

Enter and View report:

Able2achieve

13 November 2018

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Local health
and care
shaped by
you

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Background

1. About Healthwatch Somerset

Healthwatch Somerset is the county's independent health and care champion. It exists to ensure that people are at the heart of care. Dedicated teams of staff and volunteers listen to what people like about local health services, and what could be improved. These views are then shared with the decision-making organisations, so together a real difference can be made. Healthwatch Somerset can also help people find the information they need about health and care services in their area.

2. What is Enter and View?

To enable Healthwatch Somerset to gather the information it needs about services, there are times when it is appropriate for Healthwatch to see and hear for themselves how those services are provided. That is why the Government has introduced duties on certain commissioners and providers of health and social care services (with some exceptions) to allow Authorised Healthwatch Representatives to enter premises that service providers own or control to observe the nature and quality of those services.

Healthwatch Enter and View visits are:

- not part of a formal inspection process, neither are they any form of audit
- a way for Healthwatch Somerset to gain a better understanding of local health and social care services by seeing them in operation
- carried out by Authorised Representatives who have received training and been DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checked
- a way for Authorised Representatives to observe the service, talk to service users and staff and make comments and recommendations based on their subjective observations and impressions in the form of a report.

3. Disclaimer

This report relates to this specific visit to the service, at a particular point in time, and is not representative of all service users, only those who contributed. This report is written by the Enter and View authorized representatives who carried out the visit on behalf of Healthwatch Somerset.

Authorised representatives

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About the service visited

Able2achieve Ltd provides supported living and domiciliary care provision. Able2achieve Trust is a not for profit charity that provides day services and 'preparation for work' facilities. Their focus is on provision that enables and progresses learners and that encourages ability rather than disability. Their day service provision is offered at Coombe Farm in Crewkerne and at their Yeovil Office. Healthwatch Somerset visited the Yeovil office where the learners have a communal room to take part in activities, and access to work preparation placements at the Winking Frog coffee shop, Able2Antiques charity shop and Bake-able bakery.

Key findings

We found the services to be welcoming and vibrant. All the learners that we spoke to enjoyed coming to the centre. They were all happy and commented on how much they enjoyed the activities that they took part in. It was clear that they were all proud of their achievements as part of their work preparation placements and that they were offered variety in their daily schedules.

The staff all cared about the learners' experiences and how well they progressed. All the staff we spoke to were enthusiastic and proud to work for Able2achieve.

Purpose of visit/how it was conducted

The announced visit was planned in partnership with Able2achieve to restart Healthwatch Somerset's Enter and View programme. Healthwatch Somerset has an important role in scrutinising services and enabling local people to monitor the quality of service provision. We do this by talking to people who are using these services.

The visit was carried out by five authorised representatives. Information was collected from observations of learners in their day to day situations, and interviews with both staff and learners. The team spoke to four members of senior management, three further staff members and six learners.

Visit overview

We had written to the home stating our intention to conduct a visit on 13 November 2018 at 10.30am. When we arrived, we were warmly welcomed by the Registered Manager and given a room to use for the duration of the visit. We discussed our plans for the visit and we were then given a tour of the office, coffee shop, charity shop and bakery. No restrictions were placed on access, or who we could speak to. In addition to the letter advising that we would be visiting the home, we included posters advertising our intention to visit along with an information sheet for the setting. We saw the visit posters displayed around the office.

The visiting team split into two teams. One team spent some time talking to the support staff and learners in the coffee shop. The other team talked to learners in the communal area. Time was

spent observing the work placements. At the end of the visit the team met to share their findings, and then met with the registered manager to review and discuss the visit.

Observations and findings

1. Interactions

Learners were observed interacting with staff and with the public as part of their work preparation placements.

The team observed that:

- The learners had great confidence to talk to us. None of the learners were prompted by staff when talking to us.
- All learners appeared happy and enjoying their activities.
- Staff were extremely caring about the learners. It was evident that they cared about giving learners opportunity and supporting them in progressing and becoming independent.
- The senior management team are very passionate about creating an environment that helps learners reach their full potential.
- The work preparation placements provide learners with opportunities to interact and integrate with the local community. They build confidence in talking to the public in a supportive environment.
- From the observations made, the team felt that learners are accessing the community in their own terms, making their own choices and being given an opportunity to join in with community life.

