

Astra Homes Limited

Church Road Hostel

Inspection report

201 Chruch Road
Upper Norwood
London
SE19 2PS

Tel: 02087691340
Website: www.astrahomes.co.uk

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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

Church Road Hostel is a supported living service that provides twenty four hour personal care support to people with mental health needs. There were 17 people using the service at the time of this inspection.

This inspection took place on 10 December 2015 and was unannounced. At our previous inspection in April 2014, we found the provider was meeting the regulations we inspected.

The service had a registered manager in post. 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 2008 and associated Regulations about how the service is run.

People told us they liked staying at Church Road Hostel and said the staff who supported them were polite and caring towards them. There was a relaxed and friendly atmosphere when we visited.

People were supported to have their health needs met. Staff worked with the person to access the GP and other local health services as appropriate to help make sure their individual health needs were met. We saw that people's prescribed medicines were being stored securely and managed safely.

There were systems and processes in place to protect people from the risk of harm and staff were aware of safeguarding procedures. Appropriate recruitment checks took place before staff started work.

Staff received training which gave them the knowledge and skills to support people effectively. Staff had received training in the Mental Capacity Act (MCA) 2005 and the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS). People were asked for their consent to the care and support they received.

There was a system in place for dealing with people's concerns and complaints. People told us they knew how to complain and felt confident that staff would respond and take appropriate action.

The registered manager understood their role and responsibilities and positive feedback was received from staff about their leadership. There were effective systems in place to help ensure the safety and quality of the service provided.

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. People received the support they required to keep them safe. Identified risks to people's safety and welfare were being managed appropriately.

There were enough staff to meet people's needs.

Medicines were managed safely.

Recruitment processes were robust and appropriate pre-employment checks had been completed to help ensure people's safety.

Is the service effective?

Good ●

The service was effective. Staff were up to date with their training requirements and had the knowledge and skills to meet people's needs.

The service complied with the requirements of the Mental Capacity Act (MCA) 2005 and the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS).

Staff supported people to access healthcare services to help make sure their physical and mental health needs were met.

Is the service caring?

Good ●

The service was caring. People were treated with kindness and their dignity was respected.

Relationships between staff and people using the service were positive. Staff knew people well and provided care and support in line with their wishes and preferences.

Is the service responsive?

Good ●

The service was responsive. Staff were knowledgeable about people's care and support needs.

People were supported to be independent and to maintain contact with people who were important to them.

People using the service felt able to raise concerns or complaints.	
<p>Is the service well-led?</p> <p>The service was well-led. There was a registered manager in post who was organised, visible and approachable. Staff felt supported in their role and said they did not have any concerns about the service.</p> <p>There were systems in place to monitor the quality of the service and make improvements where needed.</p>	<p>Good ●</p>

Church Road Hostel

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 planned to check whether the provider is meeting the legal requirements and regulations associated with the Health and Social Care Act 2008, to look at the overall quality of the service, and to provide a rating for the service under the Care Act 2014.

This inspection took place on 10 December 2015 and was unannounced.

Prior to our inspection we reviewed the information we held about the service. This included any safeguarding alerts and outcomes, complaints, previous inspection reports and notifications that the provider had sent to CQC. Notifications are information about important events which the service is required to tell us about by law.

The inspection was carried out by one inspector. We spoke with nine people who used the service, the registered manager and three members of staff. We observed care and support in communal areas, spoke with people in private and looked at the support records for three people. We reviewed how medicines were managed and the records relating to this. We checked four staff recruitment files and the records kept for staff allocation, training and supervision. We looked at records for the management of the service including quality assurance audits and health and safety records. Feedback was received from one external care professional following our visit.

Is the service safe?

Our findings

People who used the service told us they felt safe. One person said, "I definitely feel safe here." Another person commented, "I don't have any problem, they look after me good here."

People told us there were enough staff on duty to meet their needs. Three support staff were on duty during the day with one staff member working in the evening who provided an on-call service overnight whilst sleeping on the premises. The registered manager and a cook worked supernumerary to the support staff.

