



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

Provider: Shaw Trust

Address: Walton Hall Plant Nursery, Walton Hall Academy
Stafford Road, Eccleshall, Staffordshire, ST21 6JR

Service Type: Day Service

Date of Visit: 20th February 2019

Authorised Representatives

This visit was made by two Authorised Representatives of Healthwatch Staffordshire Jo Hall and Jo Cook.

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

Walton Hall Plant Nursery is located in the grounds of a school and is accessed via a long drive and a set of gates. It can also be accessed by a separate drive that also has a set of gates. The Plant nursery is separated from the school by fencing and gates offering a safe environment for service users to work outdoors. There is no clear signage when you access the school as to how to access the plant nursery.

The nursery is made up of several sheds/buildings, a very large poly-tunnel and outside growing spaces for flowers, plants and vegetables. There is also an accessible portaloo located in a more private area. The nursery is well-maintained and provides a secure and attractive environment for service users and staff.

There is no CCTV at the nursery which the manager advised was not thought necessary due to the nursery being located within the grounds of a school which also offers some residential places. The school is part of Shaw Education, with which Shaw Trust is closely associated with.

Internal

There is a number of secure storage sheds for tools, clothing and equipment, all of which are clearly labelled using visual cues. The main indoor area is used as a kitchen, office and group room, service users are able to use the microwave and kettle where appropriate to prepare their own meals and drinks and eat their meals with staff at the dining table.

The main indoor space is also used for staff to have 1:1 meetings with service users and hold meetings with carers, relatives and professionals. There is a visual timetable for service users and there are lots of visual aids to help service users to be as independent as possible whilst there.

Client Numbers

The current maximum number of service users is 5 per day and there are currently 2 service users who attend. The Shaw Trust also offer internships in partnership with the local schools and they currently have 2 people who attend on an internship, these are also provided 1:1 support.

Staff Numbers

There is currently 2 staff and 1 manager who are all qualified activity leaders and have received training in systemic instruction. There is also a number of volunteers who attend the nursery to help where needed. Agency staff have never been used. All staff have been DBS checked.

Management

Quality Indicator 1 - 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 plant nursery is run by a general manager who is very actively involved with the running of the nursery and the service user activities. It was evident from his interactions and relationship with service users that he is very hands on in the activities and service user support. The manager is also responsible for the yearly work plan, maintenance and compliance issues.

Comments

There was strong evidence that the manager is very visible and actively involved in the daily running of the project and the activities that are undertaken and demonstrates effective leadership. Staff, service users and a relative that we contacted all spoke very highly of the manager and the service in general. The atmosphere was very calm and relaxed and service users were encouraged to be involved in the visit.

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

There are 2 staff who work part-time and a number of volunteers, we met both members of staff and 1 volunteer on our visit and were able to speak to both of the staff members. The manager informed us that all staff receive the following mandatory training;

- Safeguarding adults & children
- First Aid at work (1 staff member)
- Fire Marshall (1 staff member)
- Information security awareness training - updated annually

Further training is available as follows

- Training in Systemic Instruction (TSI)
- Jo coaching training
- ICT (Internal IT training)

We were also informed that additional training can be accessed by staff where it is felt it is needed and relevant. All training is delivered by external providers and is sourced through the Shaw Trust. There is currently no training matrix but training records for all staff can be accessed through the Shaw Trust intranet to ensure training is up to date.

Comments

The staff appeared friendly and welcoming and it was evident that they enjoy working at the nursery with service users. They clearly demonstrated their knowledge and understanding of the service users in their interactions.

Staff informed us that they feel very motivated to do their job, and staff morale is always high. They advised that they feel valued by the manager and service users and are happy in their work. They feel that they have enough time and resources to do their job well.

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

Each service user is offered a taster day before commencing their placement with the Shaw Trust to ensure that the placement is a match for the service user. Staff are assigned as key worker to service users and it is their responsibility to ensure that the service user file is continually updated to reflect changing needs and preferences. We were given an example of a service users file containing a risk assessment, care plan, observation sheet, placement support plan, and other items relating to the service user's needs, preferences, and history. Much of the file is visual using pictures and symbols so that the service users can be involved in their own support and goal setting.

We were informed by the manager that service user needs are reviewed quarterly by staff and the service user and that there is also an annual multi-agency review that includes family.

We were also advised by the manager that carers and relatives have access to the staff and manager on a continuous basis either by phone or at drop-off and collection to discuss changing needs.

Comments

Staff appeared to be a close team with good working knowledge of the service users that they support. There was a generally positive and friendly atmosphere and service users were involved in all aspects of our visit. Service users spoke highly of the staff and the manager, as did the relative that we spoke to.

Activities

Quality Indicator 4 - 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

As Shaw Trust is a horticultural project the majority of activities take place outdoors and on site. Dependent on abilities and care plan, service users are actively involved in all aspects of running a nursery including;

- Horticulture - the growing of plants, flowers and vegetables including potting and planting
- Site / grounds maintenance
- Tool cleaning and maintenance
- Wreath and Christmas product making
- Constructing a show garden at Shrewsbury Flower Show

Once a year the project competes in the Shrewsbury Flower Show constructing a show garden. Everyone makes the annual trip to the flower show to see the things they have grown being displayed in their garden.

Indoor activities are limited to work undertaken in the polytunnel or the office/kitchen area.

Service users may also be involved in making deliveries which take them off-site with staff.

Activities are seasonal and aimed at giving service users a genuine experience of working in a busy plant nursery.

