

Transform Residential Limited

Ruskin Mill College

Inspection report

The Fisheries
Horsley
Nailsworth
Gloucestershire
GL6 0PL

Tel: 01453837500
Website: www.rmet.org.uk

Date of inspection visit:
04 July 2017

Date of publication:
08 August 2017

Ratings

Overall rating for this service	Inspected but not rated
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Is the service safe?	Good ●
Is the service well-led?	Good ●



Summary of findings

Overall summary

Ruskin Mill is a specialist residential college. The service is registered to provide accommodation and personal care for up to twenty young people. The service is also registered to provide personal care to young people living with Shared Lives carers. People using the service were between 16 and 25 years of age.

At the time of our inspection eight people were living at three addresses registered to provide accommodation and personal care. These were called 'team homes'. The college provided staff to support people at these addresses. Twenty people were using the Shared Lives scheme under the regulated activity of personal care. Students live with Shared Lives carers in their home. Ruskin Mill recruits, trains and monitors Shared Lives carers who are paid a fee to provide care and support to students.

People using the Shared Lives scheme and living in team homes all attended the college. The Care Quality Commission (CQC) regulates and inspects the accommodation and personal care provided by Ruskin Mill. The educational provision at the college is regulated and inspected by the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED).

Most of the young people used the service in term time only. However, if required, by individual arrangement they were able to stay at their 'team home' or Shared Lives carer when the college shut at the end of term.

We carried out an unannounced focused inspection of this service because we had received some information of concern and we wanted to investigate this. We have only looked at the areas of safe and well-led as the concerns were within these areas.

This report only covers our findings in relation to these specific areas. You can read the report from our last comprehensive inspection, by selecting the 'all reports' link for 'Ruskin Mill College' on our website at www.cqc.org.uk. Our findings at this inspection have not changed the current rating of 'good' for the key questions of Safe and Well-led or the overall 'good' service rating.

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

There was a robust safeguarding process in place at Ruskin Mill College. Staff had received safeguarding training and were able to describe the various types of abuse. There were clear processes in place for staff and people using the service to report concerns. Where concerns had been raised they were reported to the appropriate agencies and the concerns had been addressed appropriately.

The service had implemented thorough checks to ensure the staff who were employed were suitable and safe for the role. Staff had received a thorough induction when they first started working at the service to

ensure they were appropriately skilled to support the people using the service.

The registered manager and senior leadership team offered strong leadership which was evident throughout the inspection. Staff we spoke with told us they felt confident in the skills of the management team and felt well supported by management. The vision and values of the service were clear and coherent. Staff of all levels had a good understanding of the visions and values. There was a positive, open and transparent culture within the service. The staff and management took accountability of their own practice to ensure the service provided to people was person centred and safe. Staff told us they were encouraged to question and challenge regardless of their job role and this had promoted a positive culture within the service. Staff told us this had resulted in positive staff morale across the organisation.

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.

There were robust safeguarding processes in place to ensure the safety of the people using the service was maintained.

Staff had received safeguarding training and had a good understanding of the different types of abuse.

Where safeguarding concerns had been raised, there was evidence these had been managed appropriately.

Relevant checks had been carried out to ensure staff and volunteers employed at the service were suitable for the role.

There was a robust assessment process to ensure Shared Lives carers were suitable for the role.

Is the service well-led?

Good ●

The service was well-led.

The registered manager and management team offered strong leadership.

Staff, people and relatives spoke positively about the leadership of the service.

The vision and values of the service were clear and coherent. Staff on all levels had a good understanding of these visions and values.

There was a positive, open and transparent culture within the service.

Ruskin Mill College

Detailed findings

Background to this inspection

We carried out this inspection under Section 60 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 as part of our regulatory functions. This inspection was carried out to check on information we had received and to see if the provider was meeting the legal requirements and regulations associated with the Health and Social Care Act 2008. We also checked the overall quality of the service, and reviewed the rating for the service under the Care Act 2014.

We undertook a focused inspection of Ruskin Mill College on 4 July 2017. We inspected the service against two of the five questions we ask about services: is the service safe and is the service well led. The inspection was undertaken by one adult social care inspector.

Prior to the inspection we reviewed the information we held about the service, for example, statutory notifications. A notification is information about important events which the provider is required to tell us about by law.

We spoke with seven people who lived at Ruskin Mill College and eight members of staff as part of the inspection. We spoke with four social care professionals to obtain their views on the service.

Is the service safe?

Our findings

At our last comprehensive inspection of this service in December 2016 the service was rated as good in this area. At this inspection we looked at how the service protected people from being harmed or abused and how the service ensured suitable staff were recruited.

People told us they felt safe. Comments included; "The staff are good and this makes me feel safe." One person who was receiving a Shared Lives service told us "Yes, I feel safe with my (Shared Lives carers) and if I have concerns I can always speak to the staff at the college who always listen." Another person told us they felt looked after and safe. People reacted positively to staff and seemed relaxed and contented. Relatives said they felt people were safe.

