

Cheshire East Council

Cheshire East Short Breaks

Inspection report

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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 

Overall summary

This inspection took place on 3 December 2015 and was unannounced. Telephone interviews took place on the 4 and 8 December 2015. Cheshire East Short Breaks is located in Macclesfield close to local amenities. Cheshire East Short Breaks is run by Cheshire East Council Care4CE. The service provides short break care services including accommodation and personal care for adults with learning disabilities. The service is purpose built and has four bedrooms. At the time of our visit there was one person staying at the home. There is a large accessible car park provided for visitors. Staff explained that people

who stayed at the service preferred to be referred to as customers. We have used this preferred term throughout this report. Staff are on duty 24 hours a day and provide sleep in duties.

The service had a registered manager. 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.

Summary of findings

We spoke with people living at the service and relatives/representatives who acted on their family member's behalf. They were positive about Cheshire East Short Breaks and praised all the staff and the care and support provided.

We observed how staff spoke and interacted with customers and found that they were supported with dignity and respect. We observed a friendly rapport between customers being supported and the staff. The atmosphere was relaxing and calm.

We found the staff had a good understanding of supporting customers when they lacked capacity, including the requirements of the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS.) Staff took appropriate actions to fully support customers who lacked capacity to make decisions for themselves.

We found care plans focused on the individual person. They contained guidance to enable staff to know how to support each customer with their needs and requests. Staff had a good understanding and knowledge of each customer's individual needs and preferences. Some of the customers that stayed at the service used non verbal signs to communicate. Staff were trained and aware of how customers communicated their preferences and

choices. Plans were in place to support people's communication methods. Staff used easy read formats to help some customers to better understand their support plan.

The service had a complaints procedure and relatives were confident that they could raise their opinions and discuss any issues with senior staff. They did not raise any concerns during our visit.

The service operated safe recruitment of staff and ensured that staff employed were suitable to work with people staying at Cheshire East Short Breaks. Appropriate pre-employment checks were carried out to enable the management of the service to have adequate information before employing staff.

Staff had received regular supervision and training to assist them in their job roles and in their personal development. The provider offered a wide range of training to all of their staff team to ensure they fully understood their customer's needs.

Various audits at the service were carried out on a regular basis by the manager and the provider to help ensure that appropriate standards were maintained throughout the home.

Summary of findings

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.

Both staff and relatives were happy with the staffing levels.

A thorough recruitment procedure was in place and well trained staff were available to keep customers safe and comfortable.

Staff were clear about the process to follow if they had any concerns in relation to managing safeguarding and keeping people safe.

Risks were safely managed. Moving and handling assessments for the use of hoists and how to safely manoeuvre people who needed specialist equipment were detailed.

Medicines were well organised and safely managed.

Good



Is the service effective?

The service was effective.

Staff felt supported and received regular formal supervision to assist them in their job roles and in their personal development. Regular training was provided for all staff working at the home including training to support people with specialised needs. We found staff well trained and knowledgeable about supporting people when they lacked capacity to make informed decisions, including the requirements of the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS).

People were supported to eat and drink according to their plan of care and according to individual choices and specific health needs.

Customers health needs were managed well by staff during their stay. Staff regularly contacted various multi-disciplinary professionals such as healthcare professionals, GPs and care managers when needed.

Good



Is the service caring?

The service was caring.

Customers staying at the service were supported by staff who understood their different forms of communication involving non-verbal signs and behaviours.

We observed staff respectfully communicating with people and assisting them with all aspects of their support and choices throughout the day.

Staff were respectful of their customer's privacy and dignity. They had a good understanding of the people they were supporting and their diverse needs and choices.

Relatives/representatives confirmed that choices with regard to daily living activities were always provided in a caring and sensitive manner. They felt their relatives were well supported and cared for to a very good standard.

Good



Summary of findings

Is the service responsive?

The service was responsive.

Support plans demonstrated that customers staying at the service were involved as much as possible in the decisions about what they did during their visit. The care files were reviewed regularly so staff knew what changes if any had been made.

Staff were knowledgeable about people's changing needs and responded well in contacting the necessary multi-disciplinary support when needed.

The service had a complaints policy describing how complaints would be managed..

The service provided support for various activities for people to take part in if they wished.

Good



Is the service well-led?

The service was well led.

Relatives and staff said that they felt the senior staff and manager were approachable and would listen to them. Staff felt the provider was very supportive and good to work for.

Staff were supported by their registered manager. There was open communication within the staff team and staff felt comfortable discussing any issues within the service.

The registered manager and area manager regularly checked the quality of the service provided and ensured people were happy with the service they

received. The registered provider also carried out quality checks as part of their quality assurance processes. These audits and visits provided additional support to ensure standards were maintained.

Good



Cheshire East Short Breaks

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 the 3rd 4th and 8th of December 2015 and was unannounced.

