

Care service inspection report

ARK Alloa Care Home Care Home Service Adults

1 Bedford Court

Alloa

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Telephone: 01259 729350

Type of inspection: Unannounced

Inspection completed on: 15 December 2014



Contents

	Page No
Summary	3
1 About the service we inspected	5
2 How we inspected this service	7
3 The inspection	10
4 Other information	22
5 Summary of grades	23
6 Inspection and grading history	23

Service provided by:

Ark Housing Association Ltd

Service provider number:

SP2003002578

Care service number:

CS2003011478

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Summary

This report and grades represent our assessment of the quality of the areas of performance which were examined during this inspection.

Grades for this care service may change after this inspection following other regulatory activity. For example, if we have to take enforcement action to make the service improve, or if we investigate and agree with a complaint someone makes about the service.

We gave the service these grades

Quality of Care and Support	6	Excellent
Quality of Environment	6	Excellent
Quality of Staffing	6	Excellent
Quality of Management and Leadership	6	Excellent

What the service does well

The people who live at the care home experience a life full of opportunity.

Participation and self determination are at the heart of the service. Staff work hard to ensure opportunities for choice and decision making are maximised for all service users.

The staff team are a key asset of this service. We observed practice and interaction with service users that was of an excellent standard.

What the service could do better

The manager and staff are currently in the process of transferring support plans to a new outcomes focussed format. This will complement the outcomes focussed practice we observed throughout the inspection.

What the service has done since the last inspection

The format for seeking the views and opinions of each service user has recently undergone some changes. In particular, key chats with keyworkers now have an outcomes focussed approach and service users are encouraged to talk about the service they receive.

Staff reported that they found service users were able to be more involved in planning and reviewing their support needs within this new format.

The Team Leader is currently taking part in a working group within the organisation that is sharing good practice on supporting people with limited communication that do not have someone close such as a family member to support them to make decisions. This is supporting improved practice across the organisation.

Conclusion

The care home provides excellent care and support to the people who live there.

1 About the service we inspected

The Care Inspectorate regulates care services in Scotland. Prior to 1 April 2011, this function was carried out by the Care Commission. Information in relation to all care services is available on our website at www.careinspectorate.com.

This service was previously registered with the Care Commission and transferred its registration to the Care Inspectorate on 1 April 2011.

Requirements and recommendations

If we are concerned about some aspect of a service, or think it could do more to improve its service, we may make a recommendation or requirement.

- A recommendation is a statement that sets out actions the care service provider should take to improve or develop the quality of the service but where failure to do so will not directly result in enforcement.
- A requirement is a statement which sets out what is required of a care service to comply with the Public Services Reforms (Scotland) Act 2010 and Regulations or Orders made under the Act, or a condition of registration. Where there are breaches of the Regulations, Orders or conditions, a requirement must be made. Requirements are legally enforceable at the discretion of the Inspectorate."

Ark Alloa Care Home provides accommodation for up to 8 adults with learning disabilities in central Alloa, Clackmannanshire. The service is provided by Ark Housing Association Ltd.

The organisation provides housing in the East of Scotland for people with learning difficulties, some with mental health issues and the elderly. The statement of aims and objectives state that Ark Alloa aims to:

'Promote the rights and aspirations of people with learning disabilities by providing socially inclusive and flexible opportunities for housing, support and other services.'

Based on the findings of this inspection this service has been awarded the following grades:

Quality of Care and Support - Grade 6 - Excellent

Quality of Environment - Grade 6 - Excellent

Quality of Staffing - Grade 6 - Excellent

Quality of Management and Leadership - Grade 6 - Excellent

This report and grades represent our assessment of the quality of the areas of performance which were examined during this inspection.

Grades for this care service may change following other regulatory activity. You can find the most up-to-date grades for this service by visiting our website www.careinspectorate.com or by calling us on 0345 600 9527 or visiting one of our offices.

2 How we inspected this service

The level of inspection we carried out

In this service we carried out a low intensity inspection. We carry out these inspections when we are satisfied that services are working hard to provide consistently high standards of care.

What we did during the inspection

We wrote this report following an inspection of the service. A visit was made to the service on 15th December 2014. Feedback was delivered to the manager of the service on the same day.

As requested by us, the service completed and submitted an annual return. The service also submitted a self assessment of the care and support they deliver. The information from both submissions has been used to inform the inspection process and this report.