Comments

All activities are designed according to service user preferences and abilities and this was evidenced in the conversations we had with service users and also the service user files and care plans that we saw. We also observed areas of the nursery that are assigned to specific service users so that they can use the area according to their preferences.

Service users appeared happy doing the activities they were involved in and were proud to show us the work that they have been doing, they spoke very positively about the activities that they are involved in.

Catering Services

Quality Indicator 5 - 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

Shaw Trust do not provide catering and service users bring their own lunch with them, this appears to work well. The office/kitchen area has food storage and preparation facilities such as a fridge, kettle, microwave, plates and utensils that can be used by the service users with support from staff if needed. Service users and staff eat together in the dining area.

Comments

As Catering has never been provided it is not an issue for service users to bring their own lunch with them.

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

We were assured by the manager that service users personal, cultural and lifestyle needs are met and adaptations made where needed. We also observed sections in the service user file that are completed by service users to indicate their needs and preferences.

The service users that currently attend are all able bodied with no specific care needs, but all areas of the nursery are accessible including the portaloo and various buildings and polytunnel should this be a requirement.

Service users reported that they feel well supported by staff and the manager, and that all of their needs are met, we observed interactions between staff and service users that were friendly, positive and collaborative.

Each service user has an activity plan that is developed in collaboration with the service user and which is reviewed quarterly or in response to a change in needs or preferences. Care plans are reviewed annually with relatives and Adult Social Care.

Comments

There was no evidence to suggest that service users personal, cultural and lifestyle needs are not met within the bounds of what the service offers. Each individual plan reflects the needs and wishes of service users and appear to be catered for within the service. The service accommodates people with no or low physical care needs but can accommodate service users who need a wheelchair to get around.

Transport to the service is not provided, service users travel with family or by taxi.

Client Experiences and Observations

We had opportunity to speak to a service user about his experiences of attending the service in a private area without staff or manager present. Service user comments are below;

- I have a lot more confidence.
- Staff are very attentive.
- The manager is hands on.
- They encourage me to get involved.
- They treat me like a king.
- I have good relationships with the staff and manager.
- They treat me with dignity.
- I feel valued
- Leaving here is like living in a bubble.
- They have given me the skills to get into the workplace.
- My needs are met.
- They are really nice to me.
- My dad is involved.
- It's a big relief for my family.
- It's a fantastic service.

Family / Carers experiences (if available)

We also were given opportunity to speak to the mother of one of the service users attending on the day of the visit on the phone, the call was made in a private area without staff or manager present. Comments are below;

- It's a lifeline for me, I am a single parent and I was struggling, this has provided my son with some passion for life and working.
- It has given my son responsibility, it's character building.
- He is motivated to be more self-sufficient.
- It's not just growing plants, he's growing as a person.
- We both get a lot of benefit from the service.
- We value the service very much.
- It's set him on the right path
- He feels included, they have provided him with a work uniform and he values it so much, he feels like an equal part of a team.
- Provides a sense of belonging for my son, and some respite for me.
- It has helped my son to improve all aspects of his life including personal hygiene and routines at home.

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

We were informed by the manager that service user feedback is used continuously, and changes to the service and activities available are made according to service user or carer feedback where necessary.

There are no formal meetings or mechanisms in place to collect the feedback of service users or relatives but this is included in the daily conversations that take place between service users, staff and relatives who have influenced many of the activities and informed changes to the way that the service is run.

There is a formal complaints procedure in place and this is available to view on the Shaw Trust website, the manager would be responsible for investigating any complaints made, but we were assured that complaints are very rare.

Comments

We did not have sight of the complaints policy but were assured by the manager that there is one in place and that relatives and carers are aware of it. We were also advised the same by a relative that we spoke to on the phone, who said that because of the relationship they have with the manager and staff, any issues that they raise get resolved quickly and appropriately without the need for making a formal complaint.

Additional Information

Session times for service users is 9:00am - 12pm and 1pm - 3pm Monday to Friday.

The management of the Shaw Trust have shared a lot of information about their service and plans for the future with Healthwatch. They have explained that they would like to expand the service which would enable a larger number of people to benefit from the opportunities that can be provided by the nursery.

Summary, Comments and Further Observations

We were made to feel welcome by the manager, staff and service users and all were involved in our visit. Service users were encouraged to speak to us and tell us their experiences and appeared confident and happy to show us their work. All of the feedback we received was positive and confirmed our observations and what we had been informed by the manager.

It was evident that the staff and manager have positive relationships with service users and have a good knowledge of their needs and preferences. It was also observed that service users are highly valued and are encouraged to be involved in all aspects of the activities that take place.

From the conversation we had with the mother of one of the service users it was apparent that the relationships the staff and manager have with carers and relatives is also very good with clear lines of communication.

The service is aimed primarily at people who have an interest in outdoor activity, particularly around the growing of plants, flowers and vegetables. Team Members need to be relatively independent and self-caring as there are not facilities for meeting high personal care needs, and service users were able to get to the nursery and care for themselves independently whilst there.

Each service user has a valued role and is provided a uniform to make it more inclusive and to create a deeper sense of belonging. It was evident through our visit that the ethos of providing opportunity, support and encouragement for people to learn new skills and improve their existing ones runs through every activity at the nursery.

Recommendations and Follow-Up Action

The only recommendation that we could make following our visit is for the nursery to develop its own sense of identity that is independent of the school. This could be improved with better signage and clearer access to the nursery through the school grounds.

Provider Feedback

The manager of the service advised Healthwatch that they had welcomed the visit and were pleased with the report which would allow people to understand the support they could offer to people.

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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