The inspection team was carried out by an adult social care inspector. We met one person staying at the service during our visit and three staff on duty plus the registered manager. We spoke with three next of kin who acted on behalf of their relatives and we observed how support was provided to people during the day.

We used a number of different methods to help us understand the experiences of people who stayed at Cheshire East Short Breaks. We used the Short Observational Framework for Inspection (SOFI). SOFI is a specific way of observing care to help us understand the experience of people who could not talk with us.

We looked around the building as well as checking records. We looked at a sample of documentation in relation to how the service was operating, including records such as; staff recruitment and three staff files showing supervision and training; medication records; staffing rotas; health and safety checks; risk assessments; surveys; minutes of meetings; quality assurance audits and policies and procedures. We looked at a sample of support plans and activity records for people staying at the service. .

Before our inspection we request that the services provide us with a provider information return [PIR] which helps us to prepare for the inspection. This is a form that asks the provider to give some key information about the service, what the service does well and any improvements they plan to make.

We looked at any notifications received and reviewed any other information we held prior to visiting. We also invited the local authority to provide us with any information they held about the service.

Is the service safe?

Our findings

We met customers staying at the service and observed the support they received. We noted staff respectfully ensuring customers had their own space and privacy whilst always on hand supporting customers to be comfortable and safe while walking around the building.

Relatives/representatives were positive about the service and felt their family members were safely supported. They offered various positive comments such as:

“The staff help my relative with their medications, we have no problems, staff safely manage the blister pack for medications” and “The staff manage and support our relative with their medications, we have never had any problems, there are always plenty of staff”.

Relatives told us they were happy with the staff and their conduct and attitudes towards them and their relatives. They told us the home was always very clean and tidy.

We looked at the duty rotas. Staff were happy with the staffing levels available and told us that staffing levels were usually ok unless someone phoned in sick. They told us that staffing levels were based on who was staying at the service for their short break and reflected the individual needs of customers. Some people had one to one support provided and others needed staff to offer sleep over duties rather than a waking staff rota. The service currently has an 18 hour staff vacancy that is managed in-house with staff working extra hours.

The registered provider had an adult protection procedure in place. This was designed to ensure that any possible problems that arose were dealt with openly and that customers staying at the home were protected from possible harm. Training records showed us that staff had received safeguarding training and staff we spoke with were aware of procedures to follow regarding any suspicion of abuse or if any mistreatment was suspected. All of the staff that we met told us they would not hesitate to report any concerns or any signs of abuse.

Staff were aware of their responsibilities to keep people safe and to identify and take any necessary actions to reduce risks. This included individual risk assessments for

areas such as moving and handling and for people who experienced behaviour that challenged on occasions. Support plans and risk assessments gave clear guidance, describing how staff should support the customer to help keep them safe and calm. Support plans showed good evidence of a range of risk assessments and tools used to help keep people safe and comfortable.

We observed the service to be well maintained and decorated and refurbished to a good standard. The service was modern in design and suitable for young adults. It had been adapted to meet the needs of the customers choosing to stay there for their short break. Adaptations such as ceiling track hoists were discreetly positioned. We looked at a sample of recorded checks on the environment, including checks on bedrooms, lights and fire checks. We saw that regular checks were carried out by the manager and the provider and contractors to help ensure that a safe environment was available to everyone.

We looked at a sample of staff files to see if the appropriate checks had been carried out before they were employed to work at the home. Personnel files were organised and included appropriate checks to show safe recruitment and management of staff. Checks included references and criminal record checks so that the provider could be assured that staff were safe to work with people staying at Cheshire East Short Breaks.

We looked at a sample of medication records, the storage of medicines and checks on the management of medications throughout 2015. Medicines were stored safely and managed appropriately to ensure that customers staying at the service received their medications in a safe and effective manner. We observed staff safely storing medicines in a locked cupboard and noted the room was kept clean and tidy and free from hazards. Staff were knowledgeable in regard to the management of medications. They were conversant with the home's policies and procedures to help them in safely managing medications. The provider had developed medication audits which had identified several medication errors in 2015. The manager and team had appropriately recorded all actions taken following any discrepancy to reduce any further risks.

Is the service effective?

Our findings

Relatives that we spoke with told us they were happy with the way the service was delivered and how the staff cared for their relatives. They felt their needs were being met by staff at Cheshire East Short Breaks. Relatives made various positive comments such as:

“We are happy with the service, our relative seems to really like it, the food always smells nice”; “The staff are lovely and take good care of my relative” and “My relative loves going there and sees it as her holiday, they love the food”.

Relatives confirmed they were included in any discussions and changes to their relative’s support. They told us the staff use communication diaries to keep them fully informed about their relative’s health and wellbeing while staying at the service. Staff were quick to access services including the GP and members of the multi-disciplinary team if needed during a customer’s short break. We saw that communication with family members and professionals from the multidisciplinary teams were regularly recorded and showed good liaison and continuity of care.

