

Education and Services for People with Autism Limited

Beechwood

Inspection report

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Ratings

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

Summary of findings

Overall summary

About the service

Beechwood is a residential care home providing personal care to eight people at the time of the inspection. This is the maximum number of people the service can support.

Services for people with learning disabilities and or autism are supported

The service is larger than recommended by best practice guidance. However, we have rated this service outstanding because the provider arranged the service in a way that ensured people received individual, person-centred care and were fully supported to maximise their independence, choice, control and involvement in the community.

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

People received highly personalised care from especially kind and considerate staff. People, relatives and professionals held the service in high regard. They praised the registered manager and staff team for the care and commitment shown to people. One relative commented, "[Family member] has been with ESPA 19 years and has made such progress. Beechwood is just wonderful, [family member] has been encouraged to be as independent as possible. It is just magic"

The registered manager and staff regularly went above and beyond to ensure they delivered person-centred care to meet people's needs and preferences. People participated in meaningful activities and had regular opportunities to access the local community. This included attending social groups and to volunteer.

People and relatives told us Beechwood was a safe place. Staff understood the safeguarding and whistle blowing policies and felt confident to speak up if needed. The service had enough staff to meet people's individual needs. New staff were recruited safely. The registered manager monitored incidents and accidents to help keep people safe. People received their medicines safely. Staff completed various risk assessments and health and safety checks to enhance people's safety.

Staff received good support and had access to a comprehensive training programme. Staff supported people to have enough to eat and drink. 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.

The registered manager showed effective leadership. People, relatives and staff felt able to speak with them at any time. The provider had an effective quality assurance process to help ensure people received excellent care which met their individual needs.

The service applied the principles and values of Registering the Right Support and other best practice guidance. These ensure people who use the service can live as full a life as possible and achieve the best possible outcomes that include control, choice and independence.

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.

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

Rating at last inspection

The last rating for this service was good (published 13 July 2017).

Why we inspected

This was a planned inspection based on the previous rating.

Follow up

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

The five questions we ask about services and what we found

We always ask the following five questions of services.

Is the service safe?

The service was safe.

Details are in our safe findings below.

Good ●

Is the service effective?

The service was effective.

Details are in our effective findings below.

Good ●

Is the service caring?

The service was exceptionally caring.

Details are in our caring findings below.

Outstanding ☆

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 well-led.

Details are in our well-Led findings below.

Good ●

Beechwood

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

One inspector carried out this inspection.

Service and service type

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

We gave the service 48 hours' notice of the inspection. This was because it is a small service and we needed to be sure that the provider or registered manager would be in the office to support the inspection.

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 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 of this information to plan our inspection.

During the inspection

We spoke with six people who used the service about their experience of the care provided. We spoke with

seven members of staff including the registered manager, senior support workers and support workers.

We reviewed a range of records. This included two people's care records and multiple medication records. We looked at two staff files in relation to recruitment and staff supervision. A variety of records relating to the management of the service, including policies and procedures were reviewed.

After the inspection

We received additional information from the provider to assist in making our judgments about the service.

We also spoke with four relatives of people living at 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 this key question has remained the same. This meant people were safe and protected from avoidable harm.

Systems and processes to safeguard people from the risk of abuse

- The provider had good systems to help keep people safe from abuse. Previous safeguarding matters had been fully investigated to prevent the situation from happening again.
- Staff had a good understanding of safeguarding and whistle blowing. They knew how to report concerns and were confident to do so, if needed.
- People and relatives confirmed the service was a safe place. People commented, "I am very, very safe. The staff are nice, I get on well with them."

Assessing risk, safety monitoring and management

- Staff assessed and managed risks to people's safety. They completed a range of health and safety checks and risk assessments to help keep people safe.
- The provider had appropriate procedures for dealing with emergency situations. This included personal emergency evacuation plans to guide staff about people's support needs in an emergency.

Staffing and recruitment

- Staffing levels were suitable to ensure people received personalised care. There was a visible staff presence throughout our visit to the service.
- People told us staff were available to support them with their support needs. Staff responded quickly to people's requests for assistance and to support them to access the community when they wanted.
- New staff were recruited safely.

