

Highfield Scheme Ltd

Great Harwood

Adult Day Services Enter and View Report

Tuesday 5th July 2022

1pm-3pm



DISCLAIMER

This report relates only to the service viewed at the time of the visit and is only representative of the views of the staff, people using the services and relatives who met members of the Enter and View team on that date.

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Staff met during our visit:

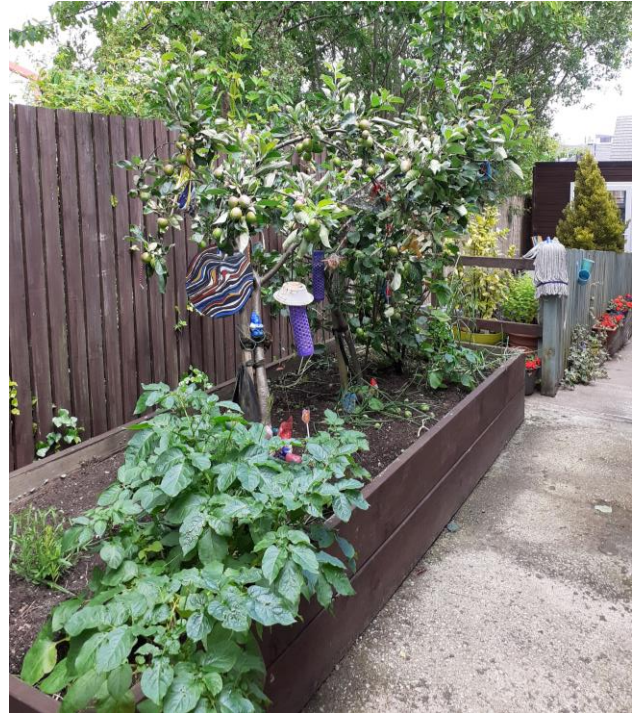
Tracy Airey: Manager

Date and time of our visit:

Date Tuesday 5th July 2022
1pm-3pm

Healthwatch Lancashire Authorised Representatives:

Sue Edwards - Senior Engagement Officer
Emmy Walmsley - Senior Engagement Officer



Introduction

Our role at Healthwatch Lancashire is to gather people's views and experiences, especially those that are seldom heard, to give them the opportunity to express how they feel about a service. This was an announced Enter and View visit undertaken by authorised representatives from Healthwatch Lancashire (HWL) who have the authority to enter health and social care premises, announced or unannounced. The aim is to obtain the views and experiences of people using the services, relatives and staff, and observe and assess the quality of services.

The team compile a report reflecting observations and feedback. Healthwatch Lancashire is an independent organisation, therefore we do not make judgements or express personal opinions. The report identifies aspects of good practice as well as possible areas of improvement. This is sent to the manager for their opportunity to respond. Where appropriate, Healthwatch Lancashire may arrange a revisit to check the progress of improvements. The report is then published on the Healthwatch Lancashire website at www.healthwatchlancashire.co.uk and sent to the Care Quality Commission, Healthwatch England and any other relevant organisations.

Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Lancashire would like to thank management, staff, service users and relatives for making us feel welcome and taking part in the visit.

General Information

There are sixteen people using the services overall, ten of these service users were present on the day of our visit.

The Highfield Scheme provide arts and crafts, gardening, aerobics and chair-based exercise, music therapy, drama and dance, and other indoor activities.

The Highfield Scheme also provide supported living services

Methodology

We have asked the service manager how they refer to people who use the service. For the purpose of this report, people who use the service will be referred to as service users

The Enter and View representatives made an announced visit on 5th July 2022 and spoke to the owner, one manager, ten service users, four staff members, four external staff members, one outside agency and one volunteer, eight relatives responded to our questions in writing.

Healthwatch Lancashire obtain the views and experiences of people using the services, relatives and staff. Conversations with each are adapted to capture individual experiences to help assess the quality of services. People using the services were asked about their general feelings about the day centre including what choices they have and what they think about the activities and environment. Conversations with staff included their thoughts about the day service, service user choice, staffing levels and support. Relatives were asked to speak about their general experiences including how they feel about the service, if they feel informed and whether their relative has choice in what they do at the day service. Representatives also recorded their own observations on the environment and staff-service user interactions.

To retain confidentiality and anonymity of respondents, names, pronouns and any identifiable details have been removed from quotes; 'they/their [service user]' has been used throughout the report to refer to service users.