During the inspection evidence was gathered from a number of sources including the following:

- * A sample of service user care and support plans
- * Minutes of meetings
- * Evaluation documents
- * Examination of a range of checks and audits
- * Examination of training and other staff records
- * Discussion with the Team Leader and staff
- * Discussion with people who use the service
- * Observation of practice and the environment

Grading the service against quality themes and statements

We inspect and grade elements of care that we call 'quality themes'. For example, one of the quality themes we might look at is 'Quality of care and support'. Under each quality theme are 'quality statements' which describe what a service should be doing well for that theme. We grade how the service performs against the quality themes and statements.

Details of what we found are in Section 3: The inspection

Inspection Focus Areas (IFAs)

In any year we may decide on specific aspects of care to focus on during our inspections. These are extra checks we make on top of all the normal ones we make during inspection. We do this to gather information about the quality of these aspects of care on a national basis. Where we have examined an inspection focus area we will clearly identify it under the relevant quality statement.

Fire safety issues

We do not regulate fire safety. Local fire and rescue services are responsible for checking services. However, where significant fire safety issues become apparent, we will alert the relevant fire and rescue services so they may consider what action to take. You can find out more about care services' responsibilities for fire safety at www.firelawscotland.org

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

There were no recommendations made at the last inspection.

The annual return

Every year all care services must complete an 'annual return' form to make sure the information we hold is up to date. We also use annual returns to decide how we will inspect the service.

Annual Return Received: Yes - Electronic

Comments on Self Assessment

Every year all care services must complete a 'self assessment' form telling us how their service is performing. We check to make sure this assessment is accurate.

The service submitted an electronic self assessment as requested by the Care Inspectorate. This identified some strengths of the service as well as some areas for improvement. The assessment contained a wide range of relevant information.

Taking the views of people using the care service into account

We spoke with three service users as part of the inspection. Everyone told us they enjoyed life and were happy. Service users spoke positively about staff and we observed positive relationships throughout the inspection.

We received eight completed questionnaires from service users. All confirmed that overall they were very happy with the quality of service they received.

Taking carers' views into account

We did not speak with any relatives or carers as part of this inspection.

3 The inspection

We looked at how the service performs against the following quality themes and statements. Here are the details of what we found.

Quality Theme 1: Quality of Care and Support

Grade awarded for this theme: 6 - Excellent

Statement 1

We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of the care and support provided by the service.

Service strengths

The manager and staff continued to demonstrate commitment to implementation and development in the way service users were enabled to have their say in all aspects of personal and service development. We found strong evidence to confirm that the service had maintained a standard of excellence in this area and across all three inspected themes.

There were a wide range of opportunities within the service to enable all service users to make decisions, develop the care and support they received and also influence overall service development and improvement. We observed interaction between staff and service users throughout the inspection and found relationships based on respect and trust. This had an empowering effect for service users and we observed how they made decisions about their day-to-day life with confidence.

We examined a range of written documents that confirmed that service users were consulted with on a wide range of issues and topics. This included service review and development, as well as issues relevant to service users such as keeping safe, human rights and what these mean, and considering some of the recommendations from The Keys to Life document. Minutes of recent 'Speak Out' meetings also confirmed an emphasis on citizenship with service users identifying and sharing ideas on how to participate actively in the local community.

We were pleased to see that the 'Speak out' worker had continued to promote active participation within the service, both for staff and for service users. This had included developing closer links with the local advocacy service to support consistent discussion on key issues with service users. This had led to greater understanding and confidence in exercising rights both within the service and the wider community.

In particular we were pleased to hear that service users had become confident in a range of social skills that supported interaction with each other and with other people in the local community.

Staff told us that following discussion, service users had decided to put up a number of notice and information boards in the dining area. These contained information about a range of issues and service plans, information on events in the local community and easy read minutes from Speak Out meetings. This had encouraged all service users to discuss issues and plans amongst themselves using negotiation skills and learning about compromise.

The ability to discuss and make decisions about a range of things without staff input is a key indicator of increased confidence and independence and we were pleased to see this happening at the service. Staff also told us that a service user had recently received considerable peer support from fellow tenants when a close family member had died. This had been unprompted and staff had not been involved in discussions. This was an excellent example of how service users had developed skills in empathy and understanding personal grief to enable them to support their friend.

