

Ashdown Care Homes Ltd

Denmark Street

Inspection report

32 Denmark Street
Gateshead
Tyne And Wear
NE8 1NQ

Tel: 01913405287

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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?

Good ●

Is the service well-led?

Good ●

Summary of findings

Overall summary

About the service

Denmark Street is a care home which provides residential care for up to five people who are living with a learning disability. At the time of our inspection five people were using the service.

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 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.

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

The registered manager and staff consistently demonstrated they valued and respected the people who used the service. The staff were passionate about supporting people to engage in meaningful activities and actively assisted them to develop their independent living skills. The staff team had been trained to use positive behaviour support (PBS) and had fully implemented these techniques. Staff found this approach greatly reduced individual's distress and enhanced people's quality of life.

We found staff were committed to delivering a service which was person-centred. 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.

Staff took steps to safeguard vulnerable adults and promoted their human rights. Incidents were dealt with appropriately and lessons were learnt, which helped to keep people safe. People's health needs were thoroughly assessed. Staff actively promoted equality and diversity within the home.

Staff supported people to manage their healthcare needs and promoted their wellbeing. When necessary, external professionals were involved in individuals care. The staff supported people to eat varied appetizing meals. Medicine was administered in a safe manner.

Thorough checks were completed prior to staff being employed to work at the service. Staff had received appropriate training and supervision. The provider had enabled staff to access a varied and extensive range of condition specific training. The registered manager and staff had found the range of training they received assisted them to significantly improve people's quality of life.

People's voices were of paramount importance in the service. The registered manager understood how to investigate and resolve complaints.

The service was well run. Systems were in place, which effectively monitored how the service operated and

ensured staff delivered appropriate care and treatment.

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

Rating at last inspection

Good (report published 4 April 2017).

Why we inspected

This was a planned inspection based on the rating at the last inspection.

Follow up

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

The five questions we ask about services and what we found

We always ask the following five questions of services.

Is the service safe?

Good ●

The service was safe.

Details are in our Safe findings below.

Is the service effective?

Good ●

The service was effective.

Details are in our Effective findings below.

Is the service caring?

Good ●

The service was caring.

Details are in our Caring findings below.

Is the service responsive?

Good ●

The service was responsive.

Details are in our Responsive findings below.

Is the service well-led?

Good ●

The service was well-led.

Details are in our Well-Led findings below.

Denmark Street

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

An inspector completed this inspection.

Service and service type

Denmark Street is a care home. People in care homes receive accommodation and personal care. 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 was an unannounced inspection.

What we did

We reviewed information we had received about the service, which included details about incidents the provider must notify us about, feedback from the local authority and professionals who work with the service. 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 the information to plan our inspection.

During the inspection

We spoke with the five people who used the service about their experience of the care and support provided. We spoke with the registered manager, deputy manager, two care staff and healthcare professionals who

visit the service.

We reviewed a range of records. This included three people's care records, medication records and various records related to recruitment, staff training and supervision, and the management 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 the last inspection this key question was rated as good. At this inspection we found the key question has remained the same. This meant people were safe and protected from avoidable harm.

Assessing risk, safety monitoring and management; Learning lessons when things go wrong

- The registered manager critically reviewed all aspects of the service and determined if and where improvements were needed. They ensured staff considered how lessons could be learnt.
- Staff understood where people required support to reduce the risk of avoidable harm. Care plans contained explanations of the control measures for staff to follow to keep people safe.
- The environment and equipment were safe and well maintained. Emergency plans were in place to ensure people were supported in certain events, such as a fire. We discussed the evacuation process and the importance of all staff, including night staff having plans around fully evacuating the home and regularly reviewing these plans. The registered manager confirmed they planned to commence this form of training.
- One person worked as a volunteer at a local fire station and told us they "kept the staff [at the home] right" and helped the staff to do the routine checks.

Systems and processes to safeguard people from the risk of abuse

- The provider had effective safeguarding systems in place and all staff spoken with had a good understanding of what to do to make sure people were protected from harm or abuse. They had received appropriate and effective training in this topic area.
- A person commented, "I am really happy here and the staff are great at making me feel safe."

Staffing and recruitment

- There were always enough staff on duty to meet people's needs. Three people were very independent and did not need staff support when going out or to organise their day. Two care staff worked during the day and one care staff member at night. A deputy manager worked at the service and the registered manager regularly visited.
- The provider operated systems that ensured suitable staff were employed.

Using medicines safely

- People's medicines were appropriately managed. Medicines were safely received, stored, administered and destroyed. Clear protocols were in place for the use of 'as required' medicines.
- Records showed, and staff confirmed they had received training in medicines management and they had been assessed as competent in this area.

Preventing and controlling infection

- The home was clean, and people were protected from the risk of infection. Staff had received infection control training and said they had plenty of personal protective equipment such as gloves and aprons.

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 we found the key question 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

- The registered manager had ensured comprehensive holistic assessments were completed for people who used the service. These were regularly reviewed and updated.
- People's care was delivered in line with evidence-based guidance, which included PBS and other recognised techniques for supporting people to regulate their emotions. The registered manager ensured this informed the care plans, which assisted staff to support people to achieve effective outcomes.

Staff support: induction, training, skills and experience

- Staff had the skills and experience to support people. They received a comprehensive programme of training and included obtaining qualifications in PBS.
- New recruits completed the Care Certificate, as a part of their induction and shadowed experienced staff for their first few shifts.
- Staff had regular supervision meetings and appraisals. They told us they felt supported.

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

- Staff encouraged people to eat a healthy balanced diet. On a weekly basis people sat down and planned their menu for the week. People went with the staff to purchase the food and some people helped to prepare the meals.
- People told us the staff were good cooks and the meals were always appetising. A person commented, "All the staff are great cooks and the food they make is lovely."

