

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	30/06/2015
Unique reference number	SC438764
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Potton Homes Ltd
Registered person address	Potton Homes, 1 Cresswell Park, LONDON, SE3 9RD

Responsible individual	Susan Potton
Registered manager	Emma Brady
Inspector	Fiona Littlefield

Inspection date	30/06/2015
Previous inspection judgement	N/A
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.	
how well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
the impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good

SC438764

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Young people are safe and cared for by a skilled leadership team and a nurturing and committed staff group.
- The needs and vulnerabilities of young people are carefully assessed and are matched with risk management strategies. Young people with a history of risk taking behaviour have been helped and supported to keep themselves safe.
- Young people who had previously not been going to school are now achieving high levels of attendance. They are making progress academically and have begun to plan for their future careers.
- Staff are highly motivated. They are provided with good training supervision and support to develop their professional skills.
- The ethos of the home is to promote a restorative approach to managing behaviour. Staff follow this confidently and effectively.
- External agencies and parents express confidence in staff and the care they provide for young people. Staff are skilled at working in partnership with other professionals and this provides a well-integrated service

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Statutory Requirements

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person/s meets the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the *Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards*. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
<p>The registered person must recruit staff that satisfy requirements that —</p> <p>(b) the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform</p> <p>and</p> <p>(d) full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32(3)(b)(d))</p>	07/08/2015
<p>The registered person must ensure that—</p> <p>within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes-</p> <p>(iv) a description of the measure and its duration;</p> <p>(vii) a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result of the measure. (Regulation 35(3)(a)(iv)(viii))</p>	07/08/2015
<p>6: The quality and purpose of care standard</p> <p>In order to meet the quality and purpose of care standard the registered provider must:</p> <p>2(c) ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home</p>	07/08/2015

are designed and furnished so as to—

(i) meet the needs of each child; and

(ii) enable each child to participate in the daily life of the home.

Full report

Information about this children's home

This home provides long-term and task centred care to a maximum of six male or female young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties. This is one of two residential services operated by this privately run organisation in addition to a school adjacent to this home.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/10/2014	CH - Interim	Sustained effectiveness
25/06/2014	CH - Full	Good
19/02/2014	CH - Interim	Satisfactory Progress
16/08/2013	CH - Full	Good

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
<p>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</p>	<p>Good</p>
<p>Young people have made good progress in this home because they have benefitted from warm and trusting relationships with key members of staff who spend time with them and get to know them well. For instance, when young people return from school, they all meet with staff in the lounge to talk about their day, discuss any events and exchange news. This is a regular low key meeting and a way of settling them down before the evening.</p> <p>Mealtimes are another important event. All young people and staff meet for the evening meal. Young people have had a significant role in choosing the menu and are often involved in preparation. As a member of staff said 'this is as near to home from home as we can get'. Issues, grumbles and observations occur naturally and consequently young people feel part of a group that is interested in them and where they feel they count.</p> <p>Young people make progress in their education. Most young people have full time educational provision but where this is not the case, the allocated social worker and staff member at the home challenge this vigorously. Some young people attend the educational provision attached to the home where they have achieved very high attendance levels. This is striking given that, prior to coming to the home, some were school refusers. All young people are assessed on arrival and their education is designed to meet their particular needs and abilities. The head teacher and staff are ambitious that all young people achieve their potential. Winning over the young person can take time but the rewards are striking as young people gain self-confidence. The parents of one young person said 'she is unrecognisable from this time last year thanks to you and your hard work'.</p> <p>School staff also value the skills that young people acquire that they will need in adult life, and have approached this is approached in an imaginative way. For instance pupils attended a session at the school about healthy eating and budgeting which was run by a well-known contestant from a TV cookery programme. Young people enjoyed this unusual presentation which boosted their interest and helped them learn.</p> <p>While educational progress is a priority, staff in the home promote young people's creative talents. They have access to an exciting range of activities including going to a recording studio. Several young people are talented singers so the opportunity to experience this has boosted their self-esteem. As a member of staff said 'they aren't robots. They benefit from the creative side of things such as drama, music</p>	

and art. It makes them feel special'. In addition, young people are signed up to local groups and community activities such as the police and army cadets, going to the local gym, sports activities and after school clubs. All activities are risk assessed. Some young people benefit most from the chance to spend some time with their key worker, going for a walk or having a coffee locally. Social workers and parents have commented on the positive relationships that staff have developed with the young people.