Overall, the service was using an approach that enhanced the lives of all the people who used the service. There was a clear commitment to 'Active' participation with service users very much in control and directing the care and support and ultimately the life they wanted.

Areas for improvement

Staff should continue to reflect on, and develop the ways in which they support people to maximise their choice and make decisions. They should consider how they can now build on skills in self-advocacy for service users.

Grade awarded for this statement: 6 - Excellent

Number of requirements: 0

Number of recommendations: 0

Statement 3

We ensure that service users' health and wellbeing needs are met.

Service strengths

During the inspection we examined a range of evidence to confirm that staff delivered an excellent standard of care and support to meet the health and well-being needs of all service users.

Systems and practice in place across the service that supported good outcomes for health and wellbeing included personalised and outcomes focussed planning, meaningful risk taking assessment, a strong multi-disciplinary approach and good communication within the staff team. There was a strong emphasis on supporting positive outcomes and we could see how service users were supported to achieve these on a day to day and also long term basis. The outcomes focussed practice from staff was observed throughout the inspection and we were aware of staff using this approach enthusiastically.

We found that staff worked in a way that promoted positive physical and emotional wellbeing. This approach was reflected in the personal care and support plans we examined in the service. Emphasis was placed on healthy lifestyles. Service users were encouraged to eat healthily and take part in a range of activity. This approach supported a number of personal outcomes and goals for service users. These included achieving weight loss to improve overall health, enjoying increased independence in managing medication, develop new friendships and enjoying improved feelings of mental well-being.

We examined two care and support plans in detail and found clear guidance on how to offer support and care that was designed to meet individual need. Records confirmed that staff followed guidance consistently, which in turn promoted the best possible outcomes for people.

Success and a sense of achievement was supported by a consistent approach from staff. This was confirmed in discussion with staff who all spoke confidently about specific guidance and strategies in place to support service users.

Staff spoke confidently throughout the inspection about their practice and we found communication records supported this. In particular we were pleased to find outcomes focussed reporting that reflected the practice of staff and the ways in which they supported service users. As a result, service users experienced support and service delivery that focussed on their abilities and how these could be maximised to support positive outcomes. Excellent examples included developing interests in particular activities to maximise opportunities to enjoy positive relationships out with the service and remain connected with the local community.

Records confirmed that mandatory training was up to date and that staff had opportunities to attend more service specific training such as autism, mental health and epilepsy. This meant that all staff were confident in their day-to-day practice and had built positive working relationships with service users built on trust and confidence in their skills.

Overall staff across the service spoke confidently about their work and we were confident about their values and commitment to person centred practice which in turn led to a strong sense of physical and emotional wellbeing for service users.

Areas for improvement

The staff and manager were currently in the process of transferring written support plans to a new outcomes focussed format. Good progress had been made and the manager had a clear plan for completion.

The new format will complement the staff approach to supporting service users to identify and reach positive outcomes in their lives.

Grade awarded for this statement: 6 - Excellent

Number of requirements: 0

Number of recommendations: 0

Quality Theme 2: Quality of Environment

Grade awarded for this theme: 6 - Excellent

Statement 1

We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of the environment within the service.

Service strengths

Evidence in support of this statement can be found in Quality Theme 1 Quality Statement 1.

Areas for improvement

See Quality Theme 1 Quality Statement

Grade awarded for this statement: 6 - Excellent

Number of requirements: 0

Number of recommendations: 0

Statement 2

We make sure that the environment is safe and service users are protected.

Service strengths

We found that the service had reached an excellent standard in relation to this statement. We found the environment supported a strong sense of safety and security for service users as well as being a warm and homely place to live.

During the inspection we carried out a physical check of the environment. The environment was fresh and clean. The house was pleasant and homely with a welcoming atmosphere. Service users appeared comfortable in their home and were relaxed in the company of each other and staff. There was a strong sense of ownership and we could see a very personalised approach to the environment. This supported feelings of safety and security for the service users.

We found a range of checks and systems in place to ensure that the safety of service users and staff was maintained on a day-to-day basis. This included regular building, health and safety and equipment checks. Service users were very much involved in ensuring their home was a safe place to live. This was confirmed in completed checks carried out with service users and also in recorded minutes of discussions about safety both at home and out in the community. Again this promoted a sense of ownership within the service for service users and supported understanding of responsibility.

