

Voyage 1 Limited Westwood

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?	Outstanding ☆
Is the service responsive?	Good ●
Is the service well-led?	Good ●

Summary of findings

Overall summary

About the service: Westwood is a residential care home that provides care for nine people with a learning disability or autistic spectrum disorder. Nine people were living at the service at the time of our visit. This comprises of a house with two self-contained flats and a bungalow on site.

People's experience of using this service: With the commitment of the provider's staff, people had extremely positive outcomes in relation to their goals, aspirations and achievements. Staff provided exceptionally compassionate, person-centred care and support, where promoting independence was key to this.

Staff supported people creatively to have relationships with those important to them. Promoting independence was a key part of the service, where people were supported to take small steps towards bigger goals.

People received care which was responsive to their individual needs. Staff were matched with people and had a good understanding of how to support them well.

Where risks associated with people's health and wellbeing had been identified, there were plans to manage those risks. Risk assessments ensured people could continue to be as safe as possible and maintain their independence.

Staff understood their responsibility to safeguard people from harm and knew how to report concerns.

There were enough staff to ensure people were safe and able to participate in the activities they chose to. These were wide ranging, according to people's interests and needs.

The provider ensured care was based upon good practice guidance to help ensure people received an effective service.

People 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 in the service supported this practice.

People received a suitable diet of their choosing and were encouraged to be involved in preparing this. The provider and staff team worked closely with external healthcare professionals to ensure people's health and wellbeing was promoted and maintained.

People, relatives and staff had opportunities to feedback about the running of the service and were listened to.

Positive feedback was received in relation the registered manager and provider who carried out comprehensive quality checks, ensuring the service was managed well.

Rating at last inspection:

Good published in October 2016.

Why we inspected:

This was a planned inspection based on previous rating.

Follow up:

There will be ongoing monitoring and routine inspections of the location based on the rating of Good.

For more details, please see the full report which is on the CQC website at www.cqc.org.uk

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

Details are in our Safe findings below.

Is the service effective?

Good ●

The service was effective

Details are in our Effective findings below.

Is the service caring?

Outstanding ☆

The service was exceptionally caring

Details are in our Caring findings below.

Is the service responsive?

Good ●

The service was responsive

Details are in our Responsive findings below.

Is the service well-led?

Good ●

The service was well-led

Details are in our Well-Led findings below.

Westwood

Detailed findings

Background to this inspection

The inspection:

We carried out this inspection under Section 60 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (the Act) 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 Act, to look at the overall quality of the service, and to provide a rating for the service under the Care Act 2014.

Inspection team: One inspector completed the inspection.

Service and service type:

Westwood is a 'care home'. People in care homes receive accommodation and nursing or personal care as single package under one contractual agreement. CQC regulates both the premises and the care.

The service had a manager registered with the Care Quality Commission. This means that they and the provider are legally responsible for how the service is run and for the quality and safety of the care provided. They had been in post since 2012.

Notice of inspection:

The inspection was announced. We gave the registered manager a short period of notice to ensure that some people, relatives and staff would be able to speak with us.

What we did:

Prior to the inspection, we reviewed information we had received about the service since the last inspection. This included details about incidents the provider must notify us about, such as suspicion of abuse and serious injuries. We sought feedback from the local authority who work with the service and this was positive.

On this occasion we did not ask the provider to send us a Provider Information Return (PIR). This is information we require providers to send us to give some key information about the service, what the service does well and improvements they plan to make. However, we gave the provider an opportunity to provide this information to us.

During the inspection, we spoke with two people and four relatives about their experience of the care provided. Some people were unable to tell us about their care. We spoke with three members of care staff, a team leader, the registered manager and the operations manager. We reviewed a range of records including two people's care records and two medication records. A number of other records were reviewed in relation to the management of the service, including quality checks, staff training records, accidents and incidents and feedback received from people and staff. We looked at two staff files to ensure they had been recruited safely.

Is the service safe?

Our findings

Safe – this means we looked for evidence that people were protected from abuse and avoidable harm

Good: People were safe and protected from avoidable harm. Legal requirements were met.

