

The Fortune Centre of Riding Therapy

Robert House

Inspection report

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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?	Outstanding ☆
Is the service well-led?	Good ●

Summary of findings

Overall summary

This unannounced comprehensive inspection was conducted by one Care Quality Commission Inspector on 10 and 14 January 2019.

Robert House is a 'care home'. People in care homes receive accommodation and nursing or personal care as single package under one contractual agreement. CQC regulates both the premises and the care provided, and both were looked at during this inspection.

The Fortune Centre of Riding Therapy (FCRT) provides a three year residential Further Education Through Horsemastership Course for 16 to 25 year old people with learning disabilities. Students are provided with the opportunity to transition into adulthood in a supported environment. They learn and develop independence and life skills through the interaction with horses.

Robert House is one of three registered locations that make up the FCRT. Robert House offers residential accommodation and learning support for up to seven students between the ages of 16 to 25. Robert House accommodates third year students and at the time of our inspection seven students with learning disabilities were living there. The home consists of a main building with bedrooms with en suite bathrooms, an office, a kitchen, a dining area/conservatory and a lounge.

The service had been developed and designed in line with the values that underpin the registering the Right Support and other best practice guidance. These values include choice, promotion of independence and inclusion. People with learning disabilities and autism using the service can live as ordinary a life as any citizen.

At our last inspection we rated the service good. At this inspection we found the evidence continued to support the rating of good and there was no evidence or information from our inspection and ongoing monitoring that demonstrated serious risks or concerns. This inspection report is written in a shorter format because our overall rating of the service has not changed since our last inspection. At this inspection we found the service remained good overall.

The service did not have a registered manager in post. The previous registered manager had left the service at the end of December 2018, however the provider was in the process of employing a replacement registered manager who was due to commence their employment in February 2019. The provider had ensured there were appropriate staff in place to manage the service in the interim period. 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.

Students told us they felt safe at Robert House, they knew who to speak to if they had any concerns and told us names of staff members they could speak to if they were worried. Parents spoke very positively about the service provided at Robert House. Staff understood how to identify, prevent and report abuse and felt well supported in their roles. Staff received training to enable them to carry out their roles competently.

Students were supported by safely recruited staff and there were enough appropriately trained and experienced staff to support students in ways that suited them. Communication styles and methods were tailored to individual students and staff supported students to understand the choices available to them. Staff were knowledgeable about their role and spoke positively regarding the induction and training they received. Staff felt well supported by the management team and received regular supervision sessions and appraisals.

Students received personal care and support in an individualised way and their privacy was protected. Staff knew students well and were able to demonstrate a good understanding of how they wished their care to be provided. Students were treated with dignity and respect.

Medicines were handled appropriately and consistently, stored securely and managed and disposed of safely.

Student's needs were rigorously assessed and care, support and guidance was planned and delivered to meet their needs. Records showed a detailed, robust, student specific assessment of need had been carried out to ensure risks to student's health were managed effectively. Unique and creative support systems were in place to ensure students developed key life skills that had an extremely positive impact on their lives.

Students were consistently and innovatively supported to promote and maintain their independence. There was an emphasis on personalised, meaningful activities that were based on student's interests and experiences. This led to students taking up paid employment positions and taking part and enjoying a wide range of activities over and above their own perceived expectations. The activities stretched their physical and mental abilities and promoted a high level of well-being and an outstanding sense of achievement for the students.

Students and their relatives were fully involved in assessing and planning the care and support they received. Students were referred to health care professionals as required.

Students and relatives knew how to make a complaint and felt confident they would be listened to if they needed to raise concerns or queries. There were weekly house meetings and an active student council that enabled students to voice their concerns or queries. This showed the service took students views seriously and were keen to maintain a continuous circle of improvement and listen to the students.

People told us they had confidence in the management team and felt the service was well led. Students and relatives spoke very positively about the management team and staff.

There was a process in place to ensure improvements were made regarding the safety and quality of the service provided.

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 Outstanding.	Outstanding ☆
Is the service well-led? The service remains Good.	Good ●

Robert House

Detailed findings

Background to this inspection

This comprehensive inspection took place on 10 and 14 January 2019 and the first day was unannounced. One CQC inspector conducted the inspection on both days.

We carried out this inspection under Section 60 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 as part of our regulatory functions. This inspection was planned to check 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.