We could see that positive relationships with staff had given service users a strong sense of security and enabled them to feel safe in their own home and also to have the confidence to feel safe when out and about.

Overall the environment was a key strength for this service and offered service users with a safe place live, care and support as needed and to enjoy their life.

Areas for improvement

Staff should continue to ensure that all service users feel confident and safe in their home. This may include regular group discussion on issues relating to keeping safe.

Staff should continue to reflect as a group, and as individuals on how their practice supports positive outcomes for service users in relation to feeling safe and confident in their surroundings.

Grade awarded for this statement: 6 - Excellent

Number of requirements: 0

Number of recommendations: 0

Quality Theme 3: Quality of Staffing

Grade awarded for this theme: 6 - Excellent

Statement 1

We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of staffing in the service.

Service strengths

Evidence in support of this statement can be found in Quality Theme 1 Quality Statement 1.

Areas for improvement

See Quality Theme 1 Quality Statement 1.

Grade awarded for this statement: 6 - Excellent

Number of requirements: 0

Number of recommendations: 0

Statement 3

We have a professional, trained and motivated workforce which operates to National Care Standards, legislation and best practice.

Service strengths

During the inspection we saw in written documentation and in discussion with the staff and manager that the staff team were an enthusiastic group of people who were highly motivated in their day-to-day practice and were also keen to learn and develop on a continuing basis.

Comments included

"It's a good place to work"

"You're always learning something new"

"It's a happy living and working environment"

"Team Leader is very supportive"

"Have always felt part of the team"

During the inspection we spoke with support workers and the team leader. They were all enthusiastic about the work they did and how they played a part in supporting service users to develop new skills, be as independent as possible and maintain as much control over their lives as possible. Staff spoke with a strong sense of pride in their work. We found that staff were very clear about their responsibilities within their different roles.

The provider organisation placed an emphasis on a continuous cycle of improvement and development and we found this reflected in discussion with staff. Staff spoke about the benefits of regular supervision. Staff told us they were encouraged to plan for supervision and regularly completed reflective accounts of practice for discussion. There was an emphasis on objective setting within the continuous learning framework and we were pleased to find staff enthusiastic about the benefits this brought to their day-to-day practice.

Records showed a range of training attended by staff. This included mandatory training such as moving and handling, food hygiene and administration of medication. Specific training also enabled staff to feel confident in the challenges they sometimes experienced.

We also examined minutes of staff meetings that confirmed staff were able to reflect on key concepts of service delivery such as values and dignity. There was also examples of staff sharing good practice and new information at team meetings. This was good practice and enabled all staff to keep up to date with best practice methods. There had also been recent discussion held on working in an outcomes focussed way.

Staff members confirmed that team meetings were positive experiences which contributed to a feeling of job satisfaction and motivation.

Overall, we concluded that the staff worked effectively as a team and as individuals. The positive outcomes for service users was clear to see throughout the inspection.

Areas for improvement

The service identified in their self assessment that the organisation was currently working on a learning and development 'Dashboard' to enable managers to have up to date information about training options for staff. This should support the established positive approach to continuous learning within the service.

Grade awarded for this statement: 6 - Excellent

Number of requirements: 0

Number of recommendations: 0

Quality Theme 4: Quality of Management and Leadership

Grade awarded for this theme: 6 - Excellent

Statement 1

We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of the management and leadership of the service.

Service strengths

Evidence in support of this statement can be found in Quality Theme 1 Quality Statement 1.

Areas for improvement

See Quality Theme 1 Quality Statement 1.

Grade awarded for this statement: 6 - Excellent

Number of requirements: 0

Number of recommendations: 0

Statement 4

We use quality assurance systems and processes which involve service users, carers, staff and stakeholders to assess the quality of service we provide

Service strengths

During the inspection, we saw that the organisation, manager and staff had a strong commitment to quality assurance particularly involving service users, relatives, carers and other stakeholders such as health and social work professionals in the assessment and improvement process. We found strong evidence to show that the service had reached a standard of excellence in this area.

