

SC393940

Registered provider: Potton Homes Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately owned children's home provides residential care to six children, aged eight to 17 years on admission, who have a diagnosed learning disability. The suitably qualified and experienced manager has been registered with Ofsted since 2013.

Inspection dates: 9 to 10 May 2018

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected requires improvement to be good

The effectiveness of leaders and managers requires improvement to be good

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 4 October 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/10/2017	Full	Good
30/01/2017	Full	Outstanding
18/05/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness

19/01/2016

Full

Good

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to meet 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 within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
<p>The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that—</p> <p>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and</p> <p>promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b)(2)(h))</p> <p>In particular, when significant building works are being undertaken ensure that documented risk management plans are in place and identify how health and safety arrangements at the home will be managed. Additionally, ensure that internal monitoring arrangements are effective.</p>	25/06/2018
<p>If the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005(a) applies to the home—</p> <p>the registered person must ensure that the requirements of that Order and any regulations made under it, except for article 23 (duties of employees), are complied with in respect of the home. (Regulation 25 (2)(b))</p>	21/05/2018
<p>The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety.</p> <p>The registered person may only—</p> <p>employ an individual to work at the children's home; or</p> <p>if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the</p>	25/06/2018

<p>individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home,</p> <p>if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3).</p> <p>The requirements are that—</p> <p>the individual is of integrity and good character;</p> <p>the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform;</p> <p>the individual is mentally and physically fit for the purposes of the work that the individual is to perform; and</p> <p>full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1)(2)(a)(b)(3)(a)(b)(c)(d))</p>	
<p>The registered person must—</p> <p>ensure that each employee—</p> <p>completes an appropriate induction;</p> <p>undertakes appropriate continuing professional development;</p> <p>receives practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (1)(a)(4)(a)(b))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that all employees receive appropriate documented induction and sufficiently regular supervision and training that equips them effectively for their role.</p>	23/07/2018
<p>The registered person must notify, without delay, the local authority for the area in which the children’s home is located of every admission of a child into the home and every discharge of a child from the home.</p> <p>The registered person is not required to notify the local authority in paragraph (1) if that local authority is also the placing authority for the child in question.</p> <p>A notification under this regulation must be in writing and must state—</p> <p>the child’s name and date of birth;</p>	25/06/2018

whether the child is provided with accommodation under section 20 or 21 of the Children Act 1989(a);

whether the child is subject to a care or supervision order under section 31 of the Children Act 1989(b);

the contact details for—
the child's placing authority; and
the independent reviewing officer appointed for the child's case;
and

whether the child has an EHC plan or a statement of special educational needs and, if so, details of the local authority with responsibility for the EHC plan or for maintaining the statement of special educational needs. (Regulation 41 (1)(2)(3)(a)(b)(c)(d)(i)(ii)(e))

Recommendations

- Ensure that all incidents of control, discipline and restraint are subject to systems of regular scrutiny to ensure that their use is fair and the principles as set out in 9.35 are respected. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.36)

In particular, ensure that records consistently evidence that the threshold for restraint is met, that children are provided with the opportunity to discuss their feelings post restraint and that the effectiveness of the measure is reviewed. Furthermore, ensure that a suitable review of each incident of restraint is reviewed by someone who was not involved in, or witness to, the incident.

- Ensure that staff understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The manager has not maintained her previously strong oversight of the home. Consequently, a number of shortfalls have been identified and associated requirements and recommendations set during this inspection. However, the care and support that the children receive remains strong, and most children make good progress from their starting points. Parents rate the home as good to brilliant. One parent said, 'I feel that she [the child] came a long way when she was there.' One professional said, 'They [the

staff] consistently provide outstanding outcomes for the children. They do what they say on the tin and make a positive change in the children's lives.'

The consistency of staffing helps the children to feel safe and settled in their environment. The children develop strong bonds with the staff. For example, one child on their return from school ran in to tell staff all about their day, and give big hugs to their key worker. The child said their key worker was their favourite, but said that all of the staff are nice.

The children are well supported by the staff to develop their skills and maintain optimum health. The staff have been imaginative in working with their local health surgery, developing social stories that include photographs of the surgery and its staff. The staff are also planning visits for a child to meet the surgery staff. It is anticipated that the visit will help reduce the stress of medical appointments for the child. One child was supported by staff to attend a well-being programme. This now young adult continues to maintain the positive life changes following their move to adult residential services.

The staff implement particular recommended practices, such as sensory diet and intensive interaction, following guidance from occupational and speech therapists. The staff are currently reviewing how they can better promote the children's use of communication systems in partnership with school. The staff help the children to make choices and have control over decisions about their day-to-day care. For example, one child chooses each afternoon which member of staff they would like to read them a story and settle them at bedtime.

The children enjoy a variety of fun activities promoting resilience, independence skills and a better understanding of the world around them. Their favourites include lots of clubs such as rugby, trampolining and swimming, and long walks along the beach. One child talked about their recent holiday and their love for the big roller coaster. Personalised photograph books help the children remember and share these memorable moments. One professional said, 'They [the staff] have made a huge difference. They've enabled her [the child] to access opportunities and experiences that she wouldn't otherwise enjoy.'

