

L'Arche Highland Support Service

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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
29 April 2024

Service provided by:
L'Arche

Service provider number:
SP2003002642

Service no:
CS2003008513

About the service

L'Arche Highland is a support service, for people with a learning disability. The service operates from purpose built premises near the centre of Inverness. The service is registered for 25 people at any one time.

The centre offers an attractive and spacious environment, which accommodates individual workshops, large garden grounds, kitchen facilities and staff offices. The service is open Monday to Friday from 9am until 4pm and each day a number of different workshops take place. Regular workshops included: candle making, woodworking, crafts, cooking and baking, gardening and horticultural work. People who use this service are called 'core members'.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 24 and 25 April. The inspection was carried out by two inspectors 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 six people (core members) using the service and eleven of their family and representatives
- Spoke with seven staff and management
- Observed practice and daily life
- Reviewed documents
- Spoke with visiting professionals

Key messages

- Everyone involved in L'Arche's workshops contributed to their success.
- Core members were very happy with the service.
- There was a very positive and relaxed atmosphere.
- The support provided had made a big difference to core members.
- Core members and key others were centrally involved in agreeing to and reviewing their support.
- Staff formed trusting and appreciative relationships with core members.
- Management were available and had very good oversight of the service's support.
- Management and staff were continuing to develop and improve the support where necessary.
- Core members contributed to decisions and plans made for 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?	4 - 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?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good. We identified several strengths which impacted positively on outcomes and experiences for people and these strengths clearly outweighed any areas for improvement.

People (core members) said they enjoyed coming to L'Arche workshops. They told us about the different work they did, how it interested them and that they were proud of the work they did. We saw examples of the products they produced in the candles and wood workshops and what they were growing in the garden workshops. Some comments from core members were:

- 'I'm happy with everything''
- 'Bagging up wood to sell and I like making bird boxes too.'
- 'I like the staff.'

From spending time in workshops, speaking to core members and staff, it was clear that core members were very comfortable at the service. They'd developed relaxed and friendly relationship with staff and management. Their time was spent purposefully engaged in the activities. Nobody looked bored or at a loose end. This service was very good at ensuring core members got a lot out of their day at the workshops.

It was a welcoming environment. Good company was evident and friendships were formed. The importance of the social side of life, feeling part of things, feeling respected and a valuable contributor to the success of the day and the workshops' activities was very well promoted at L'Arche. One comment we heard that reflected what we saw and heard was:

- '...great camaraderie amongst all the people and staff.'

Core member's health, emotional and general wellbeing, strengths and needs were given thoughtful consideration by the service. Careful planning of the support provision and regular checking that all was still okay took place. Listening to the person was a key value of the service, taking account of their views and important others such as family members was easy to see. This helped the support to be tailored to the person, recognising their individuality, abilities and special qualities.

Sometimes we found that the service could have given a support matter better attention. One example was to do with people's medication support needs and ensuring the service had assessed, planned and documented clearly what the person's support needs were. We found the service in their support documentation were unclear whether they were prompting or assisting a core member with medication or administering a medication for them. This lack of clearness was not helpful. Whilst there were no medication incidents for people, we have decided to make an area for improvement in relation to this as inadequate assessment and planning for a person's medication could potentially lead to a poor outcome for the person supported. (see Area for Improvement 1)

Very occasionally, the service was not sharing information with key partner agencies such as social work or the Care Inspectorate. We discussed an example with them and they agreed to strive to ensure any future information needed to be share would be. Sharing information with partners can help reduce the chances of a person having a poor outcome or coming to some harm.

Whilst the service had many strengths, we did discuss possibilities for improvement. Examples were: other opportunities for core members to be involved in setting the direction of the service and for the service to look beyond the service's present operation and consider what else is happening in social care that could benefit core member's experiences and outcomes at L'Arche. Management were open and positive regarding discussing options and development in the service. We also shared that whilst almost all key family members in our survey said they were included in review meetings for their relative, a couple thought there were some reviews they did not attend.

Areas for improvement

1. To support positive outcomes for people, the provider should improve the assessment process, planning and documentation for people's medication support at the service.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standard (HSCS) which states that: My personal plan (sometimes referred to as a care plan) is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices (HSCS 1.15) and I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice (HSCS 4.11).

How good is our staff team?

5 - Very Good

We evaluated this key question as very good. The staff team worked very well together and were skilled and knowledgeable in enabling person centred support. There were major strengths in supporting positive outcomes for people. There were very few areas for improvement.

The manager and staff had a very clear understanding of the importance of building trusting, relaxed and positive relationships with core members. We heard respectful communication at all times. Choices and wishes were asked throughout the day and core members came across as confident about expressing their opinions. Core members can be assured that they were valued and important in the workshops.

L'Arche gave careful thought to the staff to core members ratios for each workshop. It considered who may need some more support to be able to fully participate, be comfortable and get the most out of their day in the workshops. This enabled staff to provide activities in a suitable way and pace. The atmosphere in workshops was relaxed and productive. Core members' abilities, interests and wishes were central to the provision.

Core members had a role in recruitment decisions, providing their input to making suitable choices of staff. L'Arche carried out a number of checks, obtained references and undertook interviews to get the right staff. People can have confidence that staff are chosen on the basis of being very suitable for the role of supporting them.

L'Arche supported staff well. The manager ensured she was approachable and open to hearing staff's views. Regular supervisions for staff and meetings took place. Communication was very good. Training and development opportunities were in place and included up to date thinking on how to provide high quality social care support. This meant core members were supported by a motivated, responsible, responsive and insightful staff team. One that will understand and be responsive to their rights, wishes and needs.

Staff spoke enthusiastically about L'Arche workshops and the difference they see it makes to core members. The spoke warmly and appreciatively about different core members. We could see staff's positivity in action, encouraging and energising group activity. People had an enjoyable, busy and productive day at the service.

Staff confirmed that the workshops and general support for people at L'Arche was well organised and they thought whilst informal and relaxed in appearance was also very professional. People can have confidence in the service.

We discussed some ideas that the management could consider for ensuring robust service provision, for example, how to manage when there may be unplanned staff absence. Ways to make sure core members still experienced a smooth running service.

Comments by and about staff:

- 'It's the best team I've ever worked in.'
- 'Yeah, I am very happy with them, and they keep me informed.'
- 'They are very person centred.'

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?	4 - Good
1.3 People's health and wellbeing benefits from their care and support	4 - 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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