



Enter and View Report

Branches Day Care, Batley

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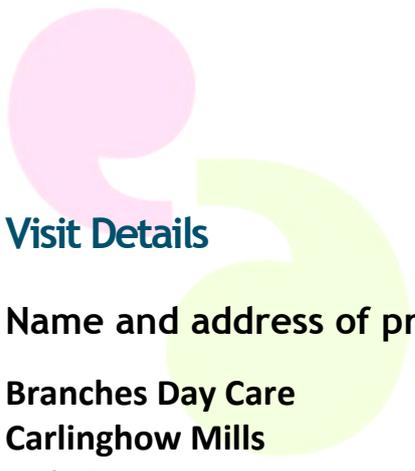
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Visit Details

Name and address of premises visited

**Branches Day Care
Carlinghow Mills
Unit 9
499 Bradford Road
Batley
WF17 8LN**

Name of service provider

This service is provided by Mencap in Kirklees, Brunswick House, 33 East Street, Lindley, Huddersfield HD3 3ND

Date and time of visit

Wednesday 18th June 2014, 10am-12pm

Authorised representatives undertaking the visit

Katherine Sharp and Clare Costello

Contact details of local Healthwatch

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Purpose of the premises/service

Branches Day Centre offers care, support, companionship and a wide range of activities and outings throughout the day. Transport is provided to clients from North Kirklees who access this service.

The service is provided for individuals over 40 years of age with learning disabilities, accommodating up to 18 clients per day.

Some people are funded through the local authority and some people pay privately. The service is referral only through Gateway to Care

The service is open Monday to Friday 9am-4.30pm.

A meal is provided at lunchtime in the centre. During day trips, sandwiches and snacks are provided or there will be a meal out at a café or church group.

Activities available are-: Arts and crafts, woodwork, gardening, pool table, games, computer activities, TV lounge area. The service provides one or two trips out on most days. They also access trips with a local church (St Peters). Trips include walking, bowling, college visits and camping weekends.

Staffing/client numbers on day of visit

On the day there were 3-4 staff and 1 manager at the centre and 2 staff on day trips.

Acknowledgements

Thank you to all the staff, service users, relatives and carers at Branches Day centre who gave us a warm welcome and spent time talking to us about their experiences of using services or working here.

Thank you to Elaine Richardson for helping us to arrange our visit and for talking to us about how the service operates.

Please note: This report relates only to a specific visit and the report is not representative of all service users (only those who contributed within the restricted time available)



Focus of visit

The focus for this visit was to gather client, carer, relative and staff feedback on the activities and food provided at Branches Day Care Centre and to get a general feel of the place and learn more about the service.

Methodology

We completed an announced visit of Branches Day Care Service which took two hours and fifteen minutes. During the visit we consulted with clients, carers and relatives who use the service and staff working there.

We agreed the visit would be informal. Prompt sheets were used with questions around food and activities provided, but questions were not asked in any specific order, nor were all questions asked of all clients. It was thought that this unstructured method of speaking to clients, family members and carers would help engage them in relaxed conversations about their views and experiences of using Branches Day Care. We introduced ourselves and noted people's comments as they spoke to us, after getting their consent to do so. We offered extra information about Enter and View visits when needed to those that wanted this.

Finally we wanted to report on the overall impression of Branches, including the atmosphere, appearance and smell and whether clients, relatives and carers were happy to be in and use the centre.

Who we spoke to

On the day of our visit we spoke to most of the clients who attended that day and stayed in the centre during the morning. We also spoke to some clients before their trip out to a local sports centre. We adapted our question styles for the different clients. Some of the clients were only able to respond with one word answers or had difficulty responding verbally. We were able to speak to carers and relatives who had been informed of our visit date.

Most of the staff not participating in the trip were able to speak to us. We tried to limit this to quiet times and for short periods so not to take them away from their duties.



Overall impression

The centre was a little difficult to find as signage from the road was not visible, but after a telephone call with the manager, who was very good at explaining how to reach them, we found the centre easily. The sign on the building was not immediately obvious either as it was slightly covered by a bush.

We were warmly welcomed at first by a staff member who was outside gardening, he asked where we were from, and offered refreshments. We were then introduced to the manager who was most friendly and accommodating, explaining the activities and trips for the day and the weekly activities planned at the service.

Based in a large room of a mill complex, the style is open plan with free flow activities for service users allowing clients to move around and choose activities themselves. The centre is a welcoming, bright place with lots of hand-made craft items to decorate the area. The manager has an office in this room which has a glass front making it welcoming to all and everyone visible to her, so if help is needed she can see immediately.

