

Potensial Limited

Potensial Limited - 31 Balfour Road

Inspection report

31 Balfour Road
Birkenhead
Merseyside
CH43 4UD

Tel: 01516512032
Website: www.potensial.co.uk

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Ratings

Overall rating for this service	Good ●
Is the service safe?	Good ●
Is the service effective?	Good ●
Is the service caring?	Good ●
Is the service responsive?	Good ●
Is the service well-led?	Good ●

Summary of findings

Overall summary

31 Balfour Road is a two story terraced house located in Birkenhead. It is registered to provide accommodation and personal care for up to four people who have a learning disability. At the time of this inspection four people were living at the home.

The house is a traditional terraced house with a front living room, back kitchen with dining area and back yard with seating. There is also an en-suite bedroom located on the ground floor.

Upstairs there are three bedrooms and a shared bathroom with a smaller room used as an office and sleep in room for staff.

At the last inspection, the home was rated good. At this inspection we found the home remained good.

People living at the home told us that they felt safe living there and were confident to raise any concerns or complaints that they had. Concerns raised were listened to and acted upon by staff.

People liked and trusted the staff team who supported them. Staff had a person centred approach to their work and spent time interacting with people and meeting their social needs as well as their care needs.

Robust recruitment checks were in place to check staff were suitable to work with people who may be vulnerable. Staff received training and support to enable them to carry out their role effectively. Sufficient staff were available to provide the support people required.

People were supported to have maximum choice and control of their lives and staff supported them in the least restrictive way possible; the policies and systems in the service supported this practice.

Support was provided to people to be as independent as possible. This included maintaining daily living skills. People also received support to take part in a number of activities they enjoyed and to occupy their time.

Staff had a good knowledge of individuals and their differing support needs. This was backed up by clear information within people's care plans that provided guidance for staff to follow.

People received the support they needed with their personal care and their health care. Staff worked well with healthcare professionals to ensure people got the support they required.

A number of systems were in place to check the quality of the service and ensure people received a good service. This included a number of ways of obtaining people's views and acting upon them.

Further information is in the detailed findings below.

The five questions we ask about services and what we found

We always ask the following five questions of services.

Is the service safe?

The service remains good.

Good ●

Is the service effective?

The service remains good.

Good ●

Is the service caring?

The service remains good.

Good ●

Is the service responsive?

The service remains good.

Good ●

Is the service well-led?

The service remains good.

Good ●

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Detailed findings

Background to this inspection

We carried out this inspection under Section 60 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 as part of our regulatory functions. This inspection checked whether the provider is meeting the legal requirements and regulations associated with the Health and Social Care Act 2008, to look at the overall quality of the service, and to provide a rating for the service under the Care Act 2014.

This comprehensive inspection took place on 21 March 2017. The provider was given 24 hours notice of the inspection because the service was a small care home for people who are often out during the day and we needed to be sure that somebody would be in.

The inspection was carried out by an adult social care inspector. Prior to our visit we looked at any information we had received about the home including any contact from people using the service or their relatives and any information sent to us by the home.

During the inspection we looked around the premises and spoke with the four people living there. We also spoke with four members of the staff team and a visiting health professional.

We spent time observing the day to day support provided to people, looked at a range of records including medication records, care records for two people, recruitment records for three members of staff and training records for all staff. We also looked at records relating to health and safety and quality assurance.

Is the service safe?

Our findings

We asked people living at Balfour Road if they thought it was a safe place to live and they told us that they did. One person said, "I feel safe."

Policies and procedures were in place to guide staff on actions to take if a safeguarding incident occurred or they wished to report something they believed was wrong via the whistle blowing policy. Staff we spoke with were aware of these policies and told us they would not hesitate to report any concerns they had. Training records confirmed that staff had received training in identifying and understanding safeguarding adults issues.

People told us that staff looked after their medication and they were happy with this arrangement as they received it on time and got pain relief medication if they needed it. We looked at how medication was managed by staff and saw that clear systems were in place and followed.

Medication was securely stored with clear records maintained of medication given to people and received into the home. Systems were in place for ensuring people always had the medication they required available and a clear system was followed when people needed as required medication. We checked a sample of medication stocks against records and found that it tallied.

Records and certificates showed that systems were in place and followed for checking the safety of the building and environment. These included external checks on electrics and gas supplies as well as internal checks on fire equipment and escape routes and water temperatures. This helped to make sure Balfour Road was a safe place for people to live, work and visit.

Individual risks to people had been identified and action taken to reduce the risk whilst supporting the person to be as independent as possible; for example people had access to the kitchen but some equipment was locked following assessment and people were provided with staff support in the kitchen if needed.

We looked at recruitment records for three members of staff. Two members of staff had all the required records in place including copies of their application, interview records, identification, references and a Disclosure and Barring service check. Records for a third person were incomplete. A senior member of staff advised that these were located at head office and has since confirmed this with us. The robust recruitment processes followed helped to ensure staff were suitable to work with people who may be vulnerable.

Sufficient staff worked at the home to provide people with support both at home and to go out and about in their local community. People living there knew who was working that day and one person explained, "If one is sick we get someone we know." This was confirmed by a senior staff member who told us that wherever possible they covered shifts with people familiar to the home.

Is the service effective?

Our findings

People told us they received the support they needed to look after their health. One person explained, "we go to the doctors, the dentist. Staff go with us in a taxi." A second person told us that staff had supported them at times when they had needed medical treatment or been in hospital. A visiting health professional said that staff provided an "excellent" level of support to one person with their specific health needs.

Staff had a good understanding of people's health care needs and this was backed up by information within individual care plans. Health action plans were used for each person which recorded when they needed to attend routine appointments such as a mammogram, dentist or optician. Records further showed that people had been supported to visit the GP or hospital when required.

