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

Notice of inspection

We gave the service 24 hours' notice of the inspection. This was because the service is small, and people are often out, and we wanted to be sure there would be people at home to speak with us.

Inspection activity started on 1 March 2023 and ended on 9 March 2023. We visited the service on 1 March 2023.

What we did before inspection

We reviewed information we had received about the service since the last inspection. We sought feedback from the local authority commissioning team, community learning disability team and the health protection team. We used the information the provider sent us in the provider information return (PIR). This is information providers are required to send us annually with key information about their service, what they do well, and improvements they plan to make. We used all this information to plan our inspection.

During the inspection

We received feedback from the relatives of 5 people who use the service. We also spoke with 6 members of staff including the registered manager, community support leaders, senior support worker and support worker. During the inspection visit we looked at 3 people's care records, how medicines were managed and health and safety.

Additional evidence, sent to us electronically, was reviewed remotely. These included staff recruitment records, training information, policies, and procedures as well as audit and checks of the service.

Is the service safe?

Our findings

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

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

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

- The staff team were aware of their responsibilities in reporting and responding to any concerns, so people were kept safe.
- People's relatives told us, "I feel comfortable and confident leaving my [relative] in their care" and "I feel confident that my [relative] is happy at Highgrove."
- We also sought feedback from professionals involved with the service. We were told, "I have found the service to be very safe for individuals with a learning disability. Staff follow systems regarding any safeguard concerns to quickly notify Adult Social Care and keep individuals safe."
- Discussion within team meetings explored any issues and where, if any, changes needed to be made so consistent and effective support continued to be provided.
- Behavioural incident reports were completed after every incident. These explored people's incidents of distress, possible triggers, and the response. A reflective log is completed monthly that summarises incidents and helps to support any learning required within the team.

Assessing risk, safety monitoring and management

- Comprehensive risk management plans had been developed to help guide staff in the safe care and support of people with complex needs and behaviours. This was supported by social care professionals who told us, "Highgrove carries out thorough assessments, support plans and risk assessments."
- Staff received training in positive behaviour support to help understand people's behaviour and how to support them in a safe way.
- People's relatives felt their family members were supported by competent staff who knew how to keep them safe. One family member told us, "It's very important to maintain my [relative] daily routine and deal with any unexpected behaviour issues, the staff at Highgrove do that very well."
- People who used the service were encouraged to develop their understanding of risk. We saw information and training had been provided in fire safety, the use of electric and how to stay safe.
- Regular servicing of equipment and mains supplies, such as gas and electric circuits and small appliance, were completed to check they were in good working order. Additional environmental and fire safety checks were also completed to ensure the premises were safe.

Staffing and recruitment

- Safe recruitment procedures were in place.
- All relevant checks had been carried out prior to staff commencing their employment. Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks provide information including details about convictions and cautions held on the Police National Computer. The information helps employers make safer recruitment decisions.

- Sufficient numbers of staff were available to meet the individual needs of people. Staff retention was said to be good. Staff told us, "It's a supportive team and good support from managers"
- People's relatives told the service provided consistent, reliable support for their family member. One relative told us, "[Person] doesn't like change, so they always make sure they have regular staff that are known to them."

Using medicines safely

- Systems were in place to help manage people's prescribed medicines.
- Appropriate arrangements were in place for booking in and out people's medication as part of their stay. Medicines were stored safely and securely.
- Staff responsible for administering medicines had received the appropriate training.

Preventing and controlling infection

- We were assured that the provider was supporting people living at the service to minimise the spread of infection.
- We were assured that the provider was admitting people safely to the service.
- We were assured that the provider was using PPE effectively and safely.
- We were assured that the provider was responding effectively to risks and signs of infection.
- We were assured that the provider was promoting safety through the layout and hygiene practices of the premises. The relative of one person told us, "The house is clean and tidy."
- We were assured that the provider was making sure infection outbreaks can be effectively prevented or managed.
- We were assured that the provider's infection prevention and control policy was up to date.

Visiting in care homes

Highgrove provides short stay breaks for people who live in the family home. Therefore, visits were not routinely made. However, friends and family were welcomed at any time.

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 our last inspection we rated this key question good. The rating for this key question has remained good. This meant people's outcomes were consistently good, and people's feedback confirmed this.

