

Underley Educational Services

The Garden Site Underley

Inspection report

Underley Garden School
Kirkby Lonsdale
Carnforth
Lancashire
LA6 2DZ

Tel: 01524271569

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Ratings

Overall rating for this service

Good ●

Is the service safe?

Requires Improvement ●

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

We carried out this unannounced inspection on 25 July 2016.

Underley adult care services provide care and accommodation at The Garden Site for up to seven young adults with learning disabilities and complex needs. The Garden Site consists of three semi-detached properties, a self-contained flat and a one bedroomed cottage. These are set in a courtyard on a private country estate on the edge of the market town of Kirkby Lonsdale. Each type of property has accommodation for care staff to sleep in overnight and a small office. At the time of our inspection there were seven people living there.

We last inspected The Garden Site in February 2014 and found it met five of the essential standards that we looked at. During this inspection we found that the records relating to the safe management and administration of medicines were not always accurate or completed in full.

This was a breach of Regulation 12 (2) (g) Safe Care and treatment of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014.

There was a registered manager in post on the day of our inspection. 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. In this service the registered manager is also the registered provider.

We found that people who used this service were safe. The staff knew how to protect people from harm. Staff had completed training in the safety of vulnerable adults and knew the signs to look for and how to report any incidents of concern.

We saw that recruitment procedures were robust this helped to ensure only suitable people worked in the service. We saw that staffing levels were good throughout all areas of the service. Staff training was up to date and provided the care staff with the right skills and knowledge for the complex needs of the people living in the homes. We saw that staff were supported by the management team through regular staff supervision and appraisals.

We found that the service worked very well with a variety of external agencies. Such as social services, local GP's, learning disabilities, mental health teams, and advocacy to provide appropriate care and support to meet people's physical and emotional needs.

A survey conducted by the registered provider in September 2015 to gather people's views on the quality of the service said people who lived at The Garden Site, relatives and stakeholders were 100% happy with the service provided.

Observations during our inspection evidenced people who lived at The Garden Site were given choices about how they wanted to be supported and how to live their lives. Support was given to people in a manner that promoted their independence. Activities were provided to take account of people's interests and preferences.

The service followed the requirements of the Mental Capacity Act 2005 Code of practice and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguarding (DoLS). This helped to protect the rights of people who were not able to make important decisions themselves. Best interest meetings were held to assist people who were not always able to make difficult decisions for themselves and where relevant independent advocacy was arranged. However the process in which the decisions had been made had not always been recorded.

We recommended the provider ensured that the decision process used in people's best interests were always documented and to always confirm if relevant others did have legal authorisation.

'You can see what action we told the provider to take at the back of the full version of the report.'

The five questions we ask about services and what we found

We always ask the following five questions of services.

Is the service safe?

Requires Improvement 

The service was not always safe.

Records relating to the management of medication were not always accurate or completed in full.

People told us they felt safe.

Staff knew how to protect people from harm. There were good systems in place to ensure people knew the staff that supported them.

People recruited had all the appropriate checks completed before they commenced working.

Is the service effective?

Good 

This service was effective.

People received support from staff that had the right training and skills to provide the care they needed.

Health care professionals were consulted when necessary.

People's rights were protected because the Mental Capacity Act 2005 Code of practice was followed when decisions were made on their behalf however the best interest process was not always recorded.

Is the service caring?

Good 

The service was caring.

Staff interacted with people in a positive way and support was focussed on the individual and on providing the care they wanted.

The staff were knowledgeable about the level of support people required and their independence was promoted.

People told us they were well cared for.

Is the service responsive?

Good 

The service was responsive.

Staff took into account the needs and preferences of the people they supported.

People were supported to engage in activities which were important to them.

Care plans were based on a comprehensive assessment of people's needs.

There was a system to receive and handle complaints or concerns.

Is the service well-led?

Good 

The service was well led.

People who lived at The Garden Site and the staff knew the registered manager well and were confident to raise any concerns with them.

The staff were well supported by the registered manager and seniors in the team.

The service had good systems in place for staff to identify and report incidents or concerns and for these to be investigated and action taken.

The registered provider had systems in place to monitor the quality of the service provided however these had not been effective in identifying errors with the records for the management of medications.