Some young people are being prepared for adult life through a special group where they work through a range of tasks. All achievements are rewarded and recognised with rewards, certificates and praise. This is important for young people whose self-esteem has been damaged. They need reassurance that they have something to offer and will be able to cope when they need to be independent.

Where young people need extra specialist help such as play therapy or the provision of a mentor, this is integrated into the young person's care. This has been arranged with considerable success and demonstrates that staff are willing to consider any help which may benefit the young person. A play therapist said about a young person 'the combination of a caring home, a caring school and therapy are starting to help him engage in life more fully'. This reflects a confident response from a home that place young people at the centre of their practice.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
<p>Young people say they feel safe and are cared for by staff who know their needs and vulnerabilities and follow clear plans to protect them. They know how to complain formally but also have confidence that any concerns will be responded to openly and in a timely fashion. For instance, a 'Grumble's Book', is kept in the hallway where it is accessible to all young people and they can use this to register any issues they want resolved. Consequently young people have confidence that their concerns are taken seriously.</p> <p>When young people are first referred to the home their needs and vulnerabilities are identified and matched with clear management strategies. Young people are also involved in the discussion about the new arrival and have proved perceptive and sympathetic about the pressure that someone new may feel. As a result arrangements to welcome someone new reflect the efforts of both staff and young people in the home. This coordinated approach can help moderate the stress that someone new may be feeling.</p> <p>Young people's risk assessments are reviewed every month by key workers and</p>	

shared regularly with the staff group at weekly team meetings. As a result, in a crisis, staff know exactly what to do and respond in a consistent and measured way. For instance, some young people are at risk of going missing. Each young person has an individual risk assessment for this behaviour which outlines the steps staff should take. In all cases, young people are challenged about their behaviour and to consider the impact on themselves and the other young people and staff. This has led to a decrease in the instances of missing from care and a significant reduction in instances of police involvement. In some cases, young people have been assessed as being at risk of CSE. Staff have responded with a combination of clear boundaries and an intensive focus on developing their self-esteem. This has led to a dramatic reduction in episodes of going missing.

However, there are occasions when police involvement cannot be avoided. Again the ethos of the home is to focus on a restorative approach and avoid unnecessary criminalisation. Staff at the home understand that the challenging behaviour of some young people is a reflection of their experiences and inner conflict. In some cases, they have been offered a programme with the Youth Offending Service who come to the home to work on an individual basis. If successful and the young person engages with the youth offending worker, the matter can be resolved outside any criminal proceedings.

Positive behaviour is consistently promoted by staff who know the young people and their individual routines well. All young people are expected to attend school and daily routines such as bed and meal times support this. Each young person has a weekly chart that measures progress in individual goals and this is completed by their key worker. They can earn a small financial reward which they can either save up or spend in agreement with their key worker.

Episodes of negative behaviour are used creatively by staff team to help young people to understand the consequences of their behaviour. For instance, recording of sanctions includes the young person's views, and comments on the effectiveness of the measure taken. Incidents of bullying have significantly reduced by the imaginative use of the time young people spend together. One member of staff said 'we adapted their activities so they got to know each-other and now it's better, they watch TV and come to house meetings where they talk about their day.'

The emphasis on the restorative approach has meant that incidents of physical restraint have reduced as young people are able to take more responsibility for their actions. However, there are shortfalls in the recording of incidents of restraint with particular reference to the views of young people and whether medical treatment was offered. The individual incident reports add some detail which is not included in the central record. This can affect the ability of the Registered Manager to accurately review and manage these incidents.

It is central to the ethos of the home that all young people should be safe and staff

receive regular training in safeguarding and child protection procedures. This acts as a framework for their practice and they are confident that they would respond appropriately to any child protection or safeguarding concern in the home. In addition, along with colleagues from the school they have attended training given by the police on internet safety. Staff are aware of the dangers of internet abuse and advise young people robustly about this.

Shortfalls in the recruitment files have been identified. The Registered Manager is aware of this and has liaised with the company headquarters to ensure that staff files held in the home are complete.