Before the inspection we reviewed the information we held about the service. This included information about incidents the provider had notified us of and contacting health professionals for their views of the service. The provider had completed a Provider Information Return (PIR). This is a form that asks the provider to give some key information about the service, what it does well and improvements they plan to make.

During the two-day inspection we met and spoke with seven students living at Robert House, we also spoke with the director, 10 members of staff which included the Robert House final year co-ordinator, the head of safeguarding and wellbeing, the education systems co-ordinator, the staff training and development co-ordinator, the facilities manager, independent living support staff and the maintenance manager. Immediately following the inspection we spoke with three relatives on the telephone and obtained their views on the service Robert House provided.

We observed how students were supported and to establish the quality of care students received we looked at records related to their care and support. This included individual learning plans, treatment and support records and Medicine Administration Records (MARS). We also looked at records relating to the management of the service including: staffing rota's, staff recruitment, supervision and training records, premises maintenance records, quality assurance records, training and staff meeting minutes and a range of the providers policies and procedures.

Is the service safe?

Our findings

Students and relatives all told us the support provided by staff at Robert House kept the students safe. One relative told us, "It's absolutely safe. She took a little while to settle in but is now very happy. It has been excellent, I've got no worries." Another relative told us, "It is very safe and secure. There is always someone on call at any time and we have always got through to speak with staff if we needed to." A further relative said, "It is 100%."

Students told us they felt safe living at Robert House. One student said, "I really enjoy it, it's nice and quiet and we all get on really well."

The service had implemented a new electronic system for reporting, recording and reviewing any safeguarding concerns, incidents and accidents. This had led to an improvement in the oversight and management of incidents and had enabled staff to be proactive in ensuring the safety of students at all times.

Staff had completed training in protecting people from abuse and staff were aware of the provider's policy for safeguarding people and whistleblowing procedures. Clear pictorial posters explaining the roles of safeguarding were prominently displayed around the premises of Robert House and FCRT. There was a system in place to protect the students from financial abuse and money management was a core topic taught to all students to support them and provide independent life skills.

Generally, risks to students and the service were managed so that students were protected and their wishes supported and respected. Risk assessments were personalised and covered all relevant aspects of student's lives. They reflected student's preferences and encouraged opportunities to make decisions and stretch themselves to improve their independence. They gave clear information about the student so staff would understand how best to help them. Risk assessments covered a wide range including, hydration, co-ordination, independent living skills, safety with horses, health and ability to drive mechanised buggies around the site. Staff had clear understandings of these risks and the support they provided to reduce them and keep student's and themselves safe.

There were systems in place to ensure the premises were maintained safely. The provider had a small maintenance team employed to ensure the FCRT site which included Robert House was safely maintained. There were plans made for safe evacuation from the premises in an emergency situation such as a fire. This information was kept up to date. Up to date service and maintenance certificates relating to electric, gas, emergency lighting, fire and water systems were available. Legionella testing had been completed which showed the premises were free from legionella. Legionella are water borne bacteria that can be harmful to people's health.

Records showed hot water outlets in Robert House were running at higher than recommended guidelines. This meant students could be at risk of being scalded. Risk assessments had not been completed on students to evaluate the risk to their health and safety from very hot water. We discussed these findings with

the director and maintenance manager who stated they would take appropriate action as soon as possible.

We recommend the service adheres to current national guidance regarding managing the risks to vulnerable people regarding water temperatures.

There were enough staff employed to meet student's needs. The provider had a system in place to ensure there were enough staff on duty through the day and night. Staff told us they felt there were enough staff on each shift to manage the needs of the students living at Robert House. The provider had their own supply of 'bank' staff that would be available to cover in the event of staff sickness or planned absence. Students required varying levels of staff support to ensure they remained safe. The staffing rota allowed for this, with sufficient staff on duty to support students when they wanted to travel outside of Robert House.

Recruitment practices were safe and the relevant checks had been completed on all staff. These checks included the use of application forms, an interview, reference checks and criminal record checks. This made sure that students were protected as far as possible from staff who were known to be unsuitable. Staff rotas correctly reflected the levels of staff on duty during our inspection visit. Staff told us they had felt well supported throughout their induction process and felt there were enough staff on shift at Robert House to support student's safely.

Medicines were administered safely. We checked the stock and storage of medicines and reviewed the medicine administration records (MARS). These records were fully completed with no gaps or omissions in recording. Improvements had been implemented regarding assessing staff for their competency in administering medicines. Staff who administered medicines had received up to date medicine training and had their competency checked annually. There were clear protocols for administering PRN (as required) medicine and staff spoke knowledgably about administering PRN medicines. Student's had known allergies recorded and there was a photograph of each student on their MARs to help ensure medicines were administered to the correct person.

