

Southern Family Care Ltd

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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 ●

Summary of findings

Overall summary

The inspection took place on 03 July 2017 and was announced. The service is registered to provide personal care to both older and younger people in their own homes, however at the time of the inspection only two young people under the age of eighteen received the regulated activity of personal care.

At the last inspection on 14 and 20 January 2016 we rated the service Good. At this inspection we found the service remained Good.

We were unable to observe care provision or speak directly with people who received support due to their age, the complex conditions some of them lived with and the circumstances in which they were supported. However, we obtained feedback about the services provided from parents, health and social care professionals and staff.

There was a manager in post who had registered with the Care Quality Commission (CQC). A registered manager is a person who has registered with the CQC 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.

Parents told us that their children were safe and well cared for when supported by the service. Staff had received training in how to safeguard both adults and children from abuse and knew how to report concerns.

There were sufficient staff employed to meet people's needs at all times. Staff had undergone employment checks prior to working in the service. Staff received training and felt supported to carry out their roles effectively.

Staff were trained to help and support people take medicines safely, however at the time of the inspection this was mainly managed by their relatives.

Potential risks to people's health and well-being had been identified, reviewed and managed effectively to keep them safe.

People's relatives and healthcare professionals were very positive about the skills, experience and abilities of staff who provided care and support.

Staff developed positive and caring relationships with the people they supported and their families and supported people in a personalised way.

Staff made every effort to ascertain people's wishes and obtain their consent before providing personal care and support.

Parents and social care professionals, together with the people concerned wherever possible, were involved in the planning, delivery and reviews of the care and support provided.

The confidentiality of information held about people's medical and personal histories was securely maintained.

Parents and relatives told us that support was provided in a way that promoted their family member's dignity and respected their privacy.

People received care and support that met their needs and took account of their preferences. Staff were very knowledgeable about their preferences and routines which they used to good effect in delivering person centred care.

People were supported to pursue interests and take part in activities of their choosing, both at home and in the community.

Parents and relatives felt that staff listened to them and responded to any concerns they had in a positive way. They knew how to complain should the need arise but told us they had never had cause to do so.

Families, staff and professional stakeholders were very complimentary about the registered manager and how the service was operated.

Effective arrangements were in place to monitor risks and the quality of services provided.

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 remained Good.

Is the service effective?

Good ●

The service remained Good.

Is the service caring?

Good ●

The service remained Good.

Is the service responsive?

Good ●

The service remained Good.

Is the service well-led?

Good ●

The service remained Good.

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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 03 July 2017. The inspection was announced and carried out by one inspector. We gave the provider 48 hours' notice to ensure that they would be available to support us with our inspection.

Before our inspection we reviewed information we held about the service including statutory notifications that had been submitted. Statutory notifications include information about important events which the provider is required to send us.

During the inspection we spoke with one staff member, one parent of a person who received support and the registered manager. We also received feedback from social care professionals familiar with the service and the people they supported. We looked at care plans relating to two people who used the service and two staff files.

Is the service safe?

Our findings

Parents told us that people who used the service were happy, well supported and kept safe. A parent of one person said, "I'm a parent you may describe as a bit OTT (over the top) when it comes to [staff] caring for [person] as [person] is non-verbal (amongst other things) and I'm always concerned [person] can't tell me if something was wrong. I never had or have had any concerns with Southern Family Care."

Staff received training about how to safeguard adults and children from harm and were knowledgeable about the risks of abuse. They knew how to raise concerns and report potential abuse by whistle blowing, both within the service and externally. A social care professional told us, "[Name of staff member] from Southern Family Care has played a paramount role in safeguarding [two people receiving the service]. [Name of staff member] has always responded to concerns appropriately by asking the right questions and recording accurate information. All concerns have been communicated clearly and timely."

Safe and effective recruitment practices were followed to make sure that staff employed at the service were suitable for the roles they performed and were of good character. The registered manager had flexible working arrangements in place to ensure there were enough suitably experienced and skilled staff available to meet people's agreed care and support needs safely, effectively and in a calm and patient way. There were no missed or late visits to people.

Staff were not required to support people with medicines, however they were all trained and their competencies were regularly checked to ensure that if there was a need for it they could administer people's medicines.

Where potential risks to people's health, well-being or safety had been identified, these were assessed and reviewed regularly to take account of people's changing needs and personal circumstances. This included areas such as the home environment, medicines, behaviour that challenged others, physical health and safety, mobility and going out and about. Information about incidents, accidents and any injuries that occurred within people's homes or in the community were recorded, reported to the registered manager and used as lessons learned to reduce the risks and likelihood of reoccurrence.

Is the service effective?

Our findings

Parents told us that staff always sought to provide care in a way that reflected their wishes and, wherever possible, those of the people who received support. Staff knew people they supported and their communication needs very well which meant they were able to ascertain what they wanted to do and obtain their consent about the care provided.