Staff support: induction, training, skills, and experience

- A comprehensive of induction, training and development plan was provided to all staff, in areas specific to the individual needs of people.
- All the staff we spoke with felt they had the skills needed to carry out their role. We were told, "There's lots of training and support" and "The training is good, relates to the people we support." From our observation we saw staff knew people well and anticipated their needs and behaviours.
- Opportunities were available for staff career development. The 'paddle project' provided staff with opportunities explore different areas of work
- People's families told us there was a good staff team. The family of one person said, "The staff are excellent, and you can easily tell they love their jobs and the people they deal with."
- Professionals involved with the service felt a high standard of support was provided. One person told us, "They [staff] have good knowledge and values relating to supporting individuals with a diagnosis of Learning Disabilities and/or Autism."

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

- People required different levels of support in meeting their nutritional needs and this was provided.
- Care records reflected the support people needed. Additional monitoring of people's weight was completed where changes had been identified.
- People were encouraged to take part in the planning and cooking of their meals.

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

- People were supported by family in meeting their healthcare needs. However, should support be required, for example for appointments, this was provided.
- Any issues in people's health and well-being were monitored, so changes could be acted upon where necessary.
- People's care records included a 'health action plan' and 'hospital passport'. This information helps to inform hospital staff about people's healthcare needs, their learning disability and how they like to communicate.
- The provider, in partnership with two charities, had developed easy read guides to help people understand their bodies and detect changes. This includes breast and testicular cancer information packs, self-checking cards and what to expect if a change is found.

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

- Highgrove provides spacious accommodation for people. New furniture items had recently been purchased and some areas of the home had been redecorated.
- A sensory room had been created in the second lounge. This included lighting that changes colour, bubble tubes, bean bags, and other pieces of equipment designed for calming and relaxing people.

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

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

The Mental Capacity Act 2005 (MCA) provides a legal framework for making particular decisions on behalf of people who may lack the mental capacity to do so for themselves. The MCA requires that, as far as possible, people make their own decisions and are helped to do so when needed. When they lack mental capacity to take particular decisions, any made on their behalf must be in their best interests and as least restrictive as possible.

People can only be deprived of their liberty to receive care and treatment when this is in their best interests and legally authorised under the MCA.

In care homes, and some hospitals, this is usually through MCA application procedures called the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS). We checked whether the service was working within the principles of the MCA.

- Comprehensive planning and assessments were carried out to ensure the needs of people were understood prior to them staying at Highgrove.
- The family of one person told us, "[Relative] visited the property a number of times before their first stay. Staff had prepared the living room to make him feel comfortable" and "What I thought was going to be a very challenging transition has gone really well."
- The service worked within the principles of the MCA. Authorisation to deprive people of their liberty were sought if necessary.
- Staff were able to demonstrate their understanding of capacity and consent and how they supported and enabled people to make their own decisions and choices, in a way they understand.

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 our last inspection we rated this key question good. The rating for this key question has remained good. 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

- Positive, polite interactions were seen between people and staff. People followed their own routines and the atmosphere within the home was relaxed and friendly.
- Staff completed training about equality and diversity and protecting people's rights.
- People's families told us they felt their relatives were supported in a way which respected their individuality, and that staff were kind and understood what support was needed. We were told, "My [relative] has been a few times and absolutely loves it" "We are always met with a friendly face, always upbeat and cheerful" and "[Relative] is cared for by kind and patient staff who provide all the support they need."
- We also received positive feedback from a professional involved with the service. They said, "The service is very caring in supporting individuals and families to get the best opportunity from a break. I have found all support staff to be respectful and caring to individuals who use the service."

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

- People were supported to maintain their independence as much as possible during their stays, following routines and activities of their choosing.
- The service had introduced a communication book, which helped to keep both staff and family members informed about people, any changes in their health and well-being and how the stay went.
- Family members felt fully informed and involved in their relative's support. Comments included, "They [staff] listen to what [relative] needs are make sure they're met" and "The paperwork is great as I know what [relative] has been up to and any issues. Cannot fault it."

Respecting and promoting people's privacy, dignity, and independence

- The aims and objectives at Highgrove are to promote people's independence and choice. Encouraging and supporting people to learning new skills, experience different things and make new friends.
- People looked well cared for. Support was provided in a discreet and dignified way and people's privacy was respected.
- A professional involved with the service told us, "The service is very effective in supporting individuals, giving the opportunity to develop independent living and social skills."

Is the service responsive?

Our findings

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

At our last inspection we rated this key question good. The rating for this key question has remained good. This meant people's needs were met through good organisation and delivery.