Some students managed their own medicines. Each student had a lockable cabinet in their bedrooms that they could store their medicines in if required.

Staff had access to personal protective equipment and wore it when it was appropriate. Staff had received training in infection control and food safety and understood how important it was to reduce the risk of cross contamination. Infection control process and systems were in place, however it was not clear which staff were responsible for infection control processes within Robert House. This could lead to confusion and a risk important infection control processes may be over looked and not completed.

We recommend the service adheres to current national guidance regarding the implementation and management of an infection control process within Robert House.

The home and equipment was clean and well maintained. Staff told us the provider had an ongoing programme to decorate and update the premises when required. Students told us each Wednesday was their 'House' day where they cleaned and tidied Robert House to ensure it was kept clean and safe.

Is the service effective?

Our findings

Relatives and health professionals gave positive feedback regarding the support and care students received at Robert House. A health professional provided written feedback which said, "The student has thrived within this environment and has developed and improved...has improved with working within a real working environment, communication skills, the ability to manage their own behaviours and improved independent living skills including travel skills, self-confidence and improved understanding of others." Another health professional commented, "The student was progressing well on their course and had nothing but praise for the college."

One member of staff had received very positive feedback from a health professional that had been providing specialised support for students at Robert House. Their comments included, "The support and dedication that the placement have shown towards [student] and their family during their time with you has been exceptional...I could not recommend FCRT highly enough."

Care and support was planned and delivered in line with current legislation and good practice guidance. Assessments, individual learning plans and care plans were individualised for each student and reflected preferences and wishes. Support and individual learning plans were regularly reviewed and updated in consultation with the students, family and professionals when appropriate.

Staff told us the induction process had been thorough and supportive and gave them a detailed insight into the ethos of FCRT. Newly employed staff were mentored by an existing member of staff to ensure they were given the correct level of support and had additional supervisions in their first term.

Staff had the skills and knowledge they needed to perform their roles. Staff told us they could access the training they needed and had found the training thorough and detailed. Training was relevant to the needs of students living at Robert House and staff were able to use, and develop, their learning alongside colleagues. The provider had secured the services of an independent training company to deliver specialised behavioural training. This training gave staff up to date skills on de-escalation techniques and how to support students safely at all times. We discussed this training with staff who all said they had found it very beneficial, well delivered and exactly right for the needs of the students living at Robert House. The Head of Safeguarding and Wellbeing had run specialised training sessions for staff on understanding epilepsy and managing condition specific medicines. Staff had found these training sessions useful and informative. The provider effectively used the quieter weeks during the students' holiday periods for delivering mandatory training to ensure all staff received their required courses.

Staff told us they felt well supported by their colleagues and the management team and felt they all worked well together as a supportive team. Annual appraisals and supervisions were used to develop and motivate staff, reviewing their practice and checking if staff wanted to progress further or develop specific skills or training related to their interests. This meant students received care or support from staff who had the skills, knowledge and understanding needed to carry out their roles.

Every student had a 'hospital passport' completed for them. These documents contained summarised relevant information regarding the student to ensure they were cared for safely should they need to go into hospital or move to another service.

As final year students, the people who lived at Robert House were supported to move towards a more independent living arrangement. One method of achieving this was to support the students to plan, prepare and cook their breakfast and evening meal. The students held a weekly meeting where they agreed and decided their meals and menus for the forthcoming week. The students were then supported to budget and buy the ingredients for the meals and work together to cook their meals. This enabled the students to manage a small budget, travel independently and how to plan and cook a weekly menu for a small group. One student told us, "I really enjoy cooking" another said, "I like to be able to make my own meals, It's good."

In order to move towards independent living, the students were also responsible for clearing away their meals, washing up the plates and cutlery and keeping the kitchen clean and tidy.

At the beginning of the student year any students with specific dietary requirements were assessed and the details given to the chefs to ensure these students maintained a healthy balanced diet when having communal meals. Mealtimes were reasonably spaced and at appropriate times, if students were travelling into town or doing voluntary work they were provided with a packed lunch or they could buy or make their own lunch. Snacks were provided throughout the day by way of a variety of fruit, yoghurts and milkshakes. Fresh water, coffee and tea and a choice of cordials were available throughout the day in the gallery area at FCRT. Students, once safely assessed as being able to, could make their own hot or cold drinks if they wished and could help themselves to healthy snacks or toast.