Systems and processes to safeguard people from the risk of abuse

- Relatives told us they felt people were safe at Westwood with staff, and their room and belongings were secure. One relative told us, "It is very good the way they are looked after, [Person] is very safe there". Another relative said they felt their family member was in 'safe hands' living at the service.
- The provider's policies and procedures provided staff with guidance of how to keep people safe. Staff understood the signs of abuse and how to recognise and protect people from this.
- All concerns had been recorded and reported to the registered manager for action, if needed. The registered manager demonstrated they had acted upon concerns raised by notifying the local authority.

Assessing risk, safety monitoring and management

- People were encouraged and supported to take positive risks to support their well-being and independence. Staff supported people to maintain their safety in managing those risks.
- People's identified risk had been recorded and documented, for example in relation to falls. For one person, in following advice from a professional, these risks were reduced further by changing their environment.
- Staff we spoke with knew the type and level of assistance each person required to maintain their safety. The registered manager told us how they were proud of how due to staff skills, knowledge and experience they had seen a significant reduction in risky behaviours for people living at the service.
- Staff had been trained in the event of a fire and practice drills were carried out. Personal emergency evacuation plans were in place for individuals which documented their support needs in this situation.

Staffing and recruitment

- People were supported by enough staff and received the appropriate support in relation to their needs. People were always either supported by one or two staff, as part of a core team, whilst floating staff members provided additional support when required.
- The registered manager confirmed staff turnover was low and a stable team were in place at Westwood.
- Staff recruitment files included relevant checks to ensure staff were suitable to work with vulnerable adults.

Using medicines safely

- Medicines systems were organised, and people received their medicines when they should. The provider was following safe protocols for the storage and administration of medicines.
- Staff were trained to give medication and regular competency checks were carried out to ensure they remained safe to do this.

Preventing and controlling infection

- Staff received training in relation to infection control. The environment and people's individual rooms were kept clean. Staff had access to protective equipment such as disposable gloves when these were required.
- Staff who prepared food observed good food hygiene practices to help reduce the risk of infection.

Learning lessons when things go wrong

- Staff completed reports where a person had been involved in an incident or accident and reported this to the management team and provider, for example a medication error.
- The registered manager identified how or why the incident may have occurred and whether, for example, a referral to another professional was needed. The registered manager took learning from any untoward incidents, and people's risk assessments had been updated in their care plans when required and necessary action taken to prevent reoccurrence.

Is the service effective?

Our findings

Effective – this means we looked for evidence that people's care, treatment and support achieved good outcomes and promoted a good quality of life, based on best available evidence

Good: People's outcomes were consistently good, and people's feedback confirmed this.

Assessing people's needs and choices; delivering care in line with standards, guidance and the law

- One relative told us about the staff at Westwood, "I would give them 10 out of 10 for autism," explaining that staff were very skilled in understanding and supporting people effectively.
- People, relatives and professionals had shared people's needs and choices with the management team before moving to the service. This information was contained within people's assessments to support staff.
- Care was provided in line with current guidance. For example, one person had an epilepsy management plan which documented clearly steps of how staff should support them during a seizure.
- There was a consistent staff team and regular hand over meetings between shifts, so relevant and important information could be shared amongst staff.
- People's needs at Westwood were complex. Staff were working towards the National Autistic Society accreditation having achieved the provider's autism quality mark in March 2019. This evidenced how well staff support people, for example, providing meaningful activities.

Staff support: induction, training, skills and experience

- Staff received an induction when they first started which involved training and working alongside experienced staff. One staff member told us, "When there are new staff we take them under our wing to learn the ropes and the practical side of things."
- Staff had completed the necessary training to enable them to carry out their role. Some staff were being supported by the provider to complete additional qualifications to further develop their skills.

Supporting people to eat and drink enough to maintain a balanced diet

- People were supported to access food and drinks in line with their needs and choices. One relative told us, "[Person] has what they want to eat and drink. They can go in the kitchen and they can help themselves. Staff encourage [Person] to do things, they cannot really do much, but they involve them." Grocery shopping was done by staff and people were involved in buying and choosing some items such as snacks. One person was now preparing more drinks and snacks for themselves with the goal of being able to prepare a meal.

