

East Lothian Autism Support Services Housing Support Service

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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
17 May 2024

Service provided by:
Autism Initiatives (UK)

Service provider number:
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Service no:
CS2007156107

About the service

East Lothian Autism Support Service is a housing support and care at home service provided by Autism Initiatives. Because the same staff team provide both services in a combined way we inspect them as one service. It is one of a number of services provided by Autism Initiatives, a national provider of services for people with autistic spectrum conditions.

This service works with people living in East Lothian and Midlothian and has an office base in Granton, Edinburgh, though local venues are used for staff business due to the distance to the main office.

There are three teams in total, Musselburgh, East Lothian and Midlothian. The service is overseen by the manager, one team leader and three senior support workers who are responsible for the day to day running of the service.

At the time of the inspection the service was providing support to 16 people who lived in either shared tenancies with communal facilities, in their own accommodation or with family. Support provided ranged from a few hours per week to 24 hour support.

About the inspection

This was a short notice unannounced inspection which took place on 14, 15 and 17 May 2024. The inspection was carried out by one inspector from the Care Inspectorate. To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection. In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with three people using the service and received questionnaires from seven
- spoke with eight staff and management and received 17 responses from staff questionnaires
- received seven responses from questionnaires completed by visiting professionals
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents .

Key messages

- Staff knew people who used the service well and delivered care according to their needs and wishes
- Auditing was effective at identifying things that worked well and where improvements could be beneficial
- People were involved in their care planning
- A few houses were due for redecoration
- Professionals were complimentary about the service

From this inspection we evaluated this service as:

In evaluating quality, we use a six point scale where 1 is unsatisfactory and 6 is excellent

How well do we support people's wellbeing?	5 - Very Good
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good

Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

How well do we support people's wellbeing?

5 - Very Good

We evaluated this service as performing at a very good level. There were major strengths in supporting positive outcomes for people. There were very few areas for improvement and the service did not require significant adjustment.

People experience care and support with compassion because there were warm, encouraging, positive relationships between staff and people living in the care service. This helped people achieve their individual outcomes and goals.

Staff knew people who used the service extremely well and this meant that they recognised if there were changes or concerns quickly.

Accidents and incidents were managed well to make sure that people were as safe as possible. There was a monthly service report which closely looked at incidents and how these were managed. This gave staff the opportunity to reflect and consider if anything else could have been done to improve the quality of the person's life.

People were able to choose how they spent their money or received the right support to manage it.

Care plans detailed needs of the service user and described how care was to be delivered taking account of the choices and preferences of the individual. Reviews of care were up to date and involved families and people who were important in the people who used the service's life.

The importance of getting out and about and physical activity was included as part of people's support plan. People had an active outdoor life as far as they were able.

Appropriate referrals were made to health care professionals and any guidance received was clearly recorded in people's support plan.

Medicines were well managed including as needed medication. There was an effective system for making sure that medicines were available and never ran out unexpectedly.

People were involved in planned care reviews and evaluations in a meaningful way to determine whether the care and support met their needs. Where there were identified changes to their needs, appropriate measures were taken to address these.

Transitional plans were in place to ensure that people were ready to move on from the service. This meant that people were well supported, well involved and it was not a traumatic event.

Staff were skilled at adapting and responding to people's needs, even when these were unpredictable and changing. This helped people feel safe and secure with the staff who supported them.

People responded to our questionnaires stating that they did not know how to raise a complaint with us. It is important that people can have a voice and express themselves when they are unhappy. We discussed this with the manager who agreed to send out communication to all who used the service.

Staff approach and skills was beneficial to the health and wellbeing of the people that used the service.

How good is our staff team?

5 - Very Good

We evaluated this service as performing at a very good level. There were major strengths in supporting positive outcomes for people. There were very few areas for improvement and it did not require significant adjustment.

Because the service understood the needs and wishes of the people living there, the right number of staff with the right skills were working at all times to meet people's needs. Staff had time to provide care and support with compassion and engaged in meaningful conversations and interactions with each individual. Care was delivered by one to one carers or two to one, dependant on the needs of the service user. Staffing was therefore stable and consistent.

People who used the service and staff benefited from a warm atmosphere because there were good working relationships. There was effective communication between the staff group, with opportunities for discussion about their work and how best to improve outcomes for people.

Staff were committed to their role and spoke about working well as a team. They felt supported and could raise issues. This meant that staff were confident in their work and could keep people safe and secure.

Staff continually evaluated people's experiences to ensure that, as far as possible, people were provided with the right care and support in the right place to meet their needs.

Staff were aware of protection issues, how these should be reported and managed and events were notified appropriately.

Staff were supported in their role through a structure that included staff meetings to keep them well informed and individual supervision sessions where they could discuss their work.

Staff training was good and offered specific training in the health conditions of people who used the service. This meant that staff were well prepared to support people with their symptoms and recognised when specialist help was needed.

Audits and the resulting actions have been positive. Redecoration was identified for two tenancies and was included in the improvement plan. This would make the environment more pleasant.

The manager had a clear understanding about what needed to improve and what was working well and they ensured that the needs and wishes of people living in the service were the primary drivers for change.

One specialist bed needed to be maintained and checked. The contractor visited during inspection and this check was now included in the audit system. We will check this at the next inspection.

The Care Inspectorate asks services to submit weekly staffing notifications. The manager was unaware that this was in place for this service and has agreed to submit these as requested.

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at www.careinspectorate.com.

Detailed evaluations

How well do we support people's wellbeing?	5 - Very Good
1.3 People's health and wellbeing benefits from their care and support	5 - Very Good
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good
3.3 Staffing arrangements are right and staff work well together	5 - Very Good

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