

Able Too Inclusive Activities

26th March 2019

Report



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Part of the Healthwatch Staffordshire remit is to carry out Enter and View Visits. Healthwatch Staffordshire Authorised Representatives will carry out these visits to health and social care premises to find out how they are being run and make recommendations where there are areas for improvement. The Health and Social Care Act allows Authorised Representatives to observe service delivery and talk to service users, their families and carers on premises such as hospitals, residential homes, GP practices, dental surgeries, optometrists and pharmacies. Enter and View visits can happen if people tell us there is a problem with a service but, equally, they can occur when services have a good reputation – so we can learn about and share examples of what they do well from the perspective of people who experience the service first hand. Healthwatch Staffordshire Enter and View visits are not intended to specifically identify safeguarding issues. However, if safeguarding concerns arise during a visit, they are reported in accordance with Healthwatch Staffordshire safeguarding policy, the service manager will be informed and the visit will end. The Local Authority Safeguarding Team will also be informed.

Provider Details

Name: Able Too Inclusive Activities

Provider: Everyone Active (Managing East Staffordshire Leisure Centres)
(Transferred from East Staffs District Council on 1st February 2019)

Address: Meadowside Leisure Centre High Street, Burton on Trent, DE14 1TL

Service Type: Day opportunities for people with disabilities

Date of Visit: 26th March 2019

Authorised Representatives

This visit was made by two Authorised Representatives of Healthwatch Staffordshire.

Dave Bassett (Authorised Representative)

Ian Wright (Community Outreach Lead and Authorised Representative)

Purpose of Visit

Healthwatch Staffordshire is making a series of visits to Day Services throughout the county in order to report on the range and quality of these services. Each service will have an individual report and an overview report on Day Services in Staffordshire will be compiled once the visits are completed.

A good service should...

1. Have strong, visible management
2. Have staff with time and skills to do their jobs
3. Have good knowledge of each individual client, their needs and how their needs may be changing.
4. Offer a varied programme of activities unless a specific service is offered.
5. Offer quality and choice to their clients around food and mealtimes, where applicable.
6. Accommodate clients personal, cultural and lifestyle needs.
7. Be an open environment where feedback is actively sought and used.

The methodology to be used is to;

- Consider the care and services offered and whether this is delivered in a way that promotes dignity and independence.
- Consider staffing levels and the level of the care provided.
- Talk to people using the service, if they are happy and willing to do so to gain their views on the opportunities available to them.
- Talk to relatives, if they are available to ask if they are happy with the care provided to their relatives and whether they are aware and feel able to report any concerns/ complaints.
- Consider staff training and the support offered to enable staff to do their jobs well.
- Observe interaction at all levels between clients, staff, Manager, and visitors.

Physical Environment

External

The service is delivered in the town's Leisure Centre which is DDA compliant (Disabilities Discrimination Act). There is adequate car parking and there are CCTV cameras in place. The building is sited on the banks of the River Trent and close to the town centre.

Services are also delivered from other locations including Shobnall Leisure Complex and Uttoxeter Leisure Centre.

Internal

There are a full range of sports facilities within the building, a reception area, a café and bookable rooms. The management of East Staffordshire Leisure Services was transferred from the Council to the current provider at the beginning of February 2009 and as part of that agreement a programme of upgrading the building has begun, starting with the Gym.

The reception will be upgraded to include new entry barriers with swipe access linked to a new digital membership management computer system

Client Numbers

Rebound Therapy is provided on an individual basis with a 20-minute appointment so 6 to 8 participants may attend in a morning.

The Able Too group had 6 participants and 3 carers in attendance when we visited but is open to whoever turns up on the day.

Staff Numbers

There are 3 staff members who lead these sessions back up by a team of 25 casual staff that can be called upon for specific coaching.

Management

Management - A good service should have strong visible management.

The manager should be visible within the service, provide good leadership to staff and have the right experience for the job.

Our findings

The service is managed the Sports Development Manager for East Staffordshire Leisure Services. He and his staff were transferred under TUPE from the Council to the new organization in February. He is accountable to the local contract manager who in turn reports to a regional manager.

He is managing the transition to new ways of working that will be introduced over the coming months through increased investment in the building and digital infrastructure. There is a service specification in place for the new contract and it is hoped that East Staffordshire will benefit from the wider experience and economies of scale that the new provider brings as they operate 200 Leisure Centres across the UK.

The manager has been developing inclusive sport and physical activity locally for a number of years and is passionate about what he does. He is well connected into local networks and knows the strengths and needs of his staff.

A full range of policies and procedures are in place and are now being brought into line with the new provider.

Comments

The service appears well managed and the transition to a new provider is being handled sensitively. There will inevitably be some changes as the new contract beds in.

Staff Experiences and Observations

Quality Indicator 2 - Have the staff the time and skills to do their jobs

Staff should be well-trained, motivated and feel they have the resources to do their job properly.

Our findings

Staff are primarily trained as sports coaches although they have been through a structured induction programme including training on First Aid, Level 1 Safeguarding and Health and Safety. All are DBS checked. The two staff who run the Rebound Therapy have had specialist training and link in with local NHS physiotherapists for advice and support with individual participants.

The same member of staff runs the Able Too session and is familiar with the individual needs of participants.

The staff we spoke to appeared well motivated and related well to participants and their carers. They have the necessary resources within the Centre to do their jobs properly and the local Mencap Group purchased and donated a special electric hoist for use with rebound therapy.

For the more open sessions provided by the Leisure service the staff provide a coaching role and do not undertake personal care.