People who lack mental capacity to consent to arrangements for necessary care or treatment can only be deprived of their liberty when this is in their best interests and legally authorised under the MCA. The procedures for this in care homes and hospitals are called the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS)." We looked to see if the home were following these procedures where required and found that they were. Staff knew who had the protection of a DoLS in place and how this could affect the support they received.

People told us that they were supported to make their own decisions with one person explaining, "Staff don't tell you what to do." They said staff talked to them and helped them to decide things for themselves. People told us that they knew about their care plans because, "Staff talk about them," and we saw that people had been given the opportunity to discuss and sign their agreement to the contents of their plan.

Balfour Road has a domestic style kitchen and we saw that it was well stocked with a choice of food. We asked people who chose menus and shopped for food and they replied "we do." One person explained, "All of us choose what we want." Care records showed that people had received support to monitor their weight and take action if it changed.

At lunchtime we saw that people were eating different meals as they preferred. We observed that staff regularly offered people a drink or snack and that other people made use of the kitchen to make themselves and us a drink when they wished to do so. This showed us that people felt confident in their own home and were able to make decisions for themselves.

Adaptations had been made to the environment to suit people's needs. A downstairs bedroom had been fitted with an en-suite shower and an upstairs bathroom had recently been updated to provide a large walk-in shower where people could receive help if required.

Staff received the supervision and training needed to undertake their role effectively. The provider had a training department which organised training for staff in a variety of relevant areas. We saw that staff had been booked on a number of courses in 2017 relevant to the support provided at Balfour Road.

Is the service caring?

Our findings

People told us that they liked and trusted the staff team. One person told us, "It's nice here, staff are nice," another person explained, "If I get upset staff talk to me. [staff name] takes me to the cemetery." A third person told us "[Staff name] helps me with all kinds. I love her." A visiting professional told us, "Staff are excellent. They are a nurturing staff team. They spend time listening."

We observed throughout the day that staff had good relationships with people living at the home. They spent a lot of time with people in everyday activities as well as meeting their support needs. Staff conversed with people regularly and took time to answer any queries or questions they had.

We saw that staff consistently put people first. For example on our arrival we were introduced to one person and asked to speak with them, staff then left the room to give people privacy to talk to us. They later explained that this was because it was a good time for the person to talk and would prevent them becoming anxious. We were impressed with the person centred approach this showed.

People told us that they were involved in the running of their home. For example one person told us, "I picked them," when they told us about the new sofas. Another person said when the lounge was decorated, "They asked us what we wanted."

Two people told us they met staff who came to be interviewed with one person explaining, "We get to meet them when they are interviewed. We are asked what we thought." This was confirmed by a senior member of staff.

Meetings had also been held with the people who lived at the home. We saw that these had been useful and enabled people to discuss a variety of issues including minor concerns, activities and menus. We saw that action had been taken on the points people raised.

People were supported to be as independent as possible in their everyday lives. Where people could use the kitchen unaided staff did not interfere and where people could go out and about without support this was encouraged. However people confirmed that if they wanted staff to go with them for example to an appointment then this support was provided.

We also observed that people made full use of their home without restrictions. Staff ensured they knocked and waited before entering anybody's bedroom and sought permission to go in. People spent time throughout the day in various rooms in the house as they chose.

Is the service responsive?

Our findings

People told us that they received support from staff to engage in a number of activities they enjoyed as well as engaging in daily living tasks. Comments we received from people included, "I help in the kitchen, I do the dishes." "I go out. I go on the bus, café, town," and "We are going to London on holiday. I can't wait." We observed throughout the day that people were occupied in a variety of ways. This included going out alone or with staff, doing household tasks and spending time on crafts as well as talking with each other and members of staff.

Information about how to raise a concern or complaint was readily available in the home. People knew how to raise a concern or complaint, one person told us "I would tell the staff." Another person gave us an example of when they had raised a concern and said they were confident it would be dealt with. We discussed their concern with a senior member of staff and saw that they were dealing with it.

Individual care plans were in place for all of the people living at Balfour Road. These were up to date and contained clear information about the person, their choices and interests and their support needs. People were aware of the contents of their care plan and told us staff had discussed it with them.

People told us that they received the support they needed from staff. One person explained, "when I go in the shower the staff stay with me." Another person told us that staff spent time talking with them. Discussions with staff showed us that they knew people well and were able to respond to their individual support needs.

Is the service well-led?

Our findings

A registered manager is a person who has registered with the Care Quality Commission to manage the service. Like registered providers, they are 'registered persons'. Registered persons have legal responsibility for meeting the requirements in the Health and Social Care Act 2008 and associated Regulations about how the service is run. The service had a registered manager. At the time of this inspection the registered manager had been working at another home within the organisation for around three weeks.

An experienced senior carer was managing the home in her absence with support from a senior manager within the organisation and was present during the inspection. People living at the home knew senior staff well and were complimentary about the support they provided. We observed that the senior member of staff acted as a good role model spending time talking with people living at the home and ensuring their approach was person centred.

Staff told us that they received the support from management that they needed. One member of staff told us, "I get a lot of support. It's easy to talk to management, you can ask anything. A second member of staff said, "They are very supportive they give you time."

A number of systems were in place and followed to check the quality of the service provided. Records showed that regular checks had been carried out in a number of areas including the environment, care records, medication, health and safety, infection control and staff training. A senior manager from the organisation visited the home monthly to carry out checks and completed a report of their findings. We saw that where areas for improvement had been identified then action had been taken or planned. The robust auditing procedures helped to ensure that Balfour Road continued to provide a good service for people living there.