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

- Highgrove does not provide permanent placements for people. It provides short stay breaks for people who needed respite. Support plans were personalised and reflected people's individual needs and wishes.
- Staff spoken with told us people staying together were 'matched' to help facilitate a relaxed and friendly stay. This was supported by feedback from a professional who said, "As a short break facility, they try to match individuals who get on with each other to stay at the same time."
- People were supported by their own team of staff, who supported them to follow activities and opportunities of their choosing.
- Family members spoke positively about the planning and support provided to support their relative. They told us, "[Staff] have been fantastic" and "My [relative] is fairly new to Highgrove but it has been smooth sailing so far. [Relative] has complex needs. Lots of preparation was put into their stay including staff shadowing and getting to know him before he moved across to the service."
- Feedback from a social care professional was also positive about staffs understanding of the individual needs of people. Adding, "Support staff always appear happy and knowledgeable about the person they are supporting"

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

- Highgrove, along other Ansar projects provided a range of recreational and learning events, which people could choose to take part in should they wish.
- Opportunities and ideas were explored with people during the regular meetings. These included creating healthy recipes, training events looking at health and safety, fire safety and energy saving, group games and social events involving friends and family. One family member told us, "It is nice that they have get togethers regularly and involve everyone in activities. It is like an extended family."
- People also took part in individually planned activities; these include developing daily living skills as well as social events. The family of one person told us, "Activities are arranged for afternoon and evening individually tailored to my [relatives] needs."
- Through fundraising events the service was able to start a gardening project, purchasing their own greenhouse, growing beds, tools and other items needed. The team looked at creative ways of keeping people active and involved. This included a 'Walk Around the World' where information packs about different countries, places of interest and local food were provided.

Meeting people's communication needs

Since 2016 all organisations that provide publicly funded adult social care are legally required to follow the

Accessible Information Standard. The Accessible Information Standard tells organisations what they have to do to help ensure people with a disability or sensory loss, and in some circumstances, their carers, get information in a way they can understand it. It also says that people should get the support they need in relation to communication.

- Information is shared with people in way they can communicate and understand. We saw brochures, support plans and other records which were provided in an easy ready format with the use of pictures.
- Other people who were not able to express themselves verbally used Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS). This is a way for autistic people to communicate using cards with pictures, symbols, or photographs.
- The family of one person told us arrangements had been made to help prepare their relative for visits to Highgrove. We were told, "We have regular chats and text to me tell me who is on shift so I can prepare [relative] with photos so he knows who is there."

Improving care quality in response to complaints or concerns

- Systems were in place for the reporting and responding to any complaints or concerns. We were not aware of any current issues.
- Families were confident any issues brought to the attention of staff and managers would be addressed. One family member told us, "There are times when something needs addressing, the leadership team do take on my feedback and deal with it swiftly."

Is the service well-led?

Our findings

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

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

Promoting a positive culture that is person-centred, open, inclusive, and empowering, which achieves good outcomes for people, Engaging and involving people using the service, the public and staff, fully considering their equality characteristics

- The service promoted an open and inclusive culture, involving people and those important to them, with clear, achievable outcomes for people.
- The families of people spoken with told us, "Confident caring professional but also extremely considerate to family's feelings and worked with us to make sure we were comfortable and happy" and "Overall I am satisfied with how staff look after my [relative] at Highgrove."
- Staff too felt involved and included in decisions about the service. Staff said there was a focus on delivering good quality care and support, adding "It is a good service, very personalised. I enjoy coming to work."
- Regular team meetings were held, as well as regular communication with families so everyone was informed and involved.
- To recognise good practice the service had a staff award scheme 'Just did it', where nominations can be made by anyone within or outside the service.

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

- There was a clear organisation structure in place with lines of accountability and staff understood their roles and responsibilities.
- Staff spoke positively about working at Highgrove and the support they received from the registered manager. They told us, "Great support and encourages career development" and "[Registered manager] has a calm approach and great knowledge."
- Positive comments were also received from family members about the management and staff at the service. We were told, "The management always try to meet my needs and requirements" and "The staff are amazing."
- The registered manager ensured CQC were formally notified of any events, as required by law.

Working in partnership with others

- The registered manager was working collaboratively with the local authority to remodel the current service provision.
- Care staff worked collaboratively with medical, health and social care professionals and followed their

instructions when supporting people with individual treatments and healthcare needs

- Feedback received from professionals involved with the service included, "In the years I have worked with Highgrove / Ansar I have found the service to be well led at all levels."

Continuous learning and improving care

- A range of quality audits were carried out to monitor the service provision and plans were in place to expand on these. Senior staff told us, "We need to improve our systems, for example audits, in readiness for the changes within the service. "
- Development plans focused on the aims and objectives the service has for the forthcoming year.