

Autism Together

Autism Together - 60 Manor Place

Inspection report

60 Manor Place
Bromborough Pool
Wirral
Merseyside
CH62 4TX

Tel: 01513347510

Website: www.wirral.autistic.org

Date of inspection visit:
05 September 2017

Date of publication:
04 October 2017

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

Autism Together 60 Manor Place is a care home registered for two people. The home is one of a range of services operated by the Wirral based charity Autism Together. It is an end of terrace house in the small village of Bromborough Pool. At the last inspection the service was rated Good. At this inspection we found the service remained Good.

The people who lived at the home were supported to have maximum choice and control of their lives and staff supported them in the least restrictive way possible; the policies and systems of the organisation supported this practice.

The same two people had lived at the home for around 15 years. They were supported by three staff who had worked there for two years or longer. The registered manager had responsibility for several similar services and was supported by two team leaders.

People had a safe and comfortable environment which had recently been redecorated. One person required support with prescribed medication and this was managed safely.

The people who lived at the home participated in various daytime activities supported by staff employed by Autism Together. We also saw evidence that they enjoyed a full social life. They were able to choose what meals they would like and were supported by staff with cooking.

Staff completed a comprehensive training programme and had regular supervision meetings with a team leader.

Care records and other records relating to the running of the home were well maintained and up to date.

Further information is in the detailed findings below.

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 remains Good.

Is the service effective?

Good ●

The service remains Good.

Is the service caring?

Good ●

The service remains Good.

Is the service responsive?

Good ●

The service remains Good.

Is the service well-led?

Good ●

The service remains Good.

Autism Together - 60 Manor Place

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 5 September 2017 and was pre-arranged. We announced this visit to ensure that staff would be available and that we would be able to speak to the people who lived at the home. The inspection was carried out by an adult social care inspector.

Before the inspection we looked at any information we had received since our last inspection in 2015. During the inspection we met one of the people who lived at the home and spoke with the registered manager, the team leader and a member of the support staff.

We looked at people's care files, staff records and other records relating to the management of the service.

Is the service safe?

Our findings

Records showed that all staff had received training about safeguarding vulnerable people from abuse. The provider had safeguarding and whistleblowing policies and procedures and staff knew how to contact social services with any concerns.

There had been no new staff working at the home for several years so we did not look at staff recruitment files during this inspection. However, we had found at previous inspections that the provider's recruitment procedures were robust.

The staff worked a three week rota which included split shifts on weekdays when the people who lived at the home were out at work. A member of staff slept in the home at night. The manager and team leader were available to provide support when needed. They told us that Autism Together bank staff were available to cover holidays or sickness but were rarely needed as staff were generally able to provide cover for each other.

General risk assessments had been written for the premises and for working practices. These had been reviewed by the team leader on 9 August 2017. Risk assessments were also in place for the people who lived at the home. These included risks associated with going out, using the kitchen and dealing with money. One person had a medical condition that put him at risk and we saw that safety measures had been put in place to protect him from harm.

A health and safety file contained up to date certificates to show that utilities and fire equipment were maintained safely. The manager told us that the provider had commissioned new fire risk assessments for all their properties and this home had been assessed on 31 August 2017. Staff carried out regular safety checks covering areas including window restrictors and the first aid box. Fire drills were completed monthly and the people who lived at the home participated. The most recent was recorded on 12 August 2017.

Cleaning rotas were in place and included kitchen hygiene checks. The service had not had a food hygiene inspection but we saw that the kitchen was clean and tidy. Harmful cleaning substances were kept in locked storage.

One of the people who lived at the home had prescribed medication and staff supported him to take this. The member of staff we spoke with had good knowledge of the person's medication. All medicines were checked and counted weekly. The staff team had recently attended a medication training update.

Is the service effective?

Our findings

The staff team were mature and experienced. They had completed the Autism Together comprehensive training programme and had relevant qualifications. Staff had regular supervision meetings with the manager or a team leader. There was also an annual appraisal procedure and the member of staff we met confirmed they had recently had an appraisal.

People who lack mental capacity to consent to arrangements for necessary care or treatment can only be deprived of their liberty when this is in their best interests and legally authorised under the Mental Capacity Act (MCA). The 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 and found that they were.

People were able to choose what they had to eat and drink and planned their menus weekly. People were able to prepare their own meals with support from staff. There were no concerns regarding their appetites or nutrition.

People had a cosy and comfortable environment to live in. The house has recently been fully redecorated and staff told us that the people who lived there had been involved in choosing a new sofa and TV for the lounge. The people who lived at the home had full mobility and did not require any adaptations to the property. Each person had their own bedroom which was decorated and furnished to their taste.

Is the service caring?

Our findings

Although it is registered as a care home, the manager told us that the service followed a supported living model. People were encouraged to be as independent as possible and learn new skills, for example using cards instead of cash to pay for shopping. A member of staff told us that people continued to gain independence in small ways and this was important to them.

The relationship between the staff and the people who lived in the home was respectful, friendly and good-humoured. The service operated very much as a family and staff told us that the two people who lived there got on well together although they had their own hobbies and interests. They shared a love of music

We saw a number of compliments recorded regarding the care the people who lived at the home received. These came from a close relative and from staff who supported the people at work.

People were able to be private in their own room when they wished and staff respected this.

Both people had contact with their families and one person had regular stays with his family.

Is the service responsive?

Our findings

The staff we spoke with told us about the individual care and support needs of the people who lived at the home and these were recorded in their care files. Care plans were reviewed regularly and each person had a full review every year with the support team and family members. Information about what people had done and how they were feeling was recorded in detail in a staff communication book.

On the day of our visit, one person was having a planned day out with a member of staff and the other person had been working at the organisation's head office. Both people attended daytime services in the community supported by Autism Together staff. One person was a member of the Autism Together band and this was an important part of his life. They both enjoyed going to watch musicals and had tickets booked for two shows. Staff told us about short break holidays that the people who lived at the home had enjoyed this year.

The provider had complaints policies and procedures and these were available in picture form. No complaints had been recorded since our last inspection.

Is the service well-led?

Our findings

The home 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 2008 and associated Regulations about how the service is run.

The registered manager and the team leader had worked for the provider for many years and had good knowledge of the people who lived at this service. The member of support staff we spoke with described how the three members of the staff team brought their different skills and qualities to the home.

The home had a small office where records were kept securely. The records we looked at were up to date, neat and legible.

The people who lived at the home actively participated in monthly house meetings and minutes of the meetings showed that they were able to put forward their views about different aspects of the running of the home. They were also involved in the Autism Together service user forum.

The manager and team leaders carried out regular checks and quality audits and we saw that the most recent was on 9 August 2017.