

## Merrybrook Care Home Service

43 Peace Avenue  
Quarriers Village  
Bridge of Weir  
PA11 3SX

Telephone: 01505 616043

**Type of inspection:**

Unannounced

**Completed on:**

30 August 2018

**Service provided by:**

Quarriers

**Service provider number:**

SP2003000264

**Service no:**

CS2003001118

## About the service

Quarrier's Merrybrook is a residential care home for up to six adults with learning disabilities. Many of the people supported at the service also have complex physical disabilities and additional health needs.

The service is located in a detached Victorian house in Quarrier's Village near Bridge of Weir. Out of the six bedrooms, two have full en-suite facilities and four have a toilet and sink. There are also fully accessible communal bathrooms. The house has a large living area, a well-equipped sensory room, kitchen, laundry room and garden. Staff are available at all times and have a sleepover room.

The aims of the service are to provide safe accommodation to people with physical and learning disabilities and to support their social inclusion. It aims to promote people's choice, privacy and dignity.

Merrybrook registered with the Care Commission in 2002 and transferred its registration to the Care Inspectorate in 2011.

## What people told us

We sought the opinion of people who used the service and their families through face-to-face discussions, telephone interviews and questionnaires. People who used the service were unable to verbally communicate and so we observed staff practice and interactions.

The feedback we received was generally positive and included:

'We're very happy with the care in Merrybrook.'

'My daughter gets personalised support to participate in the community through a range of activities and experiences. Examples of opportunities range from shopping trips, cinema, dining out, safari park, motor boat trips, to holidays.'

'I feel able to discuss all matters with management and I know from experience that if I raise any issue then it will be looked into and action taken.'

'When [person's name] was moving into Merrybrook we were asked to choose the colour of her room. This had not happened before, and was really important to us.'

'I'm very happy with the service. My daughter moved in a few months ago and it was well planned. They visited her old place, got to know her needs, and organised visits. They did a really good support plan. It was reassuring and helped us.'

'We chose Merrybrook because it has skills and experience dealing with epilepsy, and I haven't been disappointed. They're very knowledgeable. I have asked the manager for their opinion on some issues and it's been really helpful. It's good to have someone to talk to about these things.'

'The staff are all friendly and nice. There's a good mix there. The new staff are very mature and do a great job.'

'There are small issues here and there but overall I'm very happy with Merrybrook.'

There were more critical comments, including:

'The service would be better if the carers only had to care. There appears to be too much paperwork.'

'There seems to be more staff turnover now.'

'There is staff turnover at Merrybrook. It takes time for the new staff to familiarise themselves with people's complex and specific needs.'

## Self assessment

The service was not required to submit a self-assessment for this year.

## From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	5 - Very Good
Quality of environment	not assessed
Quality of staffing	not assessed
Quality of management and leadership	5 - Very Good

## What the service does well

Merrybrook had a person-centred, strengths-based culture, and people of all abilities were encouraged to be as active as possible. Many of the people who lived there had complex needs including profound and multiple learning disabilities. The service successfully balanced meeting specialist health needs and promoting meaningful social inclusion. For example, we met people who attended social clubs, attempted new activities such as boat trips, went on annual holidays and participated in daily living tasks.

There was a strong understanding of people's communication and sensory needs. We saw that people were involved in baking and experienced stimulation through touch and smell. People were also supported outdoors throughout the year and enjoyed different weather types. There were various sensory activities indoors and out to promote meaningful and varied life experiences.

Staff and management were knowledgeable on specialist needs such as epilepsy. We saw that people had clear epilepsy care plans and protocols. Staff understood preventative measures, triggers and appropriate responses. This gave people reassurance and the ability to live more active and independent lives. A family member explained: 'We chose Merrybrook because it has skills and experience dealing with epilepsy, and I haven't been disappointed. They're very knowledgeable. I have asked the manager for their opinion on some issues and it's been really helpful. It's good to have someone to talk to about these things.'