Staff told us, and records confirmed, they had received training in safeguarding adults from abuse. They knew the action to take and who they would report concerns to in order to protect people using the service. Staff felt confident that managers would take appropriate action to keep the people using the service at Church Road Hostel safe. An external care professional involved with the service told us that the registered manager and staff had supported people using the service during a safeguarding investigation "to the best of their abilities." One staff member said, "I would go to the manager, I would always make sure I told someone." A staff information folder included a safeguarding process flow chart for staff to follow and local authority contact information that could be used to report concerns. Staff were also aware of the whistleblowing policy and we saw this had been signed by each staff member to confirm they had read and understood it.

Care files included assessments of risks associated with people's support such as taking medicines or holding a front door key. Incidents and accidents were reported and we saw evidence that action was taken to make sure people were kept safe. For example, contacting the allocated Community Psychiatric Nurse (CPN) and arranging for them to meet with the person to discuss the changes in their behaviour. We saw that staff were not always recording the action taken and any changes in approach required in the person's support documentation. This was brought to the attention of the registered manager who agreed to make sure that all staff were reminded to review risk assessments and support plans immediately following any incidents or accidents.

Medicines were managed safely with the support tailored to the person's needs. One person told us, "I take my medicines up to the office and they help me take them." Prescribed medicines were kept securely either in people's rooms or in the office and the records were clear and up to date. The records showed that people were receiving their medicines regularly and as prescribed. We saw that staff received training to enable them to administer medicines safely and regular audits were carried out to ensure this.

We saw regular checks took place to help keep people staying in the hostel safe, for example, of fridge temperatures and fire equipment. Equipment in use was serviced as required. For example, gas boilers were checked annually.

Appropriate recruitment checks took place before staff started work. We looked at the personnel files for four members of staff. Each file contained evidence that criminal record checks had been carried out along with two employment references, right to work checks and proof of identity. The provider had recently

refreshed the criminal records checks for longer serving members of staff in order to update their records.

Is the service effective?

Our findings

People using the service spoke positively about the support provided by the staff working at Church Road Hostel. One person said, "I like it here, the staff are cool." Another person said "It's all ok, I like living here, the staff are kind."

Staff had the skills and knowledge to support people effectively. Staff said that they received the training they needed to care for people and meet their assessed needs. One staff member told us, "I have learned more from the manager." Another staff member said "We have a lot of training, the manager trains us."

Records showed that staff had undertaken training across a number of areas including safeguarding adults, medicines, first aid and the Mental Capacity Act. Staff also received training in topics specific to the needs of people using the service, for example, around mental and physical health issues. The registered manager made sure training was recorded and talked about obtaining external training when required to support staff with their learning. One staff member told us they had just completed their National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) award.

Staff were supported effectively in their job role. Staff said, and records confirmed, that they received regular one to one supervision sessions with the registered manager where they could discuss their work and identify any training needs. We also saw that staff had recently received their annual appraisal. One staff member said, "I do feel supported here" and this view was echoed by all of the staff we talked to.

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. We saw consent was obtained as required from each person around the support provided by staff and specific issues such as holding medicines on their behalf.

The people receiving support said they were able to come and go as they pleased. Access to the property was monitored by staff to ensure people's safety and people were able to have their own front door keys following a risk assessment. The people we spoke to were satisfied with this arrangement and understood the need to monitor who was on the premises for safety reasons.

People receiving support at Church Road Hostel were provided with a cooked meal each lunchtime. People told us they enjoyed the food and were able to give their views as to the menus provided in the regular service meetings.

Staff supported people to access the healthcare services they needed. Records showed that staff supported people to attend appointments with their GP and other specialist health services.

Is the service caring?

Our findings

We asked people about the service and the staff who supported them. People said they liked living at Church Road Hostel, that staff treated them politely and with dignity and respect. People told us that they were supported to maintain relationships with family and friends. One person said, "The staff are generous with their time and kind" and another person told us, "They look after me nice." A third person commented, "The staff are fine."

A questionnaire had been completed by people using the service in 2015 with 91% saying that they got on 'well' or 'very well' with staff. Another question asked what staff did if a person wanted to speak with them. The majority of people responded that staff would stop and listen to them or alternatively give them a time to talk later if they were busy.

Observed interactions between people and the staff supporting them were friendly and respectful. People looked relaxed and comfortable with the staff during our visit and they could choose what to do, where to spend their time and who with. Most people spent time in their rooms and people went out independently throughout the day.