Support plans were reviewed on a regular basis. Staff had developed the plans in formats to meet the needs of each customer. We looked at some records that had been developed in large print and with the use of pictures to help customers better understand the information. They had developed very detailed short break questionnaires that customers were encouraged to complete prior to them staying at the service. These records helped the staff to plan the support needed in advance of their stay and included: identifying support with their health needs; medications; equipment needed; travelling arrangements, activities they liked to do; communication needs; religious and cultural needs and choices around food and meals.

Audits were carried out by the registered manager and the regional management team. They produced reports which sometimes included an action plan for any areas of improvement required. The home had an open door policy and the manager was available at all times to families, friends and staff.

We carried out a Short Observational Framework for Inspection (SOFI) and found positive interactions between staff and customers staying at the home. We observed staff respectfully supporting customers in choosing meals and

in what they wanted to do throughout the day. Staff were very patient and calm, offering discreet and sensitive support when needed. We noted that customers being supported were happy with the staff support and they were enjoying their snacks and meals.

We looked at policies that were in place for staff to follow in relation to the Mental Capacity Act 2005, the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) and consent to care and treatment. The Mental Capacity Act 2005 (MCA) says that before care and treatment is carried out for someone it must be established whether or not they have capacity to consent to that treatment. If not, any care or treatment and decisions must be made in a person’s best interests. These policies provided information to support staff about the procedures they should follow when a person was unable to make certain decisions for themselves. We reviewed the records for one customer who stayed at the service on a regular basis and who had been assessed as being deprived of their liberty. Senior managers had organised a file including all relevant information in regard to all of their DoLS applications which helped the staff organise and manage accurate records when customers stayed at the service. Staff found that at times there were delays encountered with their applications due to the short turnaround of customers’ stays. However they explained they always followed procedures and included all relevant multi-disciplinary professionals. We found there was an organised process in place to record any restrictions in the best interests of customers whilst staying at the service. Staff were knowledgeable in regard to these procedures and were able to recognise when a DoLS authorisation was necessary to safeguard people's rights. We found staff had acted in accordance with the requirements of the Mental Capacity Act 2005 in order to ensure each person's rights were protected and that they received appropriate care and support to meet their needs.

Staff told us they had received regular training and that they were provided with all the training they needed to help them with supporting customers with a wide range of needs. Training was offered to all staff and the mixture of staff that we spoke with told us they really enjoyed training offered including: learning disabilities; autism; mental health and the Mental Capacity Act.

Staff were positive about the support they received during induction. Staff told us that their induction also included

Is the service effective?

an introduction to the job they would be doing and as part of it they shadowed existing staff members to get to know customers. (Shadowing is where a new staff member works alongside either a senior or experienced staff member.)

Staff had received recent supervision from their manager. These records were detailed and gave staff an opportunity to discuss their responsibilities, the support needed for customers and to help staff identify any further training they required. Staff spoken with said they felt well

supported by the registered manager and enjoyed working at the service. (Supervisions are regular meetings between an employee and their line manager to support staff development and to discuss any issues that may affect the staff member; this may include a discussion of on-going training needs.) All staff should expect to be provided with supervision to help with their development within the service to ensure they provide a consistent level of good quality support to customers.

Is the service caring?

Our findings

Relatives/ representatives told us they were involved in developing their family member's support plan including what support they required from the home and how this was to be carried out. Relatives were positive about the care and support received from staff and were clear that the staff were a caring team. Comments from relatives regarding staff were very positive and included:

"The staff are wonderful, the care is very good" and "The staff are very nice we have no problems at all".

Customers staying at the service looked comfortable and happy with the staff providing their support. We noted that staff were knowledgeable in regard to communicating and recognising how customers voiced their needs and choices. Customers being supported looked to their staff team for support and received it as soon as they made their needs known.

Staff told us they were able to assist each customer in making choices each day because they ensured they were always close by, sometimes providing one to one support to enable customers to express their needs at any time. Staff showed very caring and sensitive skills in supporting each customer. We observed really good practices from

staff who were polite and respectful of customer's privacy and maintained their dignity throughout our visits. Nobody was rushed and staff were observed taking their time and encouraging a relaxed atmosphere.

During our inspection we saw there was good communication and understanding between the members of staff and the customers who were receiving care and support from them. The staff we met understood the meaning of person centred care and treated each customer as an individual. They described how they worked with people who used non-verbal ways to communicate, some through their behaviours and mannerisms. They felt that taking the time to get to know each customer helped them to better understand communications and requests from customers receiving support. Staff were clear about how important it was to get to know how each customer communicated how they felt and how they expressed what they wanted.