The Garden Site Underley

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 was 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 25 July 2016. This visit was unannounced and was carried out by a lead adult social care inspector.

Before the inspection we reviewed the information we held about the service this included any notifications sent to us by the provider and contacted some commissioners of the service. We asked the provider to complete a Provider Information Return (PIR) before the inspection. This is a form that asks the provider to give some key information about the service, what the service does well and improvements they plan to make. They provided this information in good time.

During the inspection we spoke to four people who lived at The Garden Site, the registered manager, a team leader, four care staff, and the provider's education principal for the site.

We looked at two care plans in detail, five staff recruitment files these included details of recruitment, induction, training and personal development. We were also given copies of the training records for the whole team. We also looked at records relating to how complaints and incidents were managed. How the provider checked the quality of the service provided including the most recent survey results on how people viewed the service. We also received records to confirm that the properties that people lived in had been correctly maintained. We also looked at how medication was managed and stored.

Is the service safe?

Our findings

People we spoke with who lived at The Garden Site told us they felt safe with the service provided. One person said, "Yes, I feel safe I have the same staff that help me and I feel safe with them." Another person said, "Yes they (care staff) keep me safe."

We looked at medication records in the two care records we sampled and found these were not always accurate or completed correctly. We saw that when medication had been given the administration record had not always been signed. The member of care staff responsible confirmed during the inspection that it had been an omission but they had actually given the medication as prescribed. We also saw that stock records for one medication had not been recorded accurately. We also saw that the prescribed dosage had been increased for one person's medication however care staff had signed the administration records for the old dosage. This was investigated by the team leader on shift during the inspection. They could confirm that the stock of the medication was actually correct however the records had been completed wrongly. This meant that we could not be certain based on the records that medications were being handled safely.

This was a breach of Regulation 12 (2)(g) Safe Care and treatment of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014.

We looked at the records relating to accidents and incidents that had occurred. We saw that these were investigated by the registered manager and where any actions had been required we saw that these had been taken. We saw where necessary information had been shared with the commissioning authority. All the records we looked at showed actions that had been taken in response to these incidents to promote the safety and wellbeing of people who used the service.

People received support from a regular team of care staff who they knew well and who understood the care and support they required. We saw that people were treated with kindness and respect and people who lived there made very positive comments about the staff who cared for them in their individual properties.

The care staff we spoke with told us they thought that people who lived at The Garden Site were kept safe. They told us that they knew how to identify abuse and alert the appropriate people. Staff also told us they would be confident to report any concerns to the registered manager or any senior staff. Records we looked at confirmed they had all received training in the safeguarding of vulnerable adults. There was a whistle blowing policy that was available to all staff and details of how to report concerns.

We looked at care records and saw that risk assessments had been completed covering all aspects of people's needs. Risk assessments had been carried out to identify hazards to individuals' safety and to inform care staff on how to reduce and manage those risks. Where people had complex care needs additional risk assessments had been completed. We saw that the risk assessments were written in a positive way to support people to live as independently as possible while protecting their safety.

We looked at the provider's recruitment procedure and saw that this was both appropriate and robust. We

saw that all the checks and information required by law had been obtained before new staff could commence employment in the service. References had been sought and we noted that they were usually from the most recent previous employer in accordance with the provider's recruitment policy. Checks with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks had also been conducted.

We saw that there was always sufficient care staff on duty to meet the individual needs of the people they supported.

Is the service effective?

Our findings

People who lived at The Garden Site that could speak with us told us, "My staff know what they're doing they can tell when I'm in a bad mood." Another person told us, "I have the same staff looking after me, I like that." We saw that the service supported people to lead full and active lives. We were told and saw form records that they followed the activities of their choice and for two people they were supported to be a part of the local community through voluntary local employment.

The staff we spoke with told us and records we saw showed that they received a range of training to ensure they had the skills to provide the right support people required. We saw that not only did staff receive basic training but that they received training that was specific to the individual needs of the people they cared for. One member of staff told us they had a, "Brilliant induction" and "Felt competent before going to work with people who had complex needs." Another member of care staff told us, "We're always having training, we get updates all the time." The care staff we spoke with told us that new employees completed thorough training before working with individual people.