There are comfortable chairs and sofas with a TV area (not in use at the time of our visit), a pool table, computers, open plan kitchen (for staff use only), and a dining area also used for crafting and woodwork activities. Outside is the car park and the clients are able to use a small paved enclosed area at the end of the building, when supervised by staff, to sit and get some air or have a cigarette break. There is a large park nearby and the manager informed us that they often go there for a walk.

There were no unpleasant smells in the centre and the area seemed clean and facilities in good condition. The atmosphere was happy and relaxed in the centre.

The manager informed us that service users, carers, relatives and staff are encouraged to suggest any activities they would like to do. A letter is sent out to clients asking 'what do I want to do in Branches?'. We were told that trips are normally included in the cost unless they are joined up trips with other organisations, for example the local church group, then a small donation is suggested. The Manager explained that the camping trip in bunk barns has an extra charge but everyone enjoys it. If clients can't stay for the night they are taken for the day so that they don't miss out on this opportunity.

We were informed by the manager that the clients had recently been practising a show “we’re going on a bear hunt” which they will perform to relatives and carers and then will be going to other services to perform.

The activities for the day were a trip to Leyburn with a local church group and a visit to the sports centre for the morning. An activity of woodwork was provided at the centre and some of the clients were involved in making a wishing well planter with staff members. The staff interacted with the clients in a very positive way throughout this activity. One client’s conversation was very repetitive but the staff member responded calmly and spoke to the client about the activity to try and keep him engaged with it. There were many craft activities around the centre that the clients had already made, helping to create a friendly, bright environment. Clients who didn’t want to be included on the trips or activities were able to access the pool table and comfy chairs to chat and relax.

All staff were friendly and approachable, interacting with services users in a positive caring way. I observed one staff member responding caringly to concerns about a client’s health. The staff member noticed that one of the clients was coughing quite a lot during the activity and he got him a drink then asked the client whether he’d spoken to his carer about his cough as it had been a bit of a problem for a few weeks. The client didn’t seem to know. The staff member said he would send a note home to ask his carer to make a doctor’s appointment.

Comments on activities provided

Overall, carers’ and relatives’ comments show they are very happy with the activities and service provided. Although we got limited, short responses from some clients, it was easy to see they were very comfortable and happy in this environment.

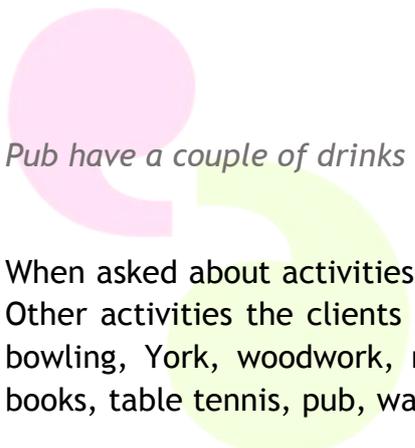
Activities liked by service users:-

Making things, seeing friends

Like coming, like reading

Going out, park

Sometimes go on bus



Pub have a couple of drinks

When asked about activities they enjoyed, many clients mentioned going out. Other activities the clients enjoyed were-: going to the park, shops, ten pin bowling, York, woodwork, meeting friends, bingo, making things, colouring books, table tennis, pub, watch people, going to college, cooking.

One client talked about how he liked wrestling. A staff member showed me a collage of wrestling pictures that this client had created. The client pointed out some of the wrestlers and said their names. This showed that Branches had planned an activity around this client's interests. One of the staff members had some information for the client about future wrestling matches in the local area. He asked the client where he would like this information to be sent.

A couple of clients mentioned activities they would like to do in the future-:

Would like to go swimming

Would like to do baking, buns and biscuits, No cream, low fat diet

Relatives and carers who called into the service to speak to us during the time we were visiting expressed very positive comments about Branches and the activities provided-:

Both of the people I have cared for enjoy it very much

Talks all about it at home if he has enjoyed it, he is very protective of the place and doesn't like it if we come, as he see it as his place!

They have the activities quite right here. He likes to tell me if he doesn't like anything -like sports, but enjoys everything else

She likes to go out, she has gone to a chocolate factory today

Carers and relatives explained that they go ten pin bowling and on camping holidays were they take their sleeping bags for them to experience this too.