The service regularly worked alongside other professionals to improve practice. We saw an example of regular contact with health professionals around the management of diabetes. Management was pro-active in liaising with consultants and nurses to create clear protocols, and staff generally followed these well. Any issues or changes were communicated with partners and solutions urgently sought.

There were changes in the service as someone had moved on and another person had settled in. We reviewed the transition process for each person and were impressed by the level of detail and forward planning. We saw examples of assessments, compatibility tools, partnership working with other organisations and several visits.

This considered approach helped people settle well in their new environments. A family member said: 'I'm very happy with the service. My daughter moved in a few months ago and it was well planned. They visited her old place, got to know her needs, and organised visits. They did a really good support plan. It was reassuring and helped us.'

There was a temporary increase in medication errors at the start of the year. The service introduced changes to procedures and invited a community pharmacist to audit practice. The feedback from pharmacy was positive and recognised that best practice was being followed, and we noted a significant decrease in errors.

This was representative of the service's open, analytical and improvement-focused approach. We saw that a number of health professionals had provided specialist training throughout the year in epilepsy, feeding tubes for nutrition, diabetes and autism. There was also a robust system of quality assurance and auditing. These measures helped further develop staff knowledge and practice.

Overall, we saw evidence of a skilled workforce, effective management team and positive values. This resulted in people experiencing very good outcomes at Merrybrook.

## What the service could do better

Merrybrook sought the opinion of supported people and families through annual questionnaires. However, we noticed that the number of responses had decreased this year. We asked the service to be more creative in seeking people's views in order to include them in service improvement plans.

People had a range of equipment and assistive technology in place to keep them safe. These were risk assessed by the service to ensure that they were appropriate. However, we noted that families, guardians and/or professionals hadn't signed these documents to evidence their agreement. We asked the service to better evidence agreement in line with best practice guidance.

Merrybrook generally had a stable and experienced core staff team. However, there was a relatively small turnover of staff earlier in the year. We discussed this with management and they explained that some new workers find the demands of the service too great, and may leave or request transfers to other parts of the organisation. We encouraged the service to give people as much insight into the role as possible during the recruitment process to promote retention.

We were pleased to see that the service had recruited and retained several permanent members of staff. We reviewed the induction process and spoke with new workers, and found them to be passionate, motivated and skilled.

## Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

## Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

## Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com).

## Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings
31 Aug 2017	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment Not assessed Staffing Not assessed Management and leadership 5 - Very good
15 Aug 2016	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment Not assessed Staffing 5 - Very good Management and leadership Not assessed
14 Aug 2015	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment 5 - Very good Staffing 5 - Very good Management and leadership 5 - Very good
31 Mar 2015	Unannounced	Care and support 4 - Good Environment 5 - Very good Staffing 4 - Good Management and leadership 4 - Good
6 Jun 2014	Unannounced	Care and support 4 - Good Environment 5 - Very good Staffing 4 - Good Management and leadership 4 - Good
17 Jun 2013	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment 5 - Very good Staffing 5 - Very good Management and leadership 5 - Very good
8 Jun 2012	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very good

Date	Type	Gradings	
		Environment	5 - Very good
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	5 - Very good
19 Jul 2011	Unannounced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	Not assessed
		Management and leadership	5 - Very good
28 Sep 2010	Unannounced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	5 - Very good
		Staffing	Not assessed
		Management and leadership	Not assessed
7 Apr 2010	Announced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	4 - Good
		Staffing	Not assessed
		Management and leadership	Not assessed
24 Nov 2009	Unannounced	Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	4 - Good
		Management and leadership	Not assessed
19 Jun 2009	Announced	Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	4 - Good
		Staffing	4 - Good
		Management and leadership	4 - Good
22 Dec 2008	Unannounced	Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	4 - Good
		Staffing	Not assessed
		Management and leadership	Not assessed
26 Jun 2008	Announced	Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	4 - Good
		Staffing	4 - Good
		Management and leadership	4 - Good

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