Support plans contained detailed records advising staff how to communicate with each customer. The plans were individual to each customer and described different ways to help staff to understand what each customer was expressing to them. Staff told us the communication plans were clear enough to help them to understand what the customer was communicating to them.

Is the service responsive?

Our findings

Relatives/representatives were happy with the activities that staff provided for their family members. Relatives were keen to share their positive experiences about this service. They told us there were a lot of different activities on offer and that the staff enabled their family members to do as much as they wanted including carrying on their usual routines that they would do at home. Relatives told us they had regular contact with the staff and the registered manager. Relatives felt there was good communication with the staff and there were opportunities for them to feedback about the service their family members received.

Support plans we looked at were well maintained and had appropriate information to show the assessed needs of each customer. Support files contained relevant information such as: risk assessments; communication plans; social support; behavioural plans; nutritional needs and medical information about each customer. The plans were reviewed regularly by senior staff so all staff knew what changes if any had been made. Everyone had a plan that was personal and individual to them. These plans were used to guide staff on how to involve each customer with their care plan and provide the care and support they needed and requested. All of the plans we looked at were well maintained and were up to date. Staff supported each customer to engage in a variety of activities in-house and sometimes within the local community.

Staff were knowledgeable about each customer they supported and explained they had got to know each customer's like and dislikes over a period of time. We

observed staff communicating with customers in a respectful manner; quietly interpreting individual needs and requests and supporting them with various activities throughout the day. Staff told us they tried to support people as much as possible regarding how they wanted to spend their day.

Staff demonstrated a good understanding of the people they supported in relation to their changing behaviours and changing needs. Records demonstrated that customers staying at the home received visits from visiting professionals when needed. This helped the staff to co-ordinate their care necessary for their health and for any changing health care needs.

The service had a policy and procedure in place in relation to compliments and complaints which was readily displayed and in the 'service user guide'. The procedure informed people of who to contact within the organisation with regards to making a complaint, making a compliment and in providing feedback about their short break. Staff talked us through what they would do if an individual wanted to raise a formal complaint. There had been no recent complaints but the staff had recorded 16 compliments in 2015.

Comments included:

"Your staff are so helpful, kind and friendly"; "I like the food"; "The staff are nice to me" and "My visit was good, we went bowling". Relatives we spoke with during the inspection told us they had no complaints and were very happy and complimentary about the service.

Is the service well-led?

Our findings

Relatives knew the senior staff team and the manager and they were on first name terms. They said they would normally be able to speak to the manager and the staff team and they were very positive about the management of the service. They felt comfortable ringing the manager, or speaking to support staff as they felt the staff were friendly and approachable.

We saw evidence that the provider regularly sought feedback from people and their families about the support provided to them. We looked at a sample of questionnaires and feedback forms that everyone was given after each customer stay. The staff tried to gather feedback after each visit. The feedback forms had been adapted in to specific formats with large print and use of pictures. This helped some customers to better understand the forms and the opportunity to offer their comments and feedback. The overall results from questionnaires offered various positive comments from relatives and customers who stayed for short breaks. A recent survey carried out by the provider involved 39 surveys being sent out randomly to customers and 22 were returned.

The results were very positive and comments included:

“We are very happy with the service and support given by the staff at Warwick Mews” and “We are very happy with them. The staff have gone out of their way to accommodate our requirements when needed especially on our last stay”.

The service had a manager who was registered with the Care Quality Commission. During the inspection we saw the registered manager was active in the day to day running of the service. From our conversations with the registered manager it was clear they knew the needs of their customers. Staff were led by a registered manager who provided good standards of care and support for staff to follow.

All of the staff told us they felt supported and enjoyed their work. They were very positive about the management style of the service. They told us they had no hesitation in approaching the manager to discuss any issues or suggestions. Staff told us staff meetings were held regularly, where they had lots of opportunity to raise questions and speak to senior staff. The minutes showed that the staff were kept up to date with the management of the service.

The service had a large collection of policies and procedures accessible to all staff. They were regularly kept updated and accessible to all staff to specify the appropriate standards expected from all staff working at the service.

The manager and area manager regularly monitored the quality of the support provided at Cheshire East Short Breaks by completing regular audits, which we reviewed during our visit. They were very detailed and covered a large variety of topics and areas throughout the service including: care files; training; complaints and compliments; health and safety; maintenance certificates; in house fire checks; medications and environmental audits. The registered provider and manager evaluated these audits and created action plans for improvement, when improvements were needed. They also used these audits to bench mark their performance against their other services. These audits showed evidence of regular monitoring of the quality of care and support being provided.

We looked at a sample of records called ‘notifications’. A notification is information about important events which the service is required to send to the Care Quality Commission (CQC) by law in a timely way. These records showed that the registered manager was knowledgeable about these requirements and was transparent in ensuring the Care Quality Commission was kept up to date with any notifiable events including safeguarding referrals.