Royal Blind Allermuir
Care Home Service

142 Glenallan Drive
Edinburgh
EH16 5RE

Telephone: 0131 446 3104

Type of inspection: Unannounced
Inspection completed on: 12 July 2017

Service provided by:
Royal Blind Asylum and School

Service provider number:
SP2003002572

Care service number:
CS2016344402
About the service

Allermuir has been registered with the Care Inspectorate since 4 August 2016.

Allermuir is located in a quiet suburb of Edinburgh.

The house has a spacious living area, large kitchen come dining area, four single bedrooms and well equipped en suite bathrooms. There is also office space, staff sleep over accommodation and volunteer accommodation.

There is access to a front and back garden area.

The building is very well maintained, furnished and decorated.

The location allows very good access to transport links.

The service has a dedicated manager, the senior residential care worker, and staff team. This includes two part-time ‘Housekeepers’. The service is externally managed by the adult services manager with overview from the care services manager.

The service incorporates volunteers and nursing students on placement.

The service provides long-term care and support to young adults who have left school. The service can accommodate four young adults, aged 17 and upwards. It is envisaged that placements will be life long. At inspection four young adults were living in the house.

The focus of placement is to maximise young adult’s preparedness for as independent an adult life as is possible.

What people told us

We engaged with young adults at inspection with the help of staff. We observed staff / young adult interaction throughout the inspection. We saw that young adults were happy with the service that they received and enjoyed very caring and close relationships with staff members. Young adults enjoyed the activities that they had access to and enjoyed the day-to-day rhythm of house life. We saw very good use of humour and appropriate touch. We saw that young adults led very busy and purposeful lives.

We saw that young adults were given choices regarding meals, activities and daily routines.

The one young adult with speech told us that he enjoyed living in Allermuir, that he “got on well” with the staff and that he felt safe. He said that he could go to any member of staff if he had a worry. He explained to us his very busy activities programme that included working in a café, woodwork and learning Braille.

We spoke with four parents / carers by telephone. They were all very positive about the service, citing the quality of care and support and staffing.

One parent / carer, whilst happy with general communication, felt that the recent changes in management and staffing could have been communicated more effectively. Another, whilst very happy with the service overall, felt that their young adult should have more access to activities. Another, whilst again very happy with the service overall, felt that the “mix” of young adults could be better.
Comments included:

“Staff are caring and helpful - I am very happy with the service”.

“(young adult) loves it - staff are brand new and really, really helpful - I am 100% happy with the service”.

“(young adult) is happy and settled-high quality of staff - top marks, an excellent service”.

“I am very happy with the service - staff are very good and communication is effective”.

Self assessment

The service had not been asked to complete a self assessment in advance of the inspection. We looked at their own improvement plan and quality assurance paperwork. These demonstrated their priorities for development and how they were monitoring of the quality of the provision within the service.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support 5 - Very Good
Quality of environment 5 - Very Good
Quality of staffing 5 - Very Good
Quality of management and leadership 5 - Very Good

Quality of care and support

Findings from the inspection

We saw that young adults enjoyed very good relationships with staff. We saw that staff knew the young adults very well and responded appropriately to their wishes and needs. We found that the service had a very positive and happy atmosphere, with a purposeful rhythm to daily life. Young adults lived full and busy lives.

Person-centred care was provided in a manner that respected young adults’ rights, dignity, choices and privacy.

We found very good key working arrangements that ensured effective case management.

We saw very detailed care and support plans referred to as ‘Essential Lifestyle Plans’. This included ‘Outcome Measures’ that set and monitored agreed goals. This ensured consistency of care and support, and maximised young adults’ self help skills. We saw that outcomes were positive for young adults in terms of improved personal hygiene, being ‘out and about’ in the community, decreased levels of aggression and involvement in activities.

We found that young adults were involved in a broad range of activities, including horse riding, trampolines, music, shopping, going for walks and visiting parks and other attractions.

Young adults exercised choice in relation to menu, activities and daily routine.
Young adults were registered with the local GP and had access to other health professionals, including the district nurse, as required. Very good storage and administration of medication arrangements were in place. Staff had received training from Boots.