A parent of a person told us, "From the start of looking for care for [person] I specified that I wanted consistency and I wanted someone with an obvious love for their job. I feel Southern Family Care provide this 100%." A social care professional told us, "[Person] also has additional needs, their behaviour is disruptive at home and [staff member] is working holistically with the family to direct the support towards the identified needs of [person] but also mindful of keeping the right balance for [other family members]. This is a delicate balance and [staff member] has shown they have managed this well."

The Mental Capacity Act 2005 (MCA) provides a legal framework for making particular decisions on behalf of adults who may lack the mental capacity to do so for themselves. The Act requires that as far as possible people make their own decisions and are helped to do so when needed. When they lack mental capacity to take particular decisions, any made on their behalf must be in their best interests and as least restrictive as possible. At the time of our inspection we found that the provider had worked within the principles of the MCA when support was provided to adults.

Staff received training provided in a range of subjects designed to help staff perform their roles safely and effectively. This included in areas such as continence care, moving and handling, fire safety, person centred care, first aid and awareness training about some of the medical conditions relevant to the people they supported, for example epilepsy. New staff were required to complete an induction programme as part of a probationary period. They received personal 'one to one' tuition from the registered manager who they were required to shadow until confident they knew how to provide the care and support required. Staff felt well supported by the registered manager and had frequent opportunities to discuss issues that were important to them. They had regular supervisions with the registered manager where their performance and personal development was reviewed.

Although staff were not responsible for supporting people with their day to day diet or meal preparation, they were very knowledgeable about their nutritional needs, food preferences and how to support them to eat and drink in a healthy and safe way as and when required. People received care and support that helped to meet their health needs in a safe and effective way. Staff were very knowledgeable about people's individual care and support requirements and how they should be met.

Is the service caring?

Our findings

People were supported in a kind and compassionate way by staff who knew them well and were very knowledgeable about their care needs. A parent of a person told us, "I feel [staff] genuinely care for clients and it's a lovely thing to see. [Person`s name] loves [Staff`s name] as they are so friendly and approachable and isn't afraid to get stuck in with [person] despite all their problems."

Staff helped and supported people in a way that maintained their dignity and respected their privacy at all times. Parents were appreciative and valued the support they received from the service. One parent told us, "The support [name of the registered manager] provides me as parent is second to none and quite honestly I don't know what I would do without them. [The registered manager] helped me mentally through a lot of hard times with [person] and that's just by taking the time to talk to me as well as care for [person`s name]."

We found that parents and social care professionals and, wherever possible the people who received support, had been fully involved in the planning, reviews and delivery of the care provided. Care plans contained information about how people should be supported. The registered manager told us they were very aware of people's changing care needs and also how best to identify changes to people's care and support. This included observations around people's behaviours and interactions in their home and in the community.

Support plans reflected the fact that families, social care professionals and, wherever possible, the people supported were involved in and had agreed to the support provided. Confidentiality was well maintained at the service which meant that held about people's health, support needs and medical histories was kept secure.

Is the service responsive?

Our findings

People received personalised care and support that met their individual needs and took full account of their personal circumstances. Staff had access to detailed information and guidance about how to support people in a person centred way, based on their individual likes and dislikes, preferences and health and welfare needs. The registered manager and staff worked closely with people's families, relatives and social care professionals to ensure they fully understood how to meet their needs.

A social care professional told us, "Before Southern Family Care was involved with the family [person] would be fixated on their computer. Now [person] lives a varied afterschool social life where [they have] been integrated into a mainstream community play scheme, [they started] attending social clubs at school but and started to attend Karate and Relaxation in the local community." This meant that people were supported to pursue activities and social interests they enjoyed, both in their own homes and in the community wherever possible.

The parents of people who received support were consulted and updated about the care and support provided and were encouraged to have their say. They felt listened to and told us that the registered manager was always quick to respond to any issues raised in a prompt and positive way. The provider had a complaint policy in place, however there were no complaints received from parents or other professionals regularly in contact with the service.

Is the service well-led?

Our findings

Parents of people who used the service staff and professional stakeholders were all extremely positive about how it was led and managed. They were all very complimentary about the registered manager in particular who they described as being well organised, professional, approachable and supportive.

The parent of one person told us, "The company is well run, efficient and so friendly and accommodating. I've had to rearrange days with [registered manager] a few times and she's always moved things around with no problems. To sum things up Southern Family Care provide by far the best care I've ever had for [person's name] and they are a credit to the service." A social care professional with experience of the service and some of the people it supports commented, "[The registered manager] is very efficient and responds quickly to the changing needs of the family."

The registered manager was very knowledgeable about the people they supported, people's families their needs and personal circumstances. Staff understood their roles and were clear about their responsibilities and what was expected of them.

The registered manager forged positive and effective working relationships with social and healthcare professionals to improve and enhance the quality of care and support provided. They sought feedback from parents, relatives and professionals at regular meetings, reviews of the support provided and by sending out surveys. We looked at a random selection of the responses received and found them to be very positive about the registered manager, staff team and the services provided.