

Animal Experience Day

I know Sam Wright outside of work and knew she ran a business called The Mobile Mini Zoo. I knew she had been going to some other nursing homes and thought it would be a good idea to try it at Fisher Close and see the reactions of service users.

Sam has experience of working with people with a learning disability.

I found out her availability and arranged for her to come on 27th February at 1pm as this was a quiet day within the diary of the service.



We decided this first instance while we saw how service users reacted, not to initially invite any next of kins, (although one parent was visiting that day and did get involved). For future visits we will extend invitations to family members as it was a very positive experience with the parent present on the day.

Sam arrived with various small animals, and everyone got to hold, touch, or look at the animals. She talked about care of the animals, how they lived, what they ate and made the whole experience very inclusive.



We split the day into groups of under 5 service users at a time so that everyone got individual time and support to enable them to get the most from the day. People that could vocalize which animals they wanted to handle were encouraged to do so.

Facial expressions were closely monitored so that no one became distressed during the experience.



Only one service user became unsettled, and they were assisted to return to their own bungalow. It isn't clear if it was the change of environment or the animals that were the root cause.

We saw lots of smiling and very positive interactions. And we will definitely be booking this again.

Colette Shirley - team leader