There were systems in place to monitor student's on-going health needs. A range of health professionals were involved in assessing, planning, implementing and evaluating student's care and treatment to ensure students got the right healthcare. Records reflected this was the case for ongoing or emerging health issues. Students were supported to visit local GP's and health professionals when required. Staff told us they would accompany and support a student if they wished to go to the local GP, alternatively the majority of students had regular health checks with their own registered GP when they returned home for the holiday periods. FCRT employed their own physiotherapists and three nurses and students were referred to appropriate health care professionals such as speech therapists, dieticians or specialist health services when required.

Student's needs were taken into account when the premises were adapted and decorated. Students had their own bedrooms which they could decorate to their individual taste. Shared communal areas were bright and comfortable which helped provide a warm, family friendly atmosphere. Clear pictorial signage was displayed throughout Robert House and the FCRT. If students wished, bedroom doors had their own personalised sign with their name on them in addition to their bedroom number. Where required en-suite bathrooms were adapted to help students mobilise safely. Throughout Robert House and the FCRT there were clear pictorial displays that encouraged learning and independence for the students. For example, in the washrooms there were pictures and guidance on the importance of washing hands which was linked to the effectiveness of washing the horses.

We checked whether the service was working within the principles of the MCA, whether any restrictions on people's liberty had been authorised and whether any conditions on such authorisations were being met. We found the service was working within the principles of the MCA. Staff showed a good understanding of how students consented to their care and support and the choices they could make each day.

Is the service caring?

Our findings

All the relatives we spoke with expressed very positive views about the service and care their family member received at Robert House. One relative told us, "I can't praise it high enough. I've never known [student] happier or healthier, it's all down to them. [Student] has achieved so much at Robert House." And "They have given [student] courage. I love the celebratory feel of the prize giving events, they have got it bang on, it's wonderful." Another relative told us, "It's been absolutely excellent. We are very pleased with [student] progress, confidence and self-esteem which has all improved so much." And "The staff team are a very, very good team. Patient and have a really good understanding of [student]."

The ethos of FCRT is to promote student independence by enabling them to live as independently as possible within a supportive, safe community. Students were encouraged to participate in the normal household tasks such as sorting and doing laundry, learning to budget for food and groceries and learning to manage their money. The students living in Robert House were in their third year at FCRT and were encouraged to learn to become more independent and learn to cook their own meals, manage a budget, travel independently and move into a working environment. Students were treated with dignity and respect by all staff and were taught to respect and care for each other through sharing living accommodation and the interaction with the horses.

Staff demonstrated a thorough knowledge of the students and how they preferred their care to be given and what interactions worked best for each student. Staff spoke knowledgeably about each student and knew what they enjoyed doing the most as well as what their anxieties or concerns had been. Throughout the inspection we observed the atmosphere between students and staff was friendly, supportive and relaxed with staff interacting positively with students. Students actively sought out staff for help, advice or just for a chat, which created a friendly, helpful environment for students to learn in.

Staff understood the importance of respecting student's rights to privacy and dignity and this was supported by their care records. Staff told us everyone was treated fairly and equally and with respect. The provider had an equality and diversity policy that staff were knowledgeable about.

Students had their own bedrooms which they locked when they were not in them to protect their privacy. Bedrooms were highly personalised with their own duvet and pillow case covers, posters, photographs, certificates and awards. Some students had their own mobile phones, electronic tablets and/or laptops which they could call or skype their relatives from. One relative told us, "I can always contact them whenever I need to. It has never been a problem." Relatives told us they were always made to feel welcome to visit. They told us they were kept fully informed in the care of their relative and found the staff team very approachable, friendly and professional.

Personal information was kept secure and staff understood the importance of maintaining secure documents and care records to ensure student's confidentiality was maintained.

Is the service responsive?

Our findings

Relatives spoke very positively about the support their family member received at Robert House. Comments included, "They have been outstanding." And "It has been excellent. They don't shy away from stretching the students and really encouraging their independence. They literally get the balance completely right between challenge and the status quo...they don't shy away from where [person] needs to improve. They don't just see the outside of the person, they really get to know them and pre-empt any concerns. It's all about increasing their independence and supporting them through it."