The care staff we spoke with told us that they had regular staff meetings and could contact the registered manager or team leaders to discuss their practice. Staff said that they knew how they could contact any of the senior care staff if they needed advice at any time about a person they were supporting. There was an on call system in place should anyone need advice or support out of day time working hours. Records we looked at showed that staff were supervised regularly and had annual appraisals.

We found where people had risks identified with nutritional requirements these had been assessed and where necessary referred to the dietician. We found that where people required their fluids or food intake monitoring to ensure they maintained good health records had been made. This meant that where people had medical conditions that put them at risk we could see that their nutritional needs had been met.

There were a variety of methods used to communicate with some of the people who lived at The Garden Site. This ensured safe and appropriate personalised care and support was given. Care plans and information provided was done at the right level for the individual and for some also included some pictorial information. This was used to assist people to communicate their thoughts and feelings about what they wanted. This helped staff to understand how to respond to people's individual likes and dislikes. Staff we spoke with had an understanding of people's needs.

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. The application procedures for this in care homes and hospitals are

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 were being met. At the time of the inspection five people living at The Garden Site had DoLS in place.

The registered manager and care staff demonstrated a good knowledge and understanding of the Mental Capacity Act 2005 (MCA), which applies to people aged 16 or over. Best interest meetings had been held to assist people who were not always able to make difficult decisions for themselves and where relevant independent advocacy was arranged. This meant that people's rights were protected. However we did not see that the best interest decision process had always been recorded.

Not all people who lived at The Garden Site had the capacity to give consent for their care and treatment. We saw that parents or relevant others and advocates had been consulted and had agreed with the level of care and treatment provided. We saw that consent to care and treatment in the care records had sometimes been signed by parents or relevant others. However the registered provider had not always clarified that those people were the appropriate legal decision makers where people lacked capacity.

We recommended the provider ensured that the decision process used in people's best interests were always documented and to always confirm if relevant others did have legal authorisation.

Is the service caring?

Our findings

People who lived at The Garden Site that were able to speak with us told us that they liked the staff that looked after them. One person when asked if they felt they were being looked after well told us, "Of course I am!". Another person told us they were really happy living at The Garden Site and liked everything about it.

Staff we spoke to confirmed they knew the people they supported well as they always worked with the same people. This gave a consistency of service that ensured people became familiar with the group of staff that supported them. The staff team was extensive in their skills and expertise. This meant that people who used the service could be sure that the most appropriate care and support for their complex needs could be put in place. Staff were knowledgeable about the individuals they supported and about what was important to them in their lives.

People who lived at The Garden Site had access to a range of healthcare professionals including the local GP and dentists. The records we looked at showed people's general health needs were met. We saw people received health care when they needed it and in a way that took account of their expressed wishes and preferences. We observed during our visit that staff were respectful of people living in their individual properties.

We saw that people's care records were written in a positive way and included information about the tasks that they could carry out themselves as well as detailing the level of support they required. This helped people to maintain their skills and independence. People told us that the staff knew them well.

We saw that people had been asked for their opinion on the services they received through key working sessions and surveys. Regular meetings with people had been held where they had been asked if they were happy with their care and if there were any changes they wanted made to the support they received. We saw that the care provided was monitored through regular reviews. Staff we spoke with told us they worked closely with families or relevant others so they felt involved and could make contributions of their own.

People living at The Garden Site, their relatives and stakeholders had been asked by the provider to comment about the service via a survey they conducted in September 2015. We saw from the results that the parents' response showed 100% satisfaction with the service. They also commented that they were satisfied with the high level of dignity, choice and respect offered. Parents were also pleased with the level of communication they received from the service in keeping them informed. We noted that stakeholders feedback was also 100% satisfied they commented that it was "A high standard of care".

Where necessary people had advocacy arrangements in place. An advocate is a person who is independent of the service and who supports a person to share their views and wishes. This ensured that people had access to independent advice and information.

Is the service responsive?

Our findings

People who lived at The Garden Site that were able to speak with us told us they knew who they could complain to. One person we asked said, "My staff or (name) registered manager". The registered provider had a formal process for receiving and responding to concerns and complaints about the service it provided. However we observed that people with concerns could contact the registered manager directly.

