



HORTON  
EDUCATION AND CARE

# Ofsted Report Southlands Hall & Lodge



THE OFFICE FOR STANDARDS IN EDUCATION,  
CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND SKILLS

## Children's homes inspection – Full

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>25 April 2016</b>
<b>Unique reference number</b>	<b>SC413987</b>
<b>Type of inspection</b>	<b>Full</b>
<b>Provision subtype</b>	<b>Children's home</b>
<b>Registered person</b>	<b>Horton Establishments Ltd</b>
<b>Registered person address</b>	<b>372 Chanterlands Avenue, Hull HU5 4ED</b>

<b>Responsible individual</b>	<b>Joan Appleby</b>
<b>Registered manager</b>	<b>Michael Wren</b>
<b>Inspector</b>	<b>Simon Morley</b>

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>25 April 2016</b>
<b>Previous inspection judgement</b>	<b>Improved effectiveness</b>
<b>Enforcement action since last inspection</b>	<b>None</b>
<b>This inspection</b>	
<b>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</b>	<b>Good</b>
The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.	
<b>How well children and young people are helped and protected</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>	<b>Good</b>

## SC413987

### Summary of findings

#### **The children's home provision is good because:**

- Children make good progress. They achieve well at school and take part in different social and leisure activities, which develop their social skills and boost their confidence.
- Staff build positive, trusting relationships with children, effectively promoting their emotional well-being.
- Children benefit from the stability that staff provide through consistent and nurturing care. Staff are committed, and persevere despite the challenges that the children may present.
- Children are safe. Missing from home incidents are very rare. The risks of child sexual exploitation, offending behaviour, and alcohol and substance misuse are extremely low.
- Leadership and management are strong, with a clear vision for continuous improvement, and they are focused on children's needs.
- The manager is developing an effective and motivated staff team to provide the best outcomes for the children.

## 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 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 must comply with the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
<p>13. The leadership and management standard.</p> <p>In order to meet the leadership and management standard, in particular to develop care strategies that effectively address recognised trigger points such as Monday afternoons, the registered person must-</p> <p>(2)(f) understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home.</p>	30 June 2016
<p>The system referred to in paragraph (2) must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff (Regulation 45 (5)).</p>	30 June 2016

### Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further, the service should take account of the following recommendations:

- Staff need to have the knowledge and skills to understand each child's education and training targets and their next steps for learning. The ethos of the home should support each child to learn, emphasising the value of independent study and reading for enjoyment. The home must make available suitable facilities, equipment and resources for learning and ensure that the home’s routines do not form barriers to children wishing to use the home’s resources to study. Staff must support children with home study by encouraging them to learn independent study skills and helping them to practice those skills (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, pages 28 and 29, paragraphs 5.11 and 5.18).
- The registered person must specify the procedures to be followed, and the roles and responsibilities of staff, when a child is missing from care or away from the home without permission and how staff should support the child on return to the home (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality

standards', page 45, paragraph 9.28). In particular, the registered person must ensure that all children have a written, individual, missing from home protocol.

- The registered person should only accept placements for children where they are satisfied that the home can respond effectively to the child's assessed needs as recorded in the child's relevant plans, and where they have fully considered the impact that the placement will have on the existing group of children ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 56, paragraph 11.4).

## Full report

### Information about this children's home

The home is privately run. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for eight children, irrespective of gender, who have learning disabilities and associated emotional and behavioural difficulties. There is