The home is comfortable and homely with a number of personal touches chosen by the young people. Any repairs or maintenance are responded in a timely manner by the Registered Manager who promotes the contribution of relaxed and cosy environment for the well-being of young people. However, the back garden does not match the attractive presentation of the home itself. It would be used more for social events and as extra space for the young people if this were made more comfortable.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
<p>Staff and managers in this home demonstrate commitment and enthusiasm to the care of young people in the home. The Registered Manager has been qualified at NVQ Level 4 for nearly five years and has significant experience in this field. Staff are ambitious and well qualified with the majority already qualified at NVQ Level 3. The remainder are already on the NVQ course and due to finish this year. This means that the team operates at a highly professional level.</p> <p>Managers use feedback from a range of sources to monitor quality of care provided. This includes direct feedback from the young people and their families, social workers and external agencies. Staff and the management team learn from complaints, placement successes and breakdowns and can comment in detail on the progress of each young person. External agencies have commented very positively on the willingness of workers to make themselves known to school staff and work in a coordinated way. One head teacher said 'we have all been working together to build up his confidence. He is starting mainstream school soon; this is dramatic progress given his starting point'.</p> <p>Staff and managers will advocate vigorously with both parents and local authorities on behalf of young people. For instance, if they feel that decisions do not adequately reflect the emotional impact on a young person and their families, staff</p>	

will challenge this assertively and robustly. Parents acknowledge the improvement that their young people have made and, on the whole, the dialogue with staff has been supportive and positive. As a consequence, the interests of young people are more fully represented and they feel supported.

The impact of this work on staff, who are expected to manage and sustain a highly professional approach, can be intense. Managers are aware of this and the need to develop a cohesive staff approach. Staff meetings are the opportunity to focus on the individual young people and review and discuss effective strategies. Staff have been assisted in this by the attendance of a child psychotherapist who reviews the progress of young people and suggests alternative ways of working. Staff have found this particularly helpful 'we can work on anything a young person might say or do to make sense of it. It is so easy to say the wrong thing and it helps avoid making mistakes'. In addition, staff use daily handover meetings and communication books to review daily progress. As a result, the care that young people receive is sustained and consistent.

The management team drives a consistent plan for improvement. The Registered Manager has written a detailed developmental plan which sets out areas of strength and identifies aspirational targets to provide high quality care and education. Ultimately all training is assessed in regard to the impact that this has on the ability of staff to care for young people. For instance, in addition to discussions about individual young people, staff meetings are also used for professional development, where staff are asked to prepare a short presentation on a particular policy for the group. This leads to a sense of shared ownership amongst staff of how to approach the care of young people.

Staff receive monthly supervision but are clear that additional sessions are always available at short notice. Staff understand their roles and delegated responsibilities and are confident that they could get advice if they need it. They are highly motivated and ambitious for their own professional development. A member of the staff group maintains a training matrix which records training for individual workers including when refresher courses are due. As a result, staff keep up to date with their professional practice and young people are safe and protected at all times

What the inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

An **outstanding** children's home provides highly effective services that contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help and protection and care. Their progress exceeds expectations and is sustained over time.

A **good** children's home provides effective services that help, protect and care for children and young people and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

In a children's home that **requires improvement**, there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. The welfare of looked after children is safeguarded and promoted. Minimum requirements are in place, however, the children's home is not yet delivering good protection, help and care for children and young people.

A children's home that is **inadequate** is providing services where there are widespread or serious failures that create or leave children and young people being harmed or at risk of harm or result in children looked after not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people living in the children's home. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference adults make to the lives of children and young people. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with children, young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care given to children and young people. Wherever possible, they talked to children, young people and their families. In addition the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people who it is trying to help, protect and look after.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service and to consider how well it complies with the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the *Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards*.

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Summary for children and young people

Name of children's home: Ocean View Lodge

URN: SC438764

Date of inspection: 30 June 2015

Hello again,

Firstly I want to say how much I enjoyed meeting you all when I came to inspect your home. I enjoyed meeting you and spending some time with you.

I have judged your home as providing you with a good service. This means that I think that you all benefit from being in the home and that you have all made progress in different ways. You are all going to school and achieving success in your education. I was also very impressed how were developing your creative talents such as singing and drama. This is a real credit to you.

I think that staff at the home are committed and enthusiastic. They know you well and are ambitious for you and your future.

I have asked for some improvements mainly around recording of incidents so that staff can monitor any risks consistently. I have also asked if the garden could be improved so that you can use it more regularly.

I wish you all the very best in the future.

Fiona

