

# Achieve Together Limited

## Avenue Road

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

# Summary of findings

## Overall summary

### About the service

Avenue Road provides personal care for people who live in supported living accommodation. The people who use the service have a range of needs including people with a learning disability and autistic people. At the time of our inspection nine people were using the service living in one supported living setting. People rented their room from a private landlord and used shared facilities such as a kitchen and living room. Not everyone who used the service received personal care. CQC only inspects where people receive personal care. This is help with tasks related to personal hygiene and eating. Where they do we also consider any wider social care provided. Five people received personal care.

This service was previously registered with the Care Management Group. The current provider took over the management and operation of the service in November 2020.

We expect health and social care providers to guarantee people with a learning disability and autistic people respect, equality, dignity, choices and independence and good access to local communities that most people take for granted. 'Right support, right care, right culture' is the guidance CQC follows to make assessments and judgements about services supporting people with a learning disability and autistic people and providers must have regard to it.

People's experience of using this service and what we found

### Right Support

The service was highly person centred. Staff focused on supporting people to live their best lives through offering people choices and opportunities. People were supported by staff to pursue their interests and to achieve their aspirations and goals with exceptional results. People told us they thought the support they received to achieve their aspirations and goals was outstanding. Staff went above and beyond to empower people to access specialist health and social care support in the community and people experienced exceptional outcomes as a result. Staff actively encouraged people to be as independent as they could be and have control over their own lives. People had a choice about their living environment and were able to personalise their rooms. Staff supported people to play an active role in maintaining their own health and wellbeing.

### Right Care

People received kind and compassionate care. Staff protected and respected people's privacy and dignity and understood and responded to individual needs. Staff understood how to protect people from poor care and abuse. The service had enough appropriately skilled staff to meet people's needs. People could communicate with staff and understand information given to them because staff supported them consistently and understood their individual communication needs.

### Right Culture

Staff knew and understood people well and were responsive, supporting their aspirations to live a quality life of their choosing. Staff placed people's wishes, needs and rights at the heart of everything they did. The service enabled people and those important to them to work with staff to develop the service. Staff valued and acted upon people's views. People's quality of life was enhanced by the service's culture of improvement and inclusivity.

For more details, please see the full report which is on the CQC website at [www.cqc.org.uk](http://www.cqc.org.uk)

#### Rating at last inspection

This service was registered with us on 26 November 2020 and this is the first inspection. The last overall rating for the service under the previous provider was good, published on 20 August 2019.

#### Why we inspected

We undertook this inspection to assess that the service is applying the principles of right support, right care, right culture. This was a planned first inspection following registration with the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

#### Follow up

We will continue to monitor information we receive about the service, which will help inform when we next inspect.

## 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?

Good ●

The service was caring.

Details are in our caring findings below.

### Is the service responsive?

Outstanding ☆

The service was exceptionally 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.

# Avenue Road

## 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. We checked whether the provider was meeting the legal requirements and regulations associated with the Act. We looked at the overall quality of the service and provided a rating for the service under the Health and Social Care Act 2008.

#### Inspection team

This inspection was carried out by one inspector.

#### Service and service type

This service provides care and support to people living in a 'supported living' setting so they can live as independently as possible. People's care and housing are provided under separate contractual agreements. CQC does not regulate premises used for supported living; this inspection looked at people's personal care and support.

#### Registered Manager

This service is required to have a registered manager. A registered manager is a person who has registered with the Care Quality Commission to manage the service. 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.

At the time of our inspection there was a registered manager in post.

#### Notice of inspection

This inspection was unannounced.

#### What we did before the inspection

We reviewed information we had received about the service since they were registered. The provider was not asked to complete a Provider Information Return (PIR) prior to this inspection. A PIR is information providers send us to give some key information about the service, what the service does well and improvements they plan to make.

During the inspection

We observed interactions between people and staff to help us understand their experiences of receiving care and support at the service. We spoke with six people using the service, the regional manager, the registered manager and four staff members. We also spoke with three family members. We looked at records which included care records for four people, three staff files, medicines records and other records relating to the management of the service.

# Is the service safe?

## Our findings

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

This is the first inspection of this newly registered service. This key question has been rated good. This meant people were safe and protected from avoidable harm.

Systems and processes to safeguard people from the risk of abuse

- People were empowered to keep safe. Safeguarding information was clear and accessible and people discussed how they felt and what to do if they did not feel safe at regular meetings. People had individual designated support staff who acted as their keyworkers. Regular one to one support with keyworkers gave people additional opportunities to discuss any concerns they may have.
- Staff received training to ensure they knew how to recognise and report abuse and staff were able to describe how they would do this.
- Systems were in place to report concerns. These were escalated to the appropriate bodies. The provider monitored and investigated concerns and took action to reduce risk to people.