Using medicines safely

- Staff supported people in various ways to take the medicines they needed. Staff maintained accurate records to show which medicines people had received.
- The registered manager and senior staff regularly checked people received the correct medicines, any issues were identified and resolved quickly.

Preventing and controlling infection; Learning lessons when things go wrong

- The provider acted to prevent and control infections. Staff completed infection control training and followed the provider's policies and procedures.
- The building was clean, well decorated and well maintained. One relative commented, "The building facility is fabulous."
- The registered manager investigated and analysed incidents and accidents. This helped ensure trends were identified and improvements made to people's care.

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 fully assessed to identify their care needs, including considering people's cultural, religious or social preferences.

Staff support: induction, training, skills and experience

- Staff received very good support and could access the training they needed. One staff member said, "I get excellent support. Management are very approachable. The rest of the team are also very helpful."
- Supervisions, appraisals and training were up-to-date.

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

- Staff supported people to ensure they had enough to eat and drink.
- People were involved in deciding what they had to eat and drink. They supported people to shop for ingredients to prepare meals.

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

- People's care records summarised important information. This was shared with professionals when they accessed other services.
- People had input from various health professionals depending on their individual needs. Staff followed recommendations and these were incorporated into people's care records.

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

- The home was suitable to meet the needs of people living there. The building was spacious and divided into small self-contained units where people either shared with others or had exclusive use.
- People's rooms were highly personalised. They had been decorated and furnished to suit their interests.

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.

- The provider followed the requirements of the MCA. MCA and best interest decisions had been made where required.
- Staff understood how to support people, who lacked capacity, to make choices and decisions about their care.

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 now improved to outstanding. This meant people were truly respected and valued as individuals; and empowered as partners in their care in an exceptional service.

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

- Staff were highly motivated and dedicated to provide highly personalised care. People were especially well looked after with staff showing a great amount of empathy and understanding. People commented, "I love this place. It is relaxing and laid back. We do lots of nice things" and "I will always be happy here, it is brilliant."
- Relatives and professionals said, "I can honestly say the staff are unbelievable, superb. It is a superbly run place. The building facility is fabulous" and "Overall, this is a service I have been particularly impressed with. This caring attitude, which has been across all staff I have met within the service, is replicated in the care I have witnessed being afforded to the individuals who live at Beechwood."
- Many staff had worked with people for a long time. This meant they had developed an in-depth understanding of their needs. Staff were proactive in encouraging people to discuss their aspirations and to support them to achieve their goals. One person told us, "The staff are all really nice and caring. I get on really well with them."
- Staff used their in-depth knowledge to achieve excellent outcomes with people. Staff worked with one person to turn an area of difficulty into a positive and productive aspect of their life. A health professional described how staff had worked collaboratively to ensure the person was heard and understood to achieve success.
- The inclusive approach of the registered manager and staff team had promoted a highly person-centred culture. One staff member commented, "The service is run how it should be. All for the benefit of the service users. Teamwork is good, we have to be flexible. The eight service users are all totally different, we adopt different ways for each person. It's not about what we want, it is about what the service users want."

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

- People and their families were central to how the care was provided at Beechwood. Staff regularly went above and beyond to provide the best care possible and to fully involve people in all decisions about their care.
- Staff had provided exceptional care and support throughout a difficult time in one person's life. Relatives and health professionals praised the service for this excellent care. One relative said, "I am absolutely happy with the place, it is wonderful. The staff are incredible. [Family member] is so happy."
- Staff involved people so they were always central to decisions made about their care or treatment options. Staff worked tirelessly and patiently to ensure people received positive outcomes. One person said, "I definitely get my views heard."