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

- Staff supported people to access healthcare services when appropriate. Records showed when people had contact with other professionals including doctors and nurses. The records described the outcomes and if there had been any changes in people's needs.

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

- The service was designed to meet the needs of people who used the service. The building was a domestic sized house and people had been supported by staff to make their rooms homely. The provider made sure the home was maintained to a good standard.

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

The Mental Capacity Act 2005 (MCA) provides a legal framework for making 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 a particular decision and 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 with appropriate legal authority. In care homes, and some hospitals, this is usually through MCA application procedures called the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS).

We checked whether the service was working within the principles of the MCA, whether any restrictions on people's liberty had been authorised and whether any conditions on such authorisations were being met.

- The registered manager ensured staff followed all the principles and guidance related to MCA and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) authorisations. However, for people who lacked capacity evidence of capacity assessments and 'best interests' decisions needed to be in place for all decisions made on the person's behalf. The registered manager immediately put these documents in place.
- People were involved in all decisions about their care. Staff asked people for consent before providing them with assistance and constantly asked individuals what were their preferred choices.

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 comprehensive inspection this key question was rated as good. At this inspection we found the 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; respecting and promoting people's privacy, dignity and independence

- People were extremely complimentary about how the staff provided the care and support. A person commented, "The staff are wonderful. They are very kind and feel like family."
- Staff consistently displayed kindness and a caring attitude. The registered manager discussed how they had worked to ensure each person was valued and respected.
- Staff demonstrated they were highly motivated and committed to respecting people's equality, diversity and human rights. Staff told us were proud to work for a service which supported people's unique differences and empowered people to choose how they wanted to live. People showed us the artwork they created and discussed how they had now went out independently.

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

- Staff encouraged people to be involved in the design their own care. People told us staff routinely asked them how they wanted their care delivered and they regularly looked at their care records.
- The staff held regular meetings with the people who used the service and routinely contacted relatives. People told us their views about how the service was run were always sought.
- The registered manager ensured, when needed, people received support from advocacy services. An advocate helps people to access information and to be involved in decisions about their lives. Information about advocacy services was on display around the home.

Is the service responsive?

Our findings

Responsive – this means that services met people's needs.

At the last comprehensive inspection this key question was rated as good. . At this inspection we found the key question has remained the same. This meant people's needs were met through good organisation and delivery.

Planning personalised care to meet people's needs, preferences, interests and give them choice and control; 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 encouraged to enjoy a wide range of meaningful activities and access to the community. Staff had formed links with the Vault, which is a specialist hotel run by people living with autistic spectrum conditions and assisted people to find employment and training. Staff accompanied people to these activities and other events within the community.
- Three people independently accessed the community and told us they organised their days around their own interests. One person told us they worked as a volunteer in a fire station every week and thoroughly enjoyed helping the firemen keep the station in good working order. One person was a keen artist and showed us the art work they had recently completed.
- People's needs were identified, including those related to equality, and care plans created were detailed and individualised. People and relatives told us care was delivered in the way they wanted and needed it. A person commented, "Staff understand me and are really helpful."
- People's needs were identified, including those related to equality, and care plans created were detailed and individualised. The provider was in the process of introducing an electronic care system. They were working with staff and people to make sure this enhanced the current care records and none of the extremely informative detail was lost.

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.

- Reasonable adjustments were made where appropriate. The registered manager was ensuring the records fully met the communication needs of people, and as required by the Accessible Information Standard.

Improving care quality in response to complaints or concerns

- People had access to information on how to make a complaint. The registered manager had a comprehensive understanding of how to investigate and resolve concerns.
- People told us they had no concerns but were confident the registered manager would resolve any issues should they arise.

End of life care and support

- At the time of the inspection no one was receiving end of life care but staff had received training.

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 requires improvement. We had found the provider had had not been appropriately notifying us of incidents. At this inspection we found these issues had been resolved. The key question has improved to good. This meant the service was consistently managed and well-led. Leaders and the culture they created promoted high-quality, person-centred care.

Planning and promoting person-centred, high-quality care and support with openness; and how the provider understands and acts on their duty of candour responsibility; Managers and staff are clear about their roles, and understand quality performance, risks and regulatory requirements

- The service was well-run. The provider and registered manager's vision and values were imaginative and person-centred. They made sure people were at the heart of the service.
- The provider and registered manager maintained clear oversight of the service and critically reviewed the service to determine how further improvements could be made. Staff understood their roles, responsibilities and their accountability. They were held to account for their performance where required.
- The registered manager constantly kept abreast of new developments within care and ensured best practice guidance was implemented. They were committed to creating an innovative service.
- Staff were energised by their work. Every staff member was driven by people having choice and control over their own lives. Staff enjoyed celebrating people's successes no matter how small, which in turn led to people having increased confidence.
- Staff told us they felt listened to and that the registered manager was approachable. They understood the provider's vision for the service and they told us they worked well as a team.

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

- The provider and registered manager acted on feedback and used it to continuously improve the service. For example, they had looked at how people could be assisted to become more involved in the community. They had sourced additional funding to provide people with personal assistants who would go with people to events in the community.
- The service worked in partnership with external agencies to deliver a high standard of care to people. The provider had worked in partnership with the local council on a project piloting a direct payment scheme and this had benefited people who used the service.

Continuous learning and improving care

- The quality assurance system included lots of checks carried out by the registered manager and staff.
- The registered manager provided strong leadership and their constant critical review of the service had led to the noticeable improvements. They closely analysed the delivery of the service, consulted with staff, people and relatives to identify how they could enhance the service and remain at the forefront of best practice.

- Feedback from people confirmed that they felt listened to and integral to the service development.