One health professional had provided positive written feedback to a member of staff which included, "You clearly invested in [student] throughout her journey with you. In times that were at points very difficult and challenging. How satisfying that their final year with you ended on a high, with so much progress emotionally, vocationally and academically. FCRT should feel exceptionally proud."

Another health professional provided written feedback that said, "We have found the college (FCRT) to be eager to work in partnership with us, being open and transparent. FCRT clearly meet young people's individual needs, provide a secure and caring base from which effective learning and development can take place."

Relatives told us they felt fully involved in and kept up to date about important matters that related to their relatives care and support. Another relative told us how staff had given so much of their time and support to help student's settle in well at Robert House and improve their independence. Staff told us how they had supported and encouraged students to take extra steps to secure work in the community, often aiming for and achieving work based placements the students had thought they could not achieve. For example, taking orders, helping to prepare meals, serving customers and taking payments for meals in a local café and Tea Rooms when the students had thought they would be helping to make sandwiches in the kitchen. Another student had secured employment at an equestrian centre after their time at Robert House ended.

A relative told us how hard the staff had worked to support their relative to manage and overcome some of their behaviours that had previously been challenging for themselves and people around them. They said, "They have been brilliant and supported and taught them how to manage their daily challenges in order to live their life and enjoy it."

Staff were attentive to student's individual needs and ensured that their care and support plans were followed. Staff told us that communication within Robert House was very good with clear handovers of any changes. Staff worked well as a team to ensure students received consistent and appropriate care and support.

All students were assessed before they were offered a place at FCRT. Assessments were a three phase approach with an initial meeting then a second assessment being conducted over one full day. If this was successful the student went on to complete a seven day residential assessment. The seven day assessment enabled both the student to see whether they wanted to move to the FCRT, and staff members to assess the

skills, needs and learning potential of the student. The residential assessments were offered during term time so that students got a good understanding of living at FCRT and Robert House.

We saw support plans that gave clear advice and guidance around how to manage people's particular health conditions. The provider had a system in place that recorded daily interventions with each student. The entries reflected all the action and interventions the staff had supported the student with which gave a clear record of any events or incidents that occurred.

Students were also given 'holiday goals' which were linked to their learning and independence. For example, one student's ILP's holiday goals was to 'maintain the learnt laundry routine' and 'to plan and cook a simple meal without prompts...and to arrange and plan and meet up with a peer that lives locally'. The ILP's gave specific achievable goals for each student, reflected student's achievements and were updated each term.

Staff told us how the service used the horses for behavioural support and to aid learning. For example, learning to care for the horse by arranging for the equine dentist to come and clean the horses teeth, by observing and helping to arrange these procedures the student learnt to maintain their own health and hygiene. ILP's focussed on promoting student's independence and the best methods staff could support the student to achieve this, for example travelling independently into town by themselves. The student had to learn how to use and understand transport timetables, budgeting for their ticket, buying the ticket and independently traveling to and from town by themselves.

Students were supported to understand their care and treatment choices. Students had a pictorial version of their weekly itinerary. The clear pictorial format ensured students could follow their own support plan and their daily schedule.

During their time at Robert House students were encouraged to take part in work experience, voluntary work and community activities which would prepare them for independent living. Examples included, working at an Arts Centre, assisting at a Dog Club, working at a local Pony Breeding and Cattle Society and Tea Rooms and Cafes.

Students were also supported to take part in a large variety of activities both in groups or on an individual basis. There was a varied activity programme and in the evenings students had the opportunity to participate in a range of activities such as; choir, swimming, gym, youth clubs, boxercise classes, cycling, nature clubs and trips to the pub and cinema visits. The routine evening activities were also planned to teach students the factual necessity of self-care, care of equipment and belongings and basic skills such as cleaning, washing, basic cookery and clearing up.

We spent time talking with the Robert House students in a group. They told us how they had enjoyed their camping trip at Badminton Horse Trials and how they had really enjoyed watching all the well-known riders and horses. Some of the students were just getting ready to go for their weekly session of 'Boxercise' they told us. "It's really good, we love it."

A future programme of weekend activities was advertised and students were encouraged to put forward suggestions of where they would like to visit, examples included; County Show's, trips into local small and larger towns such as Ringwood and Southampton, shopping centres and a trip to Monkey World.

Staff communicated in ways that suited people. These ways of communicating effectively were described in care documents and shared with new staff and professionals appropriately. This meant the service complied with the Accessible Information Standard (AIS). The AIS is a framework put in place in August 2016

making it a legal requirement for providers of NHS and publicly funded care to ensure people with a disability or sensory loss can access and understand information they are given.