Respecting and promoting people's privacy, dignity and independence

- Privacy, dignity and independence were fully respected, maintained and promoted. Staff treated people with respect at all times. One relative said, "It is absolutely perfect. The staff are wonderful, they treat [person] with respect. They are fantastic. They really engage with people so well."
- Staff supported people to be as independent as they could be. They understood people's needs and used this to encourage people to achieve their goals. One relative commented, "Staff are well aware of autism, we just find them brilliant. [Family member] is so at home there, we never thought we would find anything like it."
- Relatives and visitors were welcomed into the service at any time. Relatives were kept informed about their family member. Relative's commented, "I feel I can ring or visit anytime without any notice and I will be welcome" and "To be honest as a management team they are superb. At the moment they ring me every day. They care deeply for [family member], staff are so eager to join in and be involved."
- The provider was proactive in promoting inclusion and equality. Although people did not have specific needs in this area, the initial assessment was used as an opportunity to educate people about diversity, protected characteristics and why it is important to show respect. People's lifestyle choices were fully respected and supported.

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 outstanding. At this inspection this key question has remained the same. This meant services were tailored to meet the needs of individuals and delivered to ensure flexibility, choice and continuity of care.

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

- Care and support was planned and developed with people and relative's views at the heart of all decisions made. Support plans were accessible and identified clear outcomes and goals which had been agreed jointly with people.
- Staff had excellent qualities and had developed a deep understanding of people's needs, preferences and wishes. A highly responsive staff team supported people to achieve especially positive outcomes. Relatives commented, "Beechwood is a fantastic place. I have always felt the same. This last year they have gone above and beyond anything I could have dreamed of."
- People were actively involved in identifying and fulfilling their dreams and aspirations. Staff worked tirelessly to ensure people achieved these. One person had an interest in a particular area of work and was being supported to explore how to make this possible. Other people were supported to learn new skills.
- People had been supported to achieve many goals including holidays, short breaks, budgeting, losing weight, improving fitness and travelling independently.

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

- The service continued to develop excellent links with the local community. People were actively involved in a range of social activities, as well as educational, volunteering and work opportunities. One relative said, "It has absolutely made [family member's] life. [Family member] goes to help out at the old folks' club, they like that. [Family member] has been helped to be more independent. We never expected them to be so independent."
- The service continued to provide people with a diverse activities programme. These were specifically tailored to people's individual preferences and needs.
- People and relatives described how staff supported people to participate in activities which interested them. One relative told us, "[Family member] is offered lots of things to become involved in. They fully respect [family member's] free will and choices. They have been to college, jewellery making classes and working at the outdoor centre."
- Since the last inspection staff worked with some people to develop skills to travel to and from community placements independently.
- Staff actively supported people to maintain social relationships with other people living at service, relatives and other friends.

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 service understood and followed the AIS. All people living at Beechwood had good verbal communication skills and didn't specifically require any individual strategies. People's understanding of information was assessed through discussion.
- Information was still made available in pictorial and easy read formats. Social stories were used extensively to help people make important decisions.

Improving care quality in response to complaints or concerns

- The provider had a structured approach to complaints which was accessible to people and relatives.
- Previous complaints had been fully investigated and resolved.

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 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

- Management and the staff team worked effectively to meet people's needs. Staff and relatives described the service as having good leadership. Staff described a strong ethos of teamwork. One relative commented, "To be honest as a management team they are superb. At the moment they ring me every day."
- The service had a positive and welcoming atmosphere. One staff member said, "We have a happy atmosphere. It is so lovely here, very welcoming."

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

- People and relatives said the registered manager was approachable. They felt able to speak with management anytime they needed to. One relative said, "[Registered manager] is brilliant, she has been really, really helpful."
- The registered manager was proactive in submitting the required notifications following significant events at the service, such as for incidents and accidents.

Engaging and involving people using the service, the public and staff, fully considering their equality characteristics

- The provider encouraged people and staff to be involved in the running of the service and to share their views.
- People, relatives and staff could share their views through meetings and formal consultation. Relatives had given very positive feedback in the most recent questionnaires they had completed.

Continuous learning and improving care; Working in partnership with others

- The provider had an effective quality assurance system which successfully identified areas for improvement and lessons learnt.
- The provider worked with local commissioners, health professionals and community groups to promote good outcomes for people.