Summary:

The Highfield Scheme provides activity day services for adults with learning and physical disabilities to help improve skills, knowledge and understanding. The service is based in Great Harwood, and service users carry out a range of activities including arts and crafts, gardening, aerobics and chair-based exercise, music therapy, drama and dance, and other indoor activities.

Healthwatch Lancashire representatives spoke to the owner, one manager, ten service users, four staff members, four external staff members, one outside agency and one volunteer. Feedback from was obtained from the relatives of eight service users.

The services are provided at The Base which is a large single storey community building with a large hall, several smaller rooms and a kitchen, as well as a garden area.

Overall staff and service user interactions were observed to be professional and friendly, and supportive of needs and preferences. Staff were engaged with service users and encouraged service users to participate with the activity that was being undertaken at the time of the visit

Feedback from service users was generally positive. service users expressed that they enjoy the activities on offer, and they have some choices in what they do, although several requested more choices around activities. Several service users have been attending the service for some years.

Relative feedback was very positive, with only a few minor issues raised. Staff were highly praised, most relatives felt informed, and all felt that their relative had choices. Feedback highlighted that the day service has a big impact on the service users and their wellbeing, *“excellent, all [service user] needs are met in a way [they] can understand”*

Enter and View observations

Healthwatch Lancashire representatives arrived during group aerobics and chair-based exercise classes and representatives spoke with service users during their break as well as with staff and a volunteer. Observations were carried out during the classes so that service users could continue with their chosen activities.

Client interactions

Service users were in a group with staff who were also participating in the classes. Service users were engaged in the aerobics class and appeared to be enjoying the music. One service user had chosen not to participate and was sat doing an art activity with a member of staff, it was explained to HWL representatives that this is usual for this service user.

Staff were encouraging to the service users during the class and it appeared to be an activity everyone was familiar with. Service users were able to take a break at any time if they so chose but all waited until the official break time and seemed to know the routine of their day.

Staff ensured that the service users were safe, with one member of staff prompting a service user to remove their cardigan as it was quite warm; and they ensured that everyone had a drink at breaktime. The second half of the morning activities was chair-based exercises which allowed for service users to not over-exert but still be able to participate in a form of exercise.

Service users were very engaged with HWL representatives and happy to talk about their experiences of the centre; several service users were able to clearly verbalise their thoughts and opinions of the Highfield Scheme.

Some service users were observed sitting at tables occasionally during the activity without an alternative being offered, although staff continued to engage with them and there was chatting going on whilst they were seated.

All service users were dressed appropriately for the activities in their own clothes, and as it was indoors there was no need for outdoor clothing. Gardening activities were not being undertaken during the visit so no comment can be made on outdoor activity clothing.

Staff

The manager of the services, Tracy Airey, welcomed HWL representatives and allowed for them to engage with everyone with no interference from herself. The Highfield Scheme owner introduced themselves and greeted HWL representatives. Staff knew all service users' names and how best to support them and their individual needs and preferences. Staff were very respectful towards service users and appeared professional throughout the visit.

Manager Tracy Airey has recently returned from parental leave and explained that she is still catching up on any new developments as due to the pandemic several things had changed in her absence which she was still coming up to speed on.

Person-centred support was apparent throughout the visit by all staff.

The Centre

There is a reception area immediate upon arrival at the centre with a signing in/out book and visitors are asked to take and record their temperature on arrival. HWL representatives were asked to wear masks throughout the visit in line with the centres current policy for infection control. There is a large notice board with up-to-date and relevant information, and there are also the centres 'compliments, concerns, comments and complaints' forms for people to take without the need to request one.



The centre is based in a large single storey community building called The Base. It is set on ground level minimising any issues around mobility and access. There is a large open hall area, two quiet rooms, a sensory room, a kitchen, and a garden area with a small greenhouse. There are also two offices for staff and a reception area.

During the visit manager Tracy Airey explained that they are working on making some improvements to the centre, and consequently there were some areas that currently look a bit neglected, in particular the sensory room which has a

cluttered storage space feel to it. One staff member commented that whilst this room can be used as a quiet space its location next to the main hall means that sound can still carry quite loudly, however, this is being addressed with the creation of another quiet area away from the main hall.

There is a small secluded garden area which is accessed from the main hall; due to limited space it is very small but thought has gone into its layout and use. There are raised planters for easier access for service users and there is also a small greenhouse for the service users to use. A concrete ramp leads from the main hall down past the garden area to a solitary building which is currently being made into a quiet room which will allow for service users to be away from the group if they so need/choose.