The service continued to use a wide range of strategies both internal and external to ensure standards were maintained and improved as required. We examined very good records of a range of checks and audits including medication, finance, support planning and review. All staff were given a level of responsibility in regards to monitoring practice and standards within the service. Staff were clear about how regular monitoring in areas such as financial recording, and administration of medication had supported consistently excellent practice across the service and reduced the risks of errors and mistakes in areas such as finance and medication.

This approach had provided further opportunities for sharing good practice and confirmed that service users were receiving a service that upheld their rights and promoted their self-esteem and dignity. Service users in particular, were encouraged to provide feedback on service quality on a regular basis. This had recently been incorporated into key chats. Records showed how service users had gained confidence in raising issues which in turn were fed back to the team leader and staff team through team meetings and written memos.

All audits and reviews were regarded as valuable opportunities to improve. We found action plans for all levels of audit and could see that any required action was carried out and recorded as complete. Service users were able to see how they had influenced service change and development. This ensured that the cycle of improvement continued positively with changes happening both for individuals and for the service as a whole.

The Care Inspectorate fully supports the principles of the Learning Disability national strategy - Keys to Life. A copy of the strategy has been provided to the service and the inspector has discussed with staff the importance of implementing the recommendations in order to support continuous service improvements and better outcomes for people using the service. We will be assessing progress during our inspections in 2015/16.

Overall, the systems used by the service ensured that a high standard of service delivery was maintained and continually developed. The involvement of service users, their relatives and staff ensured that a wide variety of opinions were heard and confirmed with everyone the importance the service placed on them.

Areas for improvement

The service identified in their self assessment that they intended to review the audit tools in use at a local level in discussion with all staff at a forthcoming team meeting. We look forward to seeing how this leads to further development.

Following discussion with staff, we identified, as an area for improvement, that the provider should develop and implement an action plan which takes account of 'The Keys to Life' and Winterbourne View recommendations.

Grade awarded for this statement: 6 - Excellent

Number of requirements: 0

Number of recommendations: 0

4 Other information

Complaints

No complaints have been upheld, or partially upheld, since the last inspection.

Enforcements

We have taken no enforcement action against this care service since the last inspection.

Additional Information

Action Plan

Failure to submit an appropriate action plan within the required timescale, including any agreed extension, where requirements and recommendations have been made, will result in the Care Inspectorate re-grading a Quality Statement within the Quality of Management and Leadership Theme (or for childminders, Quality of Staffing Theme) as unsatisfactory (1). This will result in the Quality Theme being re-graded as unsatisfactory (1).

5 Summary of grades

Quality of Care and Support - 6 - Excellent	
Statement 1	6 - Excellent
Statement 3	6 - Excellent
Quality of Environment - 6 - Excellent	
Statement 1	6 - Excellent
Statement 2	6 - Excellent
Quality of Staffing - 6 - Excellent	
Statement 1	6 - Excellent
Statement 3	6 - Excellent
Quality of Management and Leadership - 6 - Excellent	
Statement 1	6 - Excellent
Statement 4	6 - Excellent

6 Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings
9 Jan 2014	Unannounced	Care and support 6 - Excellent Environment 6 - Excellent Staffing 6 - Excellent Management and Leadership 6 - Excellent
1 Feb 2013	Unannounced	Care and support 6 - Excellent Environment 5 - Very Good Staffing 5 - Very Good Management and Leadership 5 - Very Good
23 Feb 2012	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very Good Environment 5 - Very Good Staffing Not Assessed Management and Leadership 3 - Adequate

Inspection report continued

14 Dec 2010	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and Leadership	5 - Very Good Not Assessed Not Assessed Not Assessed
1 Sep 2010	Announced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and Leadership	5 - Very Good Not Assessed 5 - Very Good Not Assessed
9 Mar 2010	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and Leadership	5 - Very Good Not Assessed 5 - Very Good Not Assessed
18 Dec 2009	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and Leadership	5 - Very Good Not Assessed 5 - Very Good Not Assessed
2 Feb 2009		Care and support Environment Staffing Management and Leadership	5 - Very Good 4 - Good 4 - Good 4 - Good
10 Sep 2008	Announced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and Leadership	5 - Very Good 4 - Good 4 - Good 4 - Good

All inspections and grades before 1 April 2011 are those reported by the former regulator of care services, the Care Commission.

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ی.رخأ تاغل بو تا قیسن تب بلطلا دن ع رفاوتم روشنملا اذه

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