The staff are child focused and speak warmly about the children. This is commented on by the professionals who work with the home. One professional said, 'They [the staff] really "get her" [the child], and have her best interests at heart.' Another said, 'The staff genuinely like and appreciate her [the child] for who she is.'

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

The staff understand the home's policies and procedures for safeguarding, and are keenly aware that keeping children safe is their core duty. The manager ensures that any issues of concern are fully investigated under the guidance of the designated officer.

Although the staff receive training in safeguarding, it does not cover the needs of children who have disabilities. Consequently, the staff may not have a good understanding of the particular issues that can increase disabled children's vulnerability.

Staff recruitment procedures are generally robust. However, on occasion employment dates are not scrutinised effectively. This means that there is potential for gaps in employment to be missed, and limits the manager's ability to robustly scrutinise the applicants' suitability.

The building is well maintained, and a programme of refurbishment is under way. Builders are on site each day. However, there is no documented risk assessment and management plan detailing how these works will be overseen. In practice, this has had no negative effect on the children. The individuals concerned have been subject to checks and do not work unsupervised when the children are home. However, it does mean that there is potential for a lack of clear and shared understanding between staff on the suitability of the arrangements and the actions that they should take to promote the children's safety.

Fire prevention arrangements are not consistently robust. The integrity of one fire door is compromised, two did not close properly and a number of fire doors had the intumescent strips painted over, which may prevent the doors from sealing to reduce the travel of toxic smoke in the event of a fire. The provider took immediate appropriate action during the inspection to implement improved interim and long-term fire prevention arrangements.

Restraint holds are carefully considered in light of each of the children's particular needs. One child said that they feel safe when they have been physically restrained. However, the records of restraint are not consistently maintained to a good standard. Some of the records lack clarity and on occasion basic information, such as when the restraint took place, is not recorded. The manager reviews all incidents of restraint. This included one occasion when she was involved in the restraint. There has not been consistently effective and objective management review of the records. This has had no impact on the children but limits effective reflection. Therefore, the manager's ability to contribute to meeting the ongoing and changing needs of the children is potentially undermined. The manager has very recently begun challenging the record of these incidents to drive improvement.

Behaviour management strategies are appropriate and make a positive difference for most children. Individual behaviour management plans are detailed and provide helpful guidance to staff. The staff are suitably trained in de-escalation and breakaway techniques. Some staff are highly skilled at engaging children who are heightened, helping them return to a calm state. The staff have worked in partnership with professionals to understand the children's behaviour. A psychiatrist described the staff team as having developed a really great understanding of a child's behaviour.

The positive relationships that the staff develop with the children and the maintenance of regular routines help the children feel safe. Families and partner professionals have absolute confidence in the staff to keep the children safe. One parent said, 'She [the

child] still misses it. She loved it there.' Another parent said, 'He [the child] is happy there. They definitely have his best interests at heart.'

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The registered manager has failed to maintain the expected levels of oversight. As a result, systems at the home are not effective and the home is not currently delivering the quality of care that it aspires to within its statement of purpose.

Internal quality monitoring systems are not sufficiently robust as they have failed to identify the shortfalls. The manager has not consistently acted on the recommendations of the independent visitor.

Recording systems are generally adequate, but on occasion do not meet basic standards. For example, the records of non-prescribed medication were not signed on two occasions. It is therefore not clear which staff were responsible for the administration of the medication. Furthermore, staff do not consistently follow the communication systems that have been developed to ensure that they are aware of changes in risk management and care plans.

Staff feel well supported and say that they know what their responsibilities are. However, individual supervision and performance management arrangements are not consistently effective. For example, as part of a safeguarding management plan it was identified that a member of staff would receive weekly supervision for four weeks. This did not take place. Supervision records are not consistently signed by either supervisor or supervisee. Consequently, it is not clear whether the document is agreed as an accurate record of the matters discussed.

New staff do not consistently receive effective and documented induction. Most but not all staff undertake training in areas such as food hygiene and working with children who have learning disabilities. Most of the staff have not undertaken training in respect of the particular challenges of safeguarding children who have disabilities. Staff are not able to work to the best of their ability when they do not receive good levels of support and training.

The manager has not always ensured that the host authority has been notified of changes to the resident group. This means that the local authority in which the home is situated does not have an accurate picture of which children are placed in the area.

The home is well respected by the children's families and most partner agencies. They have confidence that each of the children receive high-quality individualised care. Although a number of requirements have been set, the children continue to receive care and support that meets their needs and promotes their life experiences.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and 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 whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

Using the 'Social care common inspection framework', this inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service, how it meets the core functions of the service as set out in legislation, 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'.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC393940

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Potton Homes Ltd

Registered provider address: Potton Homes, 1 Cresswell Park, Blackheath, London SE3 9RD

Responsible individual: Susan Potton

Registered manager: Emma Donnelly

Inspector

Joanna Heller, social care inspector

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