Comments

The staff appeared very committed and offered a consistent service.

Quality Indicator 3 - Do staff have good knowledge of each individual client, their needs and how their needs may be changing
Staff should be familiar with clients' histories and preferences and have processes in place for how to monitor any changes in wellbeing.

Our findings

Before accessing Rebound Therapy, each participant is individually risk assessed and a management plan put in place that is based on clinical advice. A validated approach is used with progress being documented and reviewed regularly. Records are stored securely at the Shobnall site when not in use.

Comments

Staff know the regular participants well and see some of them at other times when they are accessing other sessions facilitated by the centre.

Activities

Quality Indicator 4 - Activities - Does the service offer a varied programme of activities?

Services should provide a wide range of activities and support clients to take part in activities, unless the service offers a specific type of service rather than a wider range of opportunities.

Our findings

The Leisure service facilitates a wide range of inclusive sport activities irrespective of age, disability or gender within the district and there is something available every day. Other day service providers and local voluntary organisations bring some of their service users to access the facilities and sports coaching is provided.

Sessions are provided across East Staffordshire at the following venues:

- Meadowside Leisure Centre, Burton on Trent
- Shobnall Leisure Centre, Burton On Trent
- Uttoxeter Leisure Centre, Uttoxeter
- Burton Albion Community Hub, Burton on Trent

Timetabled sessions include:

- Inclusive Cycling
- Able Too Adult Activity Club
- Adult Disability Club
- Rebound Therapy
- CREST Swimming Club
- Able Too Albion Football Club

We would mention that the service also runs sessions for Children and families up to the age of 18, although we are not reporting on these sessions within this document.

- Inspire Multi-Sport Club
- Inspire Badminton Club
- Burton Albion Junior Disability Club
- Powerchair Football Club

Catering Services - where applicable

Quality Indicator 5 - Catering - Does the service offer quality, choice around food and mealtimes?

If relevant, Services should offer a range of meal choices and adequate support to help clients who may struggle to eat and drink and accommodate different preferences and needs around individual dietary requirements.

Our findings

There is a café on site which participants and carers can use to purchase food and drinks like any other member of the public. Carer's can bring menus into the Sports Hall for clients to make their choice to avoid them feeling pressured to make a decision in the Café.

Quality Indicator 6 - Does the service accommodate clients personal, cultural and lifestyle needs?

Services should be set up to meet residents cultural, religious and lifestyle needs as well as their care needs, and shouldn't make people feel uncomfortable if they are different or do things differently to other clients.

Our findings

Services are inclusive and open to all regardless of age, gender disability and race. Carers and families are recognised and are allowed free entry.

Client Experiences and Observations

We spoke with some of the participants in the Able Too session who were enjoying various sports including badminton, table tennis, curling and football. They told us they enjoy coming to the sports centre to have fun, mix with other people and go to the café.

Some attended evening clubs and had also tried other activities such as swimming and supported cycling.

We were told that one of the participants who uses Rebound Therapy regularly used to be uncommunicative but is now starting to respond to staff during the sessions.

We also observed one client receiving therapy on the trampoline, and then being removed at the end of the session via the mobile hoist. Clients require approval from their GP or physio before being allowed to use this equipment.

Family / Carers experiences (if available)

We spoke to carers who had brought 2 clients from a day service in Burntwood to make use of the Meadowside facilities. Although these clients had Complex Needs, they were able to participate in the Able Too sessions. They had joined in activities with their clients. The PA's or Carer's can attend sessions free of charge.

Quality Indicator 7 - The service should be an open environment where feedback is actively sought and use.

There should be mechanisms in place for clients and relatives to influence what happens in the service, such as a Clients and Relatives Committee or regular meetings. The process for making comments or complaints should be clear and feedback should be welcomed and acted on.

Our findings

As a Leisure service the environment is open and inclusive. Users with disabilities are members and have a leisure pass which gives them discounted access to many of the activities. Accompanying carers are not charged.

Feedback is welcomed and the manager holds a quarterly network meeting with parents, carers and voluntary groups to share ideas and consider any improvements that could be made. Open days are held annually.

There is a formal complaints procedure in place.

The service has website under redesign following the recent transfer of services from the council. This should be up and running soon and is a requirement of the contract

Comments

The Leisure Service provides a wide range of accessible opportunities for people with physical and learning disabilities to access sport and physical activity just like anybody else living in East Staffordshire.

Summary

This has been a really interesting visit as this provision is different, and therefore not directly comparable, with other types of day services we have seen in this series of visits.

What is clear is that these sessions provide important opportunities for people to participate in sport at a very low cost.

It was notable to see that individuals we had met at a visit to a Complex Needs Day Service were attending these sessions (with support from staff from the Day Services) at Able Too, which confirmed how valuable these sessions can be.

We consider this provision to be of high quality and commend the manager for developing the programme.

From our visits to other services, we are aware that people, for various reasons, including people wanting variety in types of activity, multiple needs and sometimes issues with funding, may not attend another service on a full-time basis. These easy access, low cost, sessions allow people to have additional opportunities, achievable within their personal circumstances.

Comments

We would like to thank the manager, the staff and the participants for allowing us to see what opportunities are available, providing us with information about the sessions and telling us about their experience of the service.

Recommendations and Follow-Up Action

We look forward to viewing the revised web site when it is up and running.

Provider Feedback

To be filled in by Healthwatch if feedback received

DISCLAIMER

Please note that this report only relates to findings we observe on the specific date of our visit. Our report is not a representative portrayal of the experiences of all residents and staff, only an account of what was observed and contributed at the time.



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