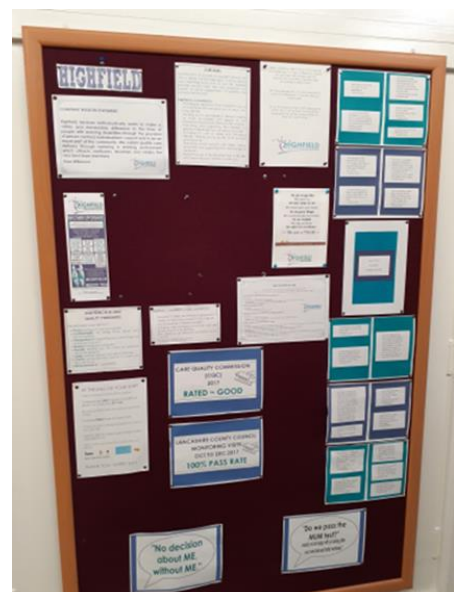
There is a kitchen area to one side of the main hall with a serving hatch, no service users were observed entering the kitchen area during the visit and drinks were provided by the staff during the break from activities.

In the main hall there is a row of full height storage cupboards which doubles up as a screen to the offices creating a more enclosed feel. These cupboards are fully stocked with art and craft materials, board games, and are unlocked allowing for service users to get something out for an activity if they so wish. service users also have their own individual tray.

Feedback from service users

General feedback

Service users spoken to during the visit were able to answer the questions direct and stated that they really enjoy attending services at the Highfield. Several service users have been using the services for a long time along with some more recent starters. They gave several reasons for continuing to attend from having a chat to the activities with arts and crafts, bingo and drama being the most mentioned activities. Others said that they enjoy gardening, baking, snooker, and



dancing and singing. One service user said that they enjoy people watching.

Several service users found the ramp in the garden area an issue in winter and prefer to avoid it in adverse weather.

Service users spoken to during the visit said that they enjoy the food with carrots mentioned several times *"carrots, I love carrots"*, and one service user said that they like the meatloaf and coffee.

Several service users said that they have made some good friends at the centre and that they enjoy having a chat and a laugh with others and this is one of the reasons why they attend the services.

One service user told HWL staff that they don't like staff wearing masks as they find it difficult to understand them.

One service user said that it can be *"a bit loud, sore ears"* and another stated *"too loud, I need more time out"* and *"too much going on"*.

Choice

Nine of the service users said that they are happy with the activities and that they have some choices, but several service users said that they didn't feel like they have enough choices around activities and would like more *"they try to do what we want but it doesn't always happen, we just do what they plan for us"* and *"we don't ask for anything, we get told what we are doing, if we don't want to join in, we just sit at the table or find something to colour"*.

Several service users commented on the menu with one stating *"I'd like more options but I haven't been asked"* and another said they don't feel like they have a choice although the food is good, and another said that it's a set menu for every four weeks *"but that's ok"*.

Activities

Service users said they enjoyed the activities overall with arts and crafts, bingo and drama being the most discussed, followed by gardening, dancing and singing, and baking.

Several service users said that they would like to get out of the centre more and have day trips out every now and then as they used to do before the pandemic. One service user said that they understand this is difficult at the moment due to COVID and acknowledged that transport may be an issue as the centre doesn't have a minibus. One service user said they would just like to get back to normality.

One service user stated that they are not allowed in the kitchen but would like to be, and that they would like to be involved in preparing food and drinks. When asked if there were any other activities service users may wish to try there were no other suggestions/requests.

Building

Service users spoken to during the visit said that they are happy with the building and facilities, although one service user stated the bathrooms *"are not the best"* whilst a different service user said bathroom access was good; it must be noted that the bathrooms are due to be refurbished imminently. Several commented on it being too loud at times although this was referring to the activities as well as the building.

Do you know who to speak to if you are not happy with the service or want to complain about something?

All service users spoken to during the visit said they like the staff and that they felt they could talk to staff if they had an issue or a worry.

Relatives and friends' views

General experience

Feedback was gained from eight relatives and all relatives are happy with the services with comments including *"I think it's marvellous"*, *"very happy [service user] always comes home with a smile on [their] face"*, *"the service that is provided for [service user] is fantastic"*, *"excellent, all*



[service user] needs are met in a way [they] can understand” and “needs are met with a cheerful and caring way”.

All relatives felt that the service users’ needs are being met, one relative stated that they feel there could be *“more time in the community”* and two relatives stated that they would like to see the return of line dancing.