2. What users said

We spoke to six learners who were accessing the services on the day we visited.

Day Services

All learners told us how much they enjoyed attending the centre and the activities they get to take part in. They were all passionate about the work they were doing in either the café, bakery, or shop.

They told us that they enjoyed the cooking lessons that are available at the centre (one learner told us how proud he was of a recent Halloween cheesecake he made).

One learner told us that they didn't enjoy one activity at the centre, but that they were able to switch to a different activity.

One learner told us how Able2achieve had supported them to secure a job in Taunton starting in January. Another learner told us how they were supporting him to apply for jobs in local coffee shops.

Supported Living

Three learners talked to us about their experiences of supported living. Two of the learners we spoke to live in a shared house and enjoyed it. They got along and were encouraged, with the support of their carers, to live independently by being supported to do their own shopping and cook their own meals. They also talked to us about their hobbies including playing Xbox, going to the gym and having BBQs in the garden. Another talked to us about how they have been encouraged to come into Yeovil independently on the bus to meet a friend.

We were also given an example of how Able2achieve supported learners to find other suitable learners to live with. A process was explained to us that was taking many months but ensured that relationships were built and that learners were comfortable with the outcome.

Able2achieve have built up relationships with local landlords which appears fundamental in supporting the business aims and objectives.

3. Families

We did not have the opportunity to speak to any relatives of learners, but we did ask the staff about how Able2achieve interact with families. We were told that operation managers have contact with families once a month (unless more needed), and the learners direct support staff and keyworkers contact families on a fortnightly basis (more if needed).

Regular meetings take place with families to update them, and family members can input into these and give feedback. Support staff told us how they have processes in place to work with families when challenging issues arise. They showed persistence and the ability to build relationships that some of our volunteers have not seen elsewhere.

4. What staff said

The staff told us how proud they were to work for Able2achieve. They talked to us about supporting learners to develop goals, progress, gain independence as well as recognising and rewarding their developments.

They talked to us about how much they like and valued the training they had received from Able2achieve.



5. Other comments

The management identified the difficulties they face between health and social care not always working cohesively together. The management also told us that they don't always feel that their innovative ways to progress learners is being supported by Somerset County Council.

Recommendations

The visiting team would like to acknowledge the good work that takes place at Able2achieve.

The visiting team would like Able2achieve to consider the following recommendations which are based on outcomes and findings from the visit:

1. We were extremely impressed with what we saw at Able2achieve. The support provided to learners and staff. This should be continued.
2. Continue to try and enhance a working relationship with other organisations that either provide services to learners on other days, or that could offer more opportunities to their learners i.e. job centre.

Acknowledgements

The Healthwatch Somerset Enter and View team would like to thank the managers, all staff and learners for a friendly welcome, and free access to the premises and activities. Thanks also to our dedicated volunteers who helped support this enter and view visit. In total volunteers gave up approximately eighteen hours.

Provider response

Able2achieve would like to thank the 'Enter and View' team for being approachable, friendly, and enthusiastic. They viewed all areas and seemed genuinely keen to meet staff, learners, questioning and learning about a2a as a provider. Our learners really enjoyed the experience and fed back to staff that they "liked being interviewed and listened to". They felt their voice and opinion was heard and staff alike found the experience a positive one. The staff were initially nervous and anxious about meeting the team; but the team put them at ease. One operations manager said, "they clearly knew what questions to ask and were knowledgeable about our field of work", thus they were able to gain the most from Able2achieve staff, and left staff feeling positive about the service they provide.

This visit gave the staff an opportunity to prepare for our next CQC inspection, and management the chance to receive productive feedback on the service Able2achieve provide. Keeping staff focused on Able2achieve's mission, enabling our learners to achieve and progress through learning, living and work.



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