We saw that the young adults who lived at The Garden Site provided feedback in the survey completed by the provider in September 2015 were all happy. Where one person had requested to try new activities we were told that this had been done. Parents had commented that they felt "Their child was treated with respect and listened to". All of the parents were happy that there were "Great opportunities" around activities sections being offered. Staff had commented in the survey that they supported the people who lived at The Garden Site to "Achieve great things". Stakeholders commented that the service "Delivered a person centred approach".

We saw the care plans included detailed information about the individuals living at The Garden site, how they should be supported and about the things which were important to them in their lives. The provider ensured that positive risk taking was in place and people were supported and encouraged to take part in the activities of their choice. Care staff also supported them to join in with meaningful activities or voluntary work in the local community.

There were a variety of methods used to communicate with people. This ensured safe and appropriate personalised care and support was given. Care plans also included pictorial information. This was to assist people to communicate their thoughts and feelings about what they wanted. This helped staff to understand how to respond to people's individual likes and dislikes.

The care records we looked at showed that people's health and support needs were clearly documented in their care plans along with personal information and histories. We could see that where relevant people's families had been involved in gathering personal information and life stories. Staff had a good understanding of people's backgrounds and lives and this helped them to support them socially and be more aware of things that might cause them difficulties.

The information we saw in people's care plans showed the service was focused on 'person centred' planning. This meant the planning and delivery of care took account of all aspects of what the person required. It included identifying risks in areas of care and the environment, both in the home and community. We saw that the service provided to individuals was focussed on supporting them to achieve positive outcomes depending on their needs and their abilities.

Care plans we looked at had been reviewed to make sure they held up to date information for staff to refer to. However we saw that things rarely changed to the care needs or level of support required and that the system used meant the review process was not always effective and could be improved. Where we did see that some needs had changed the review process had not identified any actions to take. For example where

someone was having their blood pressure monitored we did not see any guidance provided should there be any changes. We discussed this with the registered manager who informed us that they would make changes to the system used for reviewing people needs.

Regular reviews of care took place and everyone living at The Garden Site had a circle of support identified. This was a variety of people including keyworkers, relatives, social workers and other professionals had been involved in their care planning. Staff we spoke with told us they worked closely with families so they felt involved and could make contributions of their own.

Is the service well-led?

Our findings

The registered manager told us they spoke to people who lived at The Garden Site and their family members often. We saw during our inspection that the registered manager engaged in a positive and open way with both people who lived there and the care staff team. Care staff we spoke with said they "Got on well with the registered manager" and they felt very supported in carrying out their roles. Another staff member told us, "I can raise any concerns or discuss people's care at any time with him as well as during supervision".

The service worked in partnership with other professionals to ensure people received the appropriate care and support to meet their needs. We saw records of how other professionals had been involved in reviewing people's care and in identifying the levels of support required.

There was regular monitoring system in place of the quality of the service. We discussed with the registered manager during the inspection the quality of the audit system in place. The registered manager recognised that some improvements could be made especially in the frequency of some aspects of the audit for the safer management of medications. People who used the service were given opportunities to share their views about the care and support they received. There were systems in place to also monitor the maintenance of the service and facilities provided. The registered manager and staff team met regularly to discuss how and if they could make improvements to the services.

Relatives and advocates of those living in the home were regularly involved in consultation about the provision and its quality. We saw that regular reviews were held. This meant that people and or their representatives could make suggestions or comment about the environment they lived in.

The registered provider and managers had established good working relationships with its stakeholders and were proactive in sharing any information and seeking guidance from other professionals.

Comments we received from staff about the management of the service were all very positive. We saw that staff supervision was completed regularly and gave the staff opportunities to discuss their training needs and discuss the running of the service. The staff we spoke to said that they would be confident to speak to any senior person in the organisation if they had any concerns about the conduct of any other staff members. They told us that they were confident the registered manager would listen to any concerns and that action would be taken.

This section is primarily information for the provider

Action we have told the provider to take

The table below shows where regulations were not being met and we have asked the provider to send us a report that says what action they are going to take. We will check that this action is taken by the provider.

Regulated activity	Regulation
Accommodation for persons who require nursing or personal care	Regulation 12 HSCA RA Regulations 2014 Safe care and treatment Records relating to the management of medications were not always accurate or completed. Regulation 12(1)(2)(g)