Staff working with other agencies to provide consistent, effective, timely care

- The registered manager communicated with other agencies such as the local authority and local clinical commissioning groups.
- People had seen occupational therapy, physio, opticians and other professionals when required to support them with their care needs. Care plans showed that advice given by professionals was followed.

Adapting service, design, decoration to meet people's needs

- People had access to some communal and quiet areas.

- The service was well - maintained and staff told us the provider was responsive in ensuring this remained safe with any repairs completed quickly.
- Following changes in one person's needs their bathroom was redesigned so that staff could continue to support them in the way they preferred.

Supporting people to live healthier lives, access healthcare services and support

- Staff ensured that preventative checks were carried out such as health screening.
- Where there had been concerns relating to diet and weight, advice of dieticians had been sought to ensure people were supported to improve their lifestyles.
- A relative told us about a recent incident where their family member had fallen, and they felt this was handled well by staff who contacted emergency services and them quickly.

Ensuring consent to care and treatment in line with law and guidance

- 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 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 with appropriate legal authority. In care homes, and some hospitals, this is usually through MCA application procedures called the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS).

We checked whether the service was working within the principles of the MCA, whether any restrictions on people's liberty had been authorised and whether any conditions on such authorisations were being met.

- Where people were unable to make decisions for themselves, mental capacity assessments had been completed and where necessary, decisions were made on behalf of people in consultation with appropriate others in people's best interests.
- DoLS applications had been made to the relevant Local Authority where it had been identified that people were being deprived of their liberty and we had been notified when these had been authorised.

Is the service caring?

Our findings

Caring – this means we looked for evidence that the service involved people and treated them with compassion, kindness, dignity and respect

Outstanding: People were truly respected and valued as individuals; and empowered as partners in their care in an exceptional service.

Ensuring people are well treated and supported; respecting equality and diversity

- People told us about living at the service and that staff were all exceptionally kind, caring and attentive. Staff were closely matched with people based on personalities and needs. One person proudly told us about a staff member, "This is my second Mum." Another person expressed how happy they were at the service and how they had chosen their plans for the day which included going to the park, feeding the ducks and hopefully getting an ice cream. For another person, staff had organised a surprise 'trampoline party' which is something they had always wanted to do.
- One relative explained how they knew their family member was cared for well, they said, "[Person] smiles at them (staff), I know they are good to [Person] and they always look well cared for."
- Staff provided support to people which was flexible and went above and beyond with the level of care they provided. For example, one person was passionate about a music reality show. Staff arranged to buy tickets with the person, considering seating very carefully, to support them in relation to feelings of anxiety. Once at the event, staff then spoke with the venue staff to enable them to get a better seat for the person. They stayed until the very end of the show, so they could experience the maximum enjoyment from the whole day.
- People were visibly relaxed around staff and we observed people having a laugh and joke with them. Staff told us they formed these relationships with people by gradually building trust and a rapport with them, which was key to this.
- People were well supported by staff to visit and stay in touch with those people who were important to them. For example, staff arranged additional support for one person to travel and visit a relative who lived a distance away, to ensure that this important relationship could continue. Another person was supported by staff to have regular meals out with friends and family to maintain these contacts.
- Staff provided sensitive and compassionate support to people during difficult times in their lives. For one person whose relative had been very unwell, staff enabled them to visit them frequently, staying with them as long as required. This meant they had as much time as they needed together, without being rushed. When the relative passed away, staff supported them to attend the funeral, taking time to prepare them well for this. This included sharing photographs of people, and then helping support them in meeting family members who they had not seen for a number of years. This meant the person had the best experience possible and positive memories of the day.
- Staff completed training in relation to equality and diversity. One person was supported around their religious needs and beliefs. People were free to express their views, with support when needed, in an inclusive and accepting service.