If people are unable to stay for the night they take them for the day which is fabulous. They try to provide different experiences for all the clients. I'm sure someone went in a limo and up in a helicopter once.

If you have any ideas for activities you would be happy to suggest these to staff

Another person spoke about if the client was at home they don't want to go out and would be watching TV, but when they come to Branches they love the outings and going on trips.

Other enjoyable trips mentioned were sports centre, bowling, adapted bikes in Leeds for disabled people, walks, meals out, gardening projects and trips to supermarket.

Staff also spoke positively about the activities and working at Branches-:

I like the social aspect for them and the choice they have

I wouldn't change anything

One member of staff spoke about spending a lot of time planning different activities for clients, explaining the manager was very supportive of new ideas. Another staff member confirmed this, explaining there is no pressure for the clients to do anything they don't like.

Programs are changed around, we are encouraged to bring ideas for activities to do.

The staff member spoke about the importance of having meaningful activities, for example having clients involved in the planning, design and creation of useful objects which can be sold or used in the Centre.



Comments on food provided

Staff cook the food provided but clients can help themselves to a drink whenever they want from the bottles of water or jug of dilute juice on the counter already made up for them.

Comments of the food at Branches from the service users were:-

Like sandwiches

Get lots of drinks

Nice, like chicken and chips, Yorkshire pudding, just English food

Many of the service users mentioned the sandwiches at Branches

Comments from the carers and relatives about the food were:-

He enjoys the food, only tells me if he doesn't!

The food meets his needs. He's not a lot of teeth. He enjoys it but doesn't eat much. They accommodate meals to what he needs.

They have a meal each day soup or a sandwich and they cater for all-: pureed food, thickened food. Staff encourage them to eat and help. Really caring staff. They accommodate all health conditions. When the person I looked after, who suffers from Alzheimer's, was having difficulties focusing on food because he was picking at the tablecloth pattern, they changed this and the cutlery to help him.

She eats at the centre and seems to enjoy, but enjoys it when they eat out in cafes on trips out.

A staff member's comments on food served at Branches were:-

We get our lunch too and to eat with the clients, we serve things like jacket potato, pitta bread, soup, pureed food if needed. We have a book for all the dietary needs only staff are allowed in the kitchen.



Comments on staff and quality of care

We asked the carers and relatives what they liked about Branches and would they change anything. We didn't ask any questions about the staff and quality of care at Branches but clients, carers and relatives clearly wanted to tell us how much the services means to them and how the staff care for them and their family members:

I would make no change at all, staff good.

Wouldn't change anything about the service, every thing's okay, staff very helpful.

I think it is absolutely brilliant, they look forward to coming.

It's very good here, my sister likes coming. I'm trying to get her in for another day as she only comes one day at the moment.

They cater for the individual, I have nothing but praise.

A good place, which is down to staff

I would sing its praises as far as I could

Some of the people have been coming to Branches for a long time and have grown up here.

There was a comment about the transport timings:-

He gets the transport here which is good but it comes at different times normally within 30 minutes each time though, would be nice to know when it's coming- but I know this can't be helped.

Some staff spoke positively about working at Branches:-

I like working here, love it. I like the clients and how they enjoy meeting up



Conclusion

The overall impression of Branches was very good. Clients seemed happy at the service and relaxed. Relatives and carers have nothing but praise for the centre, the activities and the staff there. One carer became emotional when speaking about how great and caring it is for the clients at Branches. There is a lovely relaxed, friendly atmosphere at the centre, created by the caring staff and the positive way they interact with the clients.

As mentioned, there was a small problem with signage at the centre but when we spoke to the manager she told us a new sign was currently being made and that she would arrange for the bush to be trimmed back so that the sign on the building was visible.

Clients are treated as individuals and all planning seems to be carefully thought out to ensure clients' needs are met. The activities and trips are regular and varied but staff are flexible, giving clients the option to change their mind if they don't want to go on a particular trip.

There were a couple of activities which clients mentioned they would like to do (swimming and baking) and it would be good to see these incorporated into the future activity planning.

Clients seemed happy with the food provided and carers and relatives explained how the clients' needs were met and with care and attention to detail. A staff member commented on how they enjoy eating with the clients at mealtimes.

There are many extra touches provided at Branches, like money collected each week for client birthday gifts. They also carefully plan overnight trips to camping barns which gives clients opportunity to stay away from home and take part in exciting outdoor activities.

We enjoyed our visit to Branches and have no recommendations to make following our visit as we have no concerns about activities and food been served at the centre.