All relatives were happy with the staff with comments including *“I can’t praise them enough”, “the staff at the Base have been amazing... very supportive to the family as well as the [service user]”, “the owner and staff are excellent”, “I think staff should get a pat on the back”* and *“very polite and helpful”.*

Choice

All relatives shared that their loved one has a choice in what they do whilst they are at the service *“they do their best to include activities that [they] enjoy”, “[they] definitely get a choice”* and *“because of COVID activities have been changed with more home-based and indoor activities all excellent”.*

Do you think you are kept informed about your relative?

Seven relatives reported that they feel well informed with comments including *“staff can be asked any question, and if they don’t know they will find out”, “always ready to discuss any problems”,* and *“we are kept very well informed”.* The eighth relative stated *“I think that a care plan/report could be sent home to let us know how our relatives are getting on”.*

Any other comments

The following additional comments were made by relatives:

“I wouldn’t want [service user] to go anywhere else [service user] is happy and settled there, [service user] looks forward to going”

“[Service user] enjoys [their] time at the Base, [they] have good relationship with the staff and other [service users]”

“they are valued service users”

"[service user] looks forward to attending"

Staff views

Pre-visit questionnaire

A pre-visit questionnaire was carried out by telephone on 13th June, 2022 between HWL representative Sue Edwards and the Highfield Scheme manager Tracy Airey. Tracy was engaged and spoke about the services they offer, their facilities, activities, and any communication needs we may need to be aware of. Tracy was welcoming of the proposed visit and saw it as an opportunity to identify any area(s) needing improvement. Tracy stated that she had only recently returned to work following maternity leave so may not be fully up to date with everything as activities and practices have changed due to COVID but that we would be able to see activities rotas and the such during the visit.

General feedback

Tracy and four further members of staff were present on the day of the visit and gave feedback, along with one volunteer who provided verbal feedback. All staff gave positive feedback with comments including *"it's a pleasure to come here, it's a pleasant atmosphere and everyone seems happy"* and *"every day is different"*.



Staffing levels and support

All staff felt that they have enough staff when on duty, one staff member said *"it can depend on the day i.e. sickness, COVID, but if needed the management will step in"*.

All staff stated that they feel they have sufficient knowledge to undertake their roles, with one stating *"any on-going training is always in place"*

and another stated that *"there is always someone around to ask"* if they are unsure. One staff member said it would be good to have more tutors for specific roles such as drama.

One staff member stated *"always trying to improve things, always ask"* about the centre in general

All staff are aware how to raise a safeguarding concern

Service users choices

Staff expressed that there is a good range of activities on offer for service users and that service users are able to make choices around their day and what they would like to do and that activities are planned in advance. One staff member stated that *"there are more activities in the pipeline"* and that they are looking at how they can go out. Staff stated that service users are consulted on activities and that there is a suggestion box for service users.

Environment

All staff said that they were happy with the premises *"lovely"*, *"we are having the disabled toilet and shower area revamped"* and *"local, large open space and outside area (quiet space) light and easy to access"*.

Would you recommend this day service to a close relative?

All staff stated that they would recommend the services to a close relative *"definitely yes"* and *"yes of course I would it's a friendly place to attend"*.

Areas for improvement

The following areas for improvement have been highlighted from service user, relative and staff feedback. These are not Healthwatch Lancashire recommendations but rather, areas for improvement suggested by service users, relatives and staff.

- Consider current communications methods for relatives to ensure that all relatives feel fully informed around the services and their family members experiences, progress and development, this could be achieved by consultation with relatives.
- Include service users more in the planning of activities so that they feel they have sufficient choices over their day, look at reintroducing line dancing and the possibility of day trips.
- Consider the kitchen space and possibly have cooking sessions for those who would like to get more involved and more inclusion in menu decision making.
- Consider covering the ramp in the garden area to allow for service users to be able to access the quiet room in winter.

Response from provider

Areas identified for improvement	Action from provider	When by	Comments
Consider current communications methods for relatives to ensure that all relatives feel fully informed	The new day centre manager has implemented a report sheet home to those families that require one, not all service user families wish to have this.	Done	
Include service users more in the planning of activities so that they feel they have sufficient choices over their day	New day centre manager has sat with service users discussing the range of activities currently on offer and what they would like going forward. Plan in place to try and implement some of these.	Done	
Consider cooking sessions for those who would like to get more involved, and more inclusion in menu decision making	Cooking sessions already take place on a Monday and Wednesday afternoon. We buy lunches in from local cafes and service users have a choice of a wide range of food.	Done	
Consider covering the ramp in the garden area	This is being investigated to see if possible.	Spring	
Completed by	(Name) Cathi Sheratt	Date	22/11/2022

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