Robert House ran a weekly house meeting, which provided a forum for students to freely express any concerns or comments they had. We reviewed a selection of notes from these meetings which showed students freely raised concerns and issues that were important to them. Robert House had a 'Worry Box' where students could post any concerns or worries they may have. Staff could then discuss the concern with students in private and support them with any problems and worries.

FCRT and Robert House ran an active student council where issues or concerns could be raised with the council and these would then be taken up directly with the staff management team. Students told us they enjoyed participating in the student council which they felt was useful and helped to resolve most issues quickly. This meant the students were able to express their views and be involved in making decisions about their care and support. Staff told us one student, with their consent had been voted in as Student Representative and Chair for FCRT and Robert House. They had been supported to attend the National Student Council conference in Glasgow. This had entailed a lengthy journey and involved considerable planning which the student had participated in. Staff told us the student had thoroughly enjoyed the trip which had increased their self-confidence and feelings of self-worth immensely and was now driven to become an Ambassador.

FCRT also have a small two bedroomed cabin known as 'Meredith Lodge'. This facility is available for students who wish to test their level of independent living. Whilst living in Meredith Lodge students were responsible for their own personal care, cooking, cleaning and travelling to their work placement. We spoke with three Robert House students who had spent time living at Meredith Lodge. They all told us they had enjoyed the experience and had found it very useful. This service provided an excellent process for staff and students to assess their ability to maintain a level of independency in all areas of daily living. Staff showed us the pictorial 'tenancy agreements' the students completed and signed. These were used as a teaching aid in order to provide students with a realistic insight about independent living processes if they needed to rent accommodation in the future.

There was a system in place to provide support and assistance for students and their relatives when they completed their three year Further Education Through Horsemastership (FETH) course. Staff were available to ensure each student was given as much support and guidance as possible to move on from FCRT and maintain an independent lifestyle. Records we viewed showed clear evidence that students greatly improved in confidence, independence and communication skills during their time at FCRT and Robert House.

Students and relatives told us they knew how to complain if they needed to. There was guidance available informing people how and who to make a complaint to if required. The provider's complaint policy gave the correct contact details for the local authority should people need to contact them in the event of a complaint or concern. Any complaints received had been actioned in accordance with the providers complaint policy.

Is the service well-led?

Our findings

The registered manager had left the employment of Robert House at the end of 2018. The provider was in the process of recruiting another registered manager who was due to commence their employment during February 2019. Staff told us students had been involved in the recruitment and interview process for the new registered manager. One member of staff said, "They came up with some really good questions, they really enjoyed being involved in the process."

Students, relatives and staff told us there was a clear management structure at Robert House and they always had someone to go to if they had any concerns, needed advice or additional support. Staff told us they felt well supported and felt comfortable to put forward ideas if they felt there was a better way of supporting students.

Staff told us and records showed there were regular staff meetings and handovers to keep staff fully informed. Staff told us communication within Robert House was effective and they felt listened to and supported in all decisions. One member of staff told us, "I love it, I really enjoy it all so much. I absolutely get all the support I need and it is all very positive."

Staff, relatives and health professionals spoke positively about the service and felt there was a happy, friendly, supportive culture at Robert House.

The provider had a system in place to monitor the quality of the service provided. This included questionnaires that FCRT sent out each June to ensure they consulted with parents, guardians and students. The questionnaires covered topics such as; communication, conflict management/concerns, student progress, levels of support, transition support between services and any suggestions for improvement. The questionnaires were reviewed and analysed once completed to ensure any areas requiring improvement were acted upon. Comments we viewed from completed questionnaires and feedback from a parents day held during February 2018 included, "I am amazed by what he is already able to do independently...we are very proud of his determination to succeed" and "[Student] has gained confidence, raised self esteem...we have peace of mind that their needs are being fully understood and met." And, "[Student] has changed 100% in independence, maturity and socially."

The provider completed a series of quality audits on a variety of aspects of the service, such as, environment, medication and health and safety. This ensured a process of continual improvement and quality assurance took place at Robert House and enabled any potential areas of improvement to be quickly highlighted.

The service had sent in the relevant notifications to CQC. The notifications included what actions the service had taken in response to any incidents and were completed as required by the regulations. The service had their current rating displayed in the communal area of the home and on their website as required.