We found that transitions from school and home to Allermuir were managed well and sensitively, with staff, on occasion, transferring with the young adult from their previous placement. This promoted consistency of care and expectations.

We saw that due regard was given to healthy eating, with young adults involved in food shopping and cooking.

We found systems in place to ensure effective communication with parents/carers.

We found that risk assessments were very brief and had not been updated recently. (See recommendation 1).

One parent/carer, whilst happy with general communication, felt that the recent changes in management and staffing could have been communicated more effectively. Another, whilst very happy with the service overall, felt that their young adult should have more access to activities. Another, whilst again very happy with the service overall, felt that the ‘mix’ of young adults could be better. (See recommendation 2).

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 2

1. Individual ‘Risk Assessments’ should be more detailed and updated more often.

2. The views of parent/carers that communication could be more effective, that young adults should have access to a broader range of activities and the suitability of the ‘mix’ of young adults should be explored with the parents/carers.

National Care Standards Care Homes for People with Physical and Sensory Impairments - Standard 6: Support Arrangements.

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

We found the accommodation to be of a high standard. The location provided access to bus routes and local amenities.
Young adults had their own en suite bedrooms and there was sufficient communal space for activities and leisure. We found the accommodation to be ‘pleasant and homely’.

Décor, furnishings and fittings were of a very good standard and we were told that repairs were carried out timeously.

The building was secure. Visitors were greeted by staff and identification checked.

Young adults had access to the enclosed back garden.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of staffing

Findings from the inspection

We formed a view of a motivated, knowledgeable and skilled team.

Staff held a range of qualifications and were registered with Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) or the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC). Staff evidenced a very good awareness of the SSSC Code of Practice and National Care Standards. This meant that staff worked to professional standards and expectations.

We found that staff had very good access to training, including epilepsy, medication, Adults with Incapacity, Protection of Vulnerable Groups, food hygiene, moving and handling and MAST (managing aggression strategies and techniques). This meant that staff were well prepared to carry out their duties.

We saw that a very good supervision, appraisal, change over and staff meeting model was in place. Staff told us that they felt very well supported by the senior residential care worker and senior managers. We formed a view of a supported and supportive team.

We found very good staff deployment arrangements and young adult/staff ratios.

We found that volunteers and nursing students were managed and supported well. All relevant references and checks were carried out prior to commencement of placement. We saw that they interacted well with young adults and were appropriately involved in care and support.

The housekeeper role enhanced care and support. We saw that the housekeeper enjoyed very good relationships with the young adults.
Quality of management and leadership

Findings from the inspection
The senior residential care worker had only been in post for two weeks. She had transferred from the services other young adult provision and had many years experience. She discussed her improvement agenda with us at inspection. She worked alongside staff in order to monitor practice, provide support and provide modelling. Staff told us that they felt supported and guided by her.

The senior residential care worker provided formal supervision to the staff team on an eight weekly basis. Staff were also subject of an annual appraisal. This, alongside effective staff meeting and change over arrangements, allowed for effective overview, monitoring and leadership of the service.

We saw that files were subject to regular audit, although we identified an area for improvement within Risk Assessments. (See recommendation 1 of this report).

The adult services manager provided supervision to the senior residential care worker and spent an average of two and a half days a week at the service. The care services manager was a regular visitor to the service. Staff confirmed that they had access to senior managers as required.

A management meeting was held weekly that provided effective overview and forward planning.

The service was subject to a peer audit by managers from other Royal Blind services. This was based around National Care Standards and informed the whole service Business Plan. We were informed that the quality assurance programme was being adapted to take account of the new Care Standards.

Effective "on-call" arrangements were in place.

We formed a view of a well-managed and led service.

Requirements
Number of requirements: 0
Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at or since the last inspection

Previous requirements

There are no outstanding requirements.

What the service has done to meet any recommendations we made at or since the last inspection

Previous recommendations

There are no outstanding recommendations.

Complaints

There have been no complaints about this service.

Enforcement

No enforcement action has been taken against this care service.

Inspection and grading history

This service does not have any prior inspection history or grades.
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