People were kept safe by staff and Shared Lives carers who knew about the different types of abuse to look for and what action to take when abuse was suspected. They were able to describe the action they would take if they thought people were at risk of abuse, or being abused. They were also able to give us examples of the sort of things that may give rise to a concern of abuse. There was a safeguarding procedure to follow with contact information for the local authority's safeguarding team. Easy read flowcharts of action to be taken if abuse was suspected, witnessed or alleged were on display. Staff and Shared Lives carers we spoke with told us they had completed training in keeping people safe. This was a mix of in-house training from the safeguarding manager at the college as well as external training from the local authority.

Staff knew about 'whistle blowing' policies and practices within the organisation. The staff we spoke with were confident to report whistle blowing concerns to management. Staff told us they felt confident in the ability of the management team to manage any concerns effectively.

The provider had appropriately raised safeguarding alerts. Where concerns had been raised, these had been investigated and the appropriate action had been taken to keep people safe. The provider operated an electronic alert system, where any staff member or Shared Lives carer could send a message raising any information of concern. These were reviewed on a daily basis by the safeguarding manager to ensure any alerts regarding potential abuse, bullying or harassment were identified and acted upon. The system also allowed for urgent alerts to be raised immediately with managers. Staff and Shared Lives carers said they used this system and found it to be helpful.

During the inspection, we saw evidence of how the provider continually developed their safeguarding training to meet the needs of the people using the service. For example, following a recent safeguarding concern, the provider had recognised there was a need to increase the knowledge of the people using the service in relation to safeguarding. This would ensure people felt more confident to raise safeguarding concerns to staff in a timely manner. The safeguarding manager showed us a safeguarding course they had developed which focused on the people using the service. They told us this would be delivered to all of the people using the service in September 2017. The course will be spread over six sessions during a six week period. The safeguarding manager told us as this was a new initiative, they will be using the feedback from people to further improve the course over the coming years.

Relevant checks were carried out before staff started work. These checks included a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. A DBS check allows employers to check an applicant's police record for any convictions that may prevent them from working with vulnerable people. Where staff had been overseas for a period of time, the provider also obtained relevant background checks from the country in which they had been residing to assure themselves that staff were suitable. References were obtained from previous employers. These checks were also carried out with Shared Lives carers before people moved in with them and any volunteers supporting people. Recruitment procedures were understood and followed by the registered manager. We saw that a robust recruitment process was used, with the provider assessing the skills, abilities and values of potential employees, Shared Lives carers and volunteers.

The registered manager told us all Shared Lives carers underwent an assessment process focussing on their knowledge and skills, the suitability of their premises and their emotional resilience. This would be followed up by a report from the assessor which would be presented to a panel made up of community representatives. At the time of the inspection, the panel consisted of one person who was a previous Shared Lives carer, one person who had previously worked for the local authority's fostering team, one person with experience of working in education and a previous manager of Ruskin Mill College.

The registered manager told us once people had been approved as Shared Lives carers, they would undergo a six week induction process. This included core training and regular checks in the home once a student moved in with them to ensure they had the skills and knowledge to support people safely.

Is the service well-led?

Our findings

At our last full inspection of this service in December 2016 the service was rated as good in this area. During this inspection, we looked at the leadership of the service, the culture within the service and the vision and values of the service.

The service was well-led and had good leadership. There was a registered manager in post who was supported by four house leaders for the residential service and a Shared Lives coordinator who oversaw the Shared Lives scheme. The registered manager told us they would be taking up a new role within the organisation. A new manager had been recruited and was already in post. At the time of the inspection, the registered manager and newly recruited manager were managing the service together as part of the handover process. The registered manager and new manager had submitted the relevant application to CQC for the change in registered manager.

Throughout the inspection, it was evident the registered manager and the rest of the management team offered strong leadership and had a clear vision about the direction of the service. They were highly committed to improving people's lives and ensuring people had the best care they could receive, and expected the same high standards from the staff who were as committed to these values as the registered manager was. The management team were very much part of the overall care team at Ruskin Mill College. They were involved in people's care and were visible and approachable.

Staff spoke positively about the management team. People living at Ruskin Mill College were complimentary about the registered manager. Relatives and professionals also spoke positively about the registered manager. Staff told us they felt they could discuss any concerns they had with the registered manager. Staff used words such as "Approachable", "Open" and "Easy to work with" to describe the registered manager. People using the service described the registered manager as "A fantastic person" and "Very Caring." One person said "They are always there for us."

The staff described the registered manager as being "hands on" and helped staff with care tasks throughout the shifts. We observed this during the inspection as the registered manager would regularly attend to matters of care throughout the day. The staff said there was an open culture within the service and management encouraged staff to ask questions. Staff told us the approach of the management meant they felt confident to challenge the managers if they disagreed with decisions made by the management team. Staff told us any discussions around these issues would be open and constructive. Staff told us they felt morale amongst the staff team was high and this was down to good leadership from the entire management team.

The registered manager and management team spoke about the vision and values of the service which were clear and coherent. The overall vision of the service was described as re-imagining potential'. This was further defined in four key values. These values were; inclusive learning, mutual respect, recognising the capacity for growth and valuing openness and tolerance. Staff of all levels including the Shared Lives carers, received training that explored the vision and values to ensure they were understood and put into practice.

Throughout our inspection we saw a person centred, open and transparent culture and a commitment to providing high quality care and support. Staff at all levels understood the vision, values and culture of the service and were able to explain them.