Supporting people to express their views and be involved in making decisions about their care

- People made decisions about their daily lives and were actively involved in planning their care. An advocate supported one person in relation to making decisions about their accommodation, whilst staff helped them to arrange this alongside their family. The goal being to enable them to live more independently in the future.
- People were supported by staff creatively. For one person, staff had arranged for a review meeting to take place in a café, so the person's family member could attend for the first time in several years, as they both wanted this. They also arranged for an additional care staff member to accompany them, to support this further.
- Staff understood the importance of people's views, wishes and choices being respected. For example, one person was interested in buying a virtual reality headset, however as this was a large expenditure, staff arranged for them to experience this for the day, to help them make an informed decision prior to spending this money.
- Staff supported people with their goals and aspirations. One person has expressed an interest in owning a dog in the future so staff had taken them to an animal charity to gain a further understanding about types of dogs and their needs. This helped educate them further about this commitment.

Respecting and promoting people's privacy, dignity and independence

- People were supported by staff respectfully. One relative told us, "They respect [Person], they are very good to them, and always keep an eye on them." They explained that if, for example, the person needed some assistance with their personal care, staff were quick to offer this.
- Staff took pride in the work they did supporting young people to transition to adults and access opportunities to develop them along the way. One person was encouraged by staff to be actively involved in the community with a wide range of interests which meant they developed some meaningful relationships with other people outside of the home, for example at a local college.
- Staff promoted people's independence. One person had been reluctant to leave the service and gradually over time and with dedicated and consistent support from staff, their confidence had grown, so now they were going out several times a week. This had now developed further so the person was able to go on holiday and enjoy this experience, which has led to them doing other activities, such as going on a boat.
- Due to the committed support of the staff, another person's confidence had grown so much they had now built relationships with the other people that lived at the home, their anxieties had reduced, and they were now able to express their feelings to staff if anything troubled them.

Is the service responsive?

Our findings

Responsive – this means we looked for evidence that the service met people's needs

Good: People's needs were met through good organisation and delivery.

Planning personalised care to meet people's needs, preferences, interests and give them choice and control

- People received care which reflected their needs and preferences. One relative explained staff knew their family member very well, and this was the secret to success, they told us, "It is about teaching staff how to handle situations, they have a programme, and it is working". Another relative praised how new staff were matched with people and a period of getting to know each other took place which worked really well. People chose the staff to support them, for example staff gender, and this ensured people were supported as they chose to be.
- Staff knew people well. For example, one person communicated by calling out sometimes, the staff member could tell what this meant by the way they did this and tone, for example this might indicate they felt happy or bored.
- People's care and support plans had been reviewed regularly and updated to reflect any changes to people's needs. These included people's health needs, histories and preferences. Autism profiles contained further information about people such as what they found difficult and aspirations. Relatives were involved in review meetings to ensure the care remained suitable.
- Staff supported people to manage and reduce their care needs. One person had used leg splints when they first came to the service and with the support of staff and other professionals now no longer needed these, which made them feel very happy. They had also been diagnosed with a health condition and staff and the registered manager had taken time to gain a full understanding of this, including how best to support them and the impact of this on them.
- People lived their lives as they wanted. One person had experienced some feelings of anxiety and the staff supported them to attend art therapy sessions which helped them to express how they felt and talk to staff further. An 'emotions' box was used to write down their feelings and this had led to a decrease in some of their behaviours.
- Staff arranged for one person to attend an Autism awareness group and this enabled them to talk about how autism affected them on a day to day basis and their experiences.
- People enjoyed activities and were able to follow their interests. Relatives were given information in advance of people's plans and told us activities were varied. One person told us about how they loved music and showed us around their room which was personalised with all their belongings, including a karaoke machine they liked to use. They had been supported by staff to record a CD of a song they had written themselves at a music studio.
- Staff supported one person to volunteer for a charity and attend some local youth activity sessions. They had also attended a course for film making animation and had applied for work experience with support from staff. Other people had attended a riding school and helped to care for the horses.
- People's information and communication needs were assessed, and staff understood the Accessible Information Standard. Information was provided to people in a format that met their needs. Some people communicated using pictures, objects of reference or Makaton, which is a form of sign language.

Improving care quality in response to complaints or concerns

- Where complaints had been received, they were followed up and information was used to make improvements if required. There had been no recent complaints, however one relative said they had lodged a complaint in the past and this was dealt with to their satisfaction.

End of life care and support

- No one at the service was receiving support with end of life care however the registered manager was aware that should a person's needs change, they would ensure support was received in line with their wishes.

Is the service well-led?

Our findings

Well-Led – this means we looked for evidence that service leadership, management and governance assured high-quality, person-centred care; supported learning and innovation; and promoted an open, fair culture

Good: The service was consistently managed and well-led. Leaders and the culture they created promoted high-quality, person-centred care.

Planning and promoting person-centred, high-quality care and support with openness; and how the provider understands and acts on their duty of candour responsibility

- All of the feedback we received about Westwood was positive. One person told us, "Yes I like it here." A relative said, "It's good. [Registered manager] has the place under control. Action is taken where it is needed, they know what they are doing." Another relative told us they felt the registered manager was 'particularly good'.
- The management team consisted of the registered manager and team leaders, and were described as 'open and transparent'. They were supported by the operations manager.
- Staff felt supported by the registered manager who was available when needed. One staff member told us, "I think it is good here, if you have any concerns, the office door is always open. I can raise any issues, even if it might sound silly, I don't worry about asking." Another staff member said they felt the registered manager was very supportive, very open, they actively got involved with people and told us they admired them.
- Staff said the service was a good place to work. The culture of working at Westwood was described with comments such as, "It has a nice feel," and "It is a close - knit staff team". Staff turnover at the service was low and staff said this was because of the positive relationships with the people they supported, and they enjoyed coming into work each day.
- Staff were clear about the providers vision to provide personalised care and understood why this was important. The registered manager told us they were proud that over the last four years due to the hard work of staff, people's risk behaviours had reduced significantly, keeping people safe from harm and increasing their quality of life. Along with this, use of medication had also reduced.
- A provider programme called 'Active Support' had been introduced to ensure people were supported to increase their independence. This had also shown to reduce people's anxieties and behaviours.
- Plan were underway to develop an area of land at the rear of the property to make this accessible for people living at the service. Also, to decorate some of the environment further.
- The registered manager understood their responsibilities in relation to duty of candour, that was being open and honest and accepting responsibility when things went wrong.

Managers and staff being clear about their roles, and understanding quality performance, risks and regulatory requirements

- The registered manager understood the legal requirements of their role including submitting certain notifications to us and displaying their inspection ratings.
- The registered manager and senior staff checked the quality of the care provided. For example, checks were made to ensure people's care plans remained current. Peer audits were completed by other service managers to further provide quality checks. The registered manager explained these processes supported

them with the ongoing delivery, monitoring and improvement of the care and provided the best possible experience for people being supported.

- Staff received supervision of their performance and monthly team meetings were held which provided an opportunity for staff to feedback their views and suggestions.

Engaging and involving people using the service, the public and staff, fully considering their equality characteristics

- Views of people, relatives and staff were gathered through an annual service review and where suggestions for improvement were made, these had been acted on. A suggestion box was made available for people and staff to feedback. One suggestion was for a smoothie maker which was purchased so people could enjoy these.
- The provider was committed to supporting people into work and had supported one person who had a disability to gain employment with them. They had been awarded the 'Disability Confident Committed' award by the provider to acknowledge that they ensured their recruitment processes were inclusive and accessible.

Continuous learning and improving care

- Learning from concerns and incidents contributed to continuous improvement. Regular reviews of documentation, staff practise, and accidents and incidents meant the service continued to change and adapt the support provided. For example, it had been identified that diet triggered one person's behaviours and learning had been taken from this.
- To support their autism specialism and the further work being carried out in this area, the registered manager had completed an autism improvement plan. This assessment ensured the service and environment was as suitable as possible for people living there.
- To acknowledge their commitment to care, both the registered manager and a staff member were nominated for provider awards. The staff member won the regional care support worker of the year award and the registered manager reached the regional finals for manager of the year.

Working in partnership with others

- The registered manager continued to develop community links with a view to further improving care and support for people and to enhance people's life experiences.
- Social workers, commissioners and other professionals were welcomed in support of people's care.