Staff spoke positively about the service provided and gave us examples of how they ensured the privacy and dignity of people using the service including knocking on doors and making sure the person received personal care in private. One staff member said, "We treat them as we would like to be treated." Other staff members told us, "Its friendly here" and "We think about how it would feel if we were not treated in the right way."

Each person had a one page profile summary including some personal history, preferences and routines. The registered manager gave us a number of examples of how they monitored people using the service including signs they would look for to indicate someone was upset or not feeling well. We found staff were knowledgeable about people using the service, their preferences and daily routines.

Each person had a keyworker although different feedback was received from people as to whether they knew which staff member was allocated to them and how often they met. One person said "They keep up to date with me." Records were kept of keyworker meetings however the registered manager reported that work was on-going to improve the quality of information being recorded.

We saw that people had been involved in the planning and review of their support plans and had signed to say they agreed with the content. The plans were written in the first person with statements such as 'I have staff support with' and 'I can do' helping the person voice their own preferences for care.

Is the service responsive?

Our findings

One person told us, "The staff are helpful" and another person said, "We are on an equal level with the staff, that's what I like." A third person said, "The staff help me make appointments."

We saw people were supported as required by staff to undertake activities of daily living including preparing meals, doing laundry and cleaning their rooms. Support plans seen contained guidance for staff profiling each person's care needs across a range of documents including their personal details, a one page profile and plans for areas such as activities of daily living, personal hygiene and health. We saw that care documentation was well organised, kept under review and subject to audit by senior staff.

Overall support goals were in place for people, for example, to support them in building independent living skills such as cooking and budgeting money. We discussed breaking these broad goals down into more specific and detailed steps with the registered manager who agreed to take this forward as a development area with the staff team.

Handovers and daily notes helped to make sure that staff had access to the most up to date information about the people they supported. The daily handover was used to discuss each person in turn and share information between staff. A key events sheet at the front of each person's file recorded 'at a glance' information for staff about recent health appointments and significant events.

Regular tenants meetings were held to obtain the views of people using the service. The meetings were used to discuss any issues and to make sure people were satisfied with the support provided. One person said, "I can raise issues in the meeting, I feel able to do that."

Other people said they felt able to raise any issues or concerns with staff and were confident that these would be acted upon. The office door was open to people and we observed individuals having discussions with staff and the registered manager throughout our inspection.

People using the service were made aware of the complaints system. One person told us, "It's on the wall out there." The displayed complaints procedure set out the process which would be followed by the provider and included contact details of the provider, local authorities and the Care Quality Commission. The records kept of any concerns received by the service were reviewed and appropriate action had been taken in each instance. One person said, "I'm quite happy, no complaints" and another person commented, "Any problems, they sort it out."

Is the service well-led?

Our findings

People and staff spoken with said the registered manager was approachable and the service was well managed. One person told us, "The manager, he's alright." Another person said, "He's nice, I can talk to him" whilst a third person commented, "The manager helps me with making phone calls about my benefits."

Staff said that they felt able to raise any concerns with the registered manager should they have any. They said he was very organised and they felt comfortable talking to him if they had any issues or concerns. One staff member said, "They care about the staff, they care about the clients." Another staff member told us they learnt from the registered manager and felt comfortable in talking to him.

The manager was also registered with CQC to lead another care service for the same organisation and split their time on a daily basis between the two locations. He demonstrated an in-depth knowledge of this service throughout our inspection and staff confirmed that he was available when they needed him either in person or on the telephone.

Minutes of recent staff meetings showed staff were involved in discussions about the operation of the service and how people were supported. Staff discussed what was working for people when they supported them and any concerns they had about individuals.

Records showed the home had systems to regularly check the quality of the service provided and make sure any necessary improvements were made. For example, regular checks were carried out on the medicines to make sure staff were following the correct procedures. The building and equipment was checked to make sure that it was safe and well-maintained and individual financial records audited monthly with action taken as required.

A new compliance audit had been introduced by the registered manager based on the Care Quality Commission's own five key questions. This tool was used by the registered manager to assess the quality of service provided and make improvements as required. Church Road was also subject to external quality checks by the registered provider who visited the home on a monthly basis and compiled a detailed report of their findings.

People were sent an annual questionnaire by the organisation to ask for their feedback. The findings from the 2015 exercise had been collated by the registered manager and this was going to form part of an annual development plan due to be formulated for the service.