Assessing risk, safety monitoring and management

- People were involved in managing risks and in taking decisions about how to keep themselves safe. Risk assessments helped balance people's safety while still encouraging their independence. Staff encouraged people to take positive risks, for example, using public transport safely and trying out new activities in the community.
- Staff told us about the strategies they used when people became anxious and upset and the distraction techniques they used to help reduce anxiety.
- Staff managed the safety of the living environment and equipment in it through checks and actions to minimise risk. For example, regular health and safety and fire checks were carried out to make sure people were safe in their home.

Staffing and recruitment

- The service had enough staff, including additional support for people to take part in activities or attend healthcare appointments. Staff told us how they managed their shifts to accommodate people's activities including those that were late at night such as parties, discos and pool tournaments. We observed people were in and out, taking part in activities with staff during the inspection.
- Staff recruitment and induction training processes promoted safety. Checks were carried out before employment started to make sure staff were suitable for the role.

Using medicines safely

- People were supported by staff who followed systems and processes to prescribe, administer, record and store medicines safely.
- People could take their medicines in private when appropriate and safe. Staff were able to support people in their rooms with their medicines.
- Staff reviewed each person's medicines regularly to make sure they received the right medicines at the

right time. Additional advice was in place to help staff when PRN or 'as required' medicine was needed. Regular medicine audits made sure people received their medicines safely.

#### Preventing and controlling infection

- The service used effective infection, prevention and control measures to keep people safe, and staff supported people to follow them. The service had good arrangements to keep the premises clean and hygienic.
- The service prevented visitors from catching and spreading infections in line with current guidance.
- Staff used personal protective equipment (PPE) effectively and safely when they needed to.
- There were no restrictions on visiting arrangements and people's friends and family were able to visit in line with current guidance.
- All relevant staff had completed food hygiene training and followed correct procedures for preparing and storing food.

#### Learning lessons when things go wrong

- Staff were fully supported to report concerns and incidents and knew they would be listened to by the registered manager. When something went wrong the registered manager fully investigated concerns and acted appropriately.
- The provider reviewed all accidents, incidents and safeguarding concerns and there was a strong focus to learn lessons to make things better for people. When there was learning from events these were circulated to staff so action could be taken to reduce any risk that people could face.



# 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.

This is the first inspection for this newly registered service. This key question has been rated good. This meant 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

- People's needs were assessed to identify all of the support they required while focusing on giving people choice and control in their everyday life. Staff supported people to develop the skills they needed to be more independent and used evidence-based guidance to map people's goals and achievements.
- People's support plans were personalised with an attention to detail that allowed staff to focus on people's individual needs, aspirations, physical and mental health needs.
- Relatives told us they felt involved in people's care and support and confirmed they were invited to care and support reviews.

Staff support: induction, training, skills and experience

- People were supported by staff who had received relevant training in evidence-based practice. This included training in supporting and understanding autistic people. Staff told us how their training helped them feel confident supporting people.
- The registered manager checked staff's competency to ensure they understood and applied training and best practice.
- Staff received support in the form of continual supervision, appraisal and recognition of good practice.

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

- People were involved in choosing their food, shopping, and planning their meals. People kept food supplies in their flats and staff supported people to use the oven in the main kitchen. During our inspection people were choosing what to eat and when and staff supported people with this, with a focus on improving people's independence.
- People spoke about how important their diet was and making the right food choices to keep healthy. Staff supported people to do this by planning their meals and writing shopping lists before a shopping trip.
- People's likes and dislikes were recorded in their care records along with any special dietary needs. Staff knew about people's cultural, ethical and religious choices and these were respected when planning and preparing meals.

Staff working with other agencies to provide consistent, effective, timely care; supporting people to live healthier lives, access healthcare services and support

- People were supported to access the healthcare services they required. Care records confirmed there were good links with local health services and the GP. There was evidence of regular visits to healthcare professionals, together with the advice given and action taken
- Staff worked closely with healthcare professionals to make sure people received positive outcomes. For

example, one person with support and motivation from staff and their GP had been able to stop smoking.

#### 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 MCA 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. When people receive care and treatment in their own homes an application must be made to the Court of Protection for them to authorise people to be deprived of their liberty. We checked whether the service was working within the principles of the MCA, whether appropriate legal authorisations were in place when needed to deprive a person of their liberty, and whether any conditions relating to those authorisations were being met.

- Staff made sure people had the maximum choice and control over their lives and supported them in the least restrictive way possible.
- Care records highlighted where people lacked the mental capacity to make certain decisions about their care and treatment and staff made sure people received the support they needed to make decisions in these areas.

# 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.

This is the first inspection for this newly registered service. This key question has been rated good. This meant people were supported and treated with dignity and respect; and involved as partners in their care.

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

- People were relaxed and happy in the company of the staff. Staff interactions with people were positive with people smiling and laughing. Staff showed a genuine interest in people's well-being and quality of life. One person told us, "Staff have really done well for me since I have been here. Another said, "All the staff have been brilliant". It was clear people valued and trusted the support provided by staff.
- Staff saw people as their equal and created a warm and inclusive atmosphere. Staff we spoke with showed a real empathy for people and spoke about their work with enthusiasm and compassion. Comments from staff included, "I love working here especially with [person's name] we talk such a lot, we are like best friends" and "Working here has been enriching. Just being there when [people] achieve their goals and desires gives you a fulfilling feeling."
- People were well matched with their designated support worker. This meant people were at ease, happy, engaged and stimulated. The registered manager explained how people could choose which staff member supported them and explained how matching people and staff with the similar interests or personalities could really reduce people's anxieties. For example, one person needed a calming influence and the time to build rapport and trust with new staff. The designated staff member was able to spend time with the person, really getting to know them. As a result the person's anxiety reduced allowing them to become involved in more meaningful activities.
- People were asked about their religious and cultural beliefs and staff worked with people and families to respect these in line with their wishes.

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

- People felt listened to and valued by staff. One person told us, "That's what I like about this company [provider] they give you so much choice."
- People were involved with choices about their day to day care and support. This included food choices, what to wear and how to spend their time. Throughout our inspection we observed staff chatting and speaking to people as equals, using encouraging and supportive language to give people the information they needed to make decisions about their day.
- People and those important to them, took part in making decisions and planning of their care and risk assessments. Relatives told us they felt listened to by staff and could make suggestions to improve their family members care and support.

Respecting and promoting people's privacy, dignity and independence

- Respect for privacy and dignity was at the heart of the services culture and values. Some staff had worked at the service for a long time, and it was clear when observing people, they valued and trusted the support

provided by these staff.

- Staff were given the time and freedom to work with people to increase their independence, to teach people new skills and give people the opportunity to fully embrace new experiences. Staff knew when people needed their space and privacy and respected this. We observed people made choices throughout our inspection about what they wanted to do or where they wanted to be, including having privacy and space when necessary.

# Is the service responsive?

## Our findings

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

This was the first inspection for this service under the new provider. This key question has been rated as outstanding. This meant services were tailored to meet the needs of individuals and delivered to ensure flexibility, choice and continuity of care.

Supporting people to develop and maintain relationships to avoid social isolation; support to follow interests and to take part in activities that are socially and culturally relevant to them

- Staff empowered people to achieve their goals and aspirations with impressive results. They understood what motivated people as individuals and were able to encourage people to try new activities or learn new skills using a person-centred approach.
- Staff had a can-do attitude when it came to new challenges and went the extra mile to make sure people had the opportunities available to them to lead a fulfilling life. One person came to the service with a list of goals they wished to achieve. Staff told us how they had worked with the person to achieve their ambitions and make the person's dreams become a reality. They worked hard to find and make contacts in the local community to ensure the person had the opportunity to achieve their goals and aspirations. We spoke with the person who told us how busy their life was and how proud they were of their achievements. They went on to show us pictures and videos of their successes and spoke about their future ambitions. The person's enthusiasm was mirrored by staff who told us they were absolutely committed to the person's ongoing journey.
- Where people had longstanding anxieties staff were able to work with them to build trust and overcome their fears so they were able to live as full a life as possible. One person had refused life changing healthcare treatment for many years because of fear and mistrust. Staff worked with the person over many months to build their confidence and to make sure they had the information they needed, in a way they could understand, to help reduce their apprehension. With the support and encouragement of staff and healthcare professionals, the person agreed to the procedure. Staff made sure they were with the person throughout their hospital stay to make sure they had a familiar face there to support and care for them. Staff told us how different the person's life was, once the treatment was completed. The person now had the confidence to access the community, they took pride in how they looked and dressed and they were able to participate in new activities never available to them before.
- There was a wide variety of activities for people both inside the service and outside in the community, which were tailored around people's individual hobbies and interests. Staff supported people to take positive risks and went above and beyond to make sure people's choice was always respected. One person was looking forward to their holiday but wanted to change the venue at the last minute so they could be with their friends. Staff did not see this as a barrier but reacted positively to the person's request. The person had reduced mobility and staff made sure the hotel had mobility access to the facilities available. This meant the person would not feel excluded or different because of their disability and could enjoy all of the activities available with their friends. Staff told us they were prepared to do everything in their power to make sure the person had an enjoyable holiday with their friends.
- The registered manager actively encouraged positive relationships between people and those who

mattered to them. When one person suffered a bereavement the registered manager made sure the person was able to visit their remaining family who lived several hours away. Staff accompanied the person on the journey using their favourite mode of transport to make sure the person enjoyed the trip.

Planning personalised care to ensure people have choice and control and to meet their needs and preferences

- Staff put people at the centre of their care and made sure their care and support were tailored to meet individual needs. The registered manager spoke with passion about the people they supported and told us, "Every moment of people's life has potential and I really push for people to have potential." This was demonstrated by the many examples of positive outcomes people experienced through the dedicated and person centred support offered by staff.
- People told us the personalised support they received was outstanding and described it in these terms. People were proud to live at Avenue Road and felt empowered to take control of their day to day life because they felt valued by staff. People told us about their goals and aspirations such as moving to their own flats or getting married to their partners and they felt staff supported them to do so.
- People told us about their next steps to become more independent and how staff had supported them to have more choice and control. For example, staff encouraged one person to give up smoking by emphasising the health and financial benefits. Staff highlighted how much money could be saved by not smoking and how this could contribute towards the person's love of traveling. The person told us, "Staff have been brilliant, they are lovely and so supportive. I have more money now. I am happy, fitter and walking better now. Staff have really done well for me since I have been here."

Meeting people's communication needs

Since 2016 all organisations that provide publicly funded adult social care are legally required to follow the Accessible Information Standard. The Accessible Information Standard tells organisations what they have to do to help ensure people with a disability or sensory loss, and in some circumstances, their carers, get information in a way they can understand it. It also says that people should get the support they need in relation to communication.

- Staff ensured people had access to information in formats they could understand. This included easy to read documents to help people understand more about their health needs or how to report concerns and make a complaint.
- Staff had good awareness, skills and understanding of individual communication needs, they knew how to facilitate communication and when people were trying to tell them something.

Improving care quality in response to complaints or concerns

- People, and those important to them, could raise concerns and complaints easily and staff supported them to do so. Relatives told us if they had a complaint or concerns they would raise this with the registered manager.
- The service treated all concerns and complaints seriously, investigated them and learned lessons from the results, sharing the learning with the whole team and the wider service.

End of life care and support

- At the time of our inspection no one at the service was receiving end of life care.
- People and their family members were given the opportunity to discuss their end of life plans and records of these conversations were kept in people's care records.

# 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.

This is the first inspection for this newly registered service. This key question has been rated good. This meant the service was consistently managed and well-led. Leaders and the culture they created promoted high-quality, person-centred care.

Promoting a positive culture that is person-centred, open, inclusive and empowering, which achieves good outcomes for people

- The registered manager worked hard to instil a culture of care in which staff truly valued and promoted people's individuality, protected their rights and enabled them to develop and flourish. They told us, "Our values drive what we do and are linked with everything we do to have a good practice and culture. People deserve to live the best life possible. I am always having conversations with staff about building relationships with people. We all have our part to play."
- Staff told us they felt respected, supported and valued by senior staff. One staff member told us, "They [the registered manager and deputy manager] have been so supportive and I have learnt a lot from them. They will advise me, or if it doesn't work out so well we reflect and do it better. It has been quite a learning experience for me."

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

- The provider had a robust quality assurance program in place that allowed them to manage and assess the risks to people and the quality of care and support people received. The provider's recent quality audit had highlighted some areas for improvement. The registered manager explained how they were working on their action plan to meet agreed targets so they could continue to deliver high quality, person centred care.
- Staff understood their roles and responsibilities and were encouraged to progress within the organisation. The provider invested in staff by providing them with quality training to meet the needs of all individuals using the service. One staff member told us about the training they had just completed and told us, "If you want to grow, they will support you to do that."

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

- People were asked for their views about their care and treatment and their views were acted on. We observed people were encouraged to give their views to staff at any time and also had the opportunity to do so during regular one to one and keyworker meetings.
- People chaired their own meetings and discussed issues that were important to them. Staff listened to people's views and proactively engaged with people to improve and shape the service to meet people's preferences.
- Staff told us they were able to share their views and experiences with the registered manager at any time but also during their staff meetings and supervision. Staff explained how they appreciated the support they

received from the team and managers and how this made them strong and resilient especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. One staff member told us, "The team is a great team, since I came here it's been really supportive , like a family."

Continuous learning and improving care; how the provider understands and acts on the duty of candour, which is their legal responsibility to be open and honest with people when something goes wrong

- Managers set a culture that valued reflection, learning and improvement and they were receptive to challenge and welcomed fresh perspectives. The registered manager was open with us about the changes they made and what they wanted to do going forward. They explained how they were always looking for ways to improve the care and support people received.
- When things went wrong the registered manager explained how they shared lessons with staff to help reduce risk and improve people's care.

Working in partnership with others

- The service worked with other agencies such as health care professionals to make sure people had the care they needed. This included commissioners and healthcare professionals, whose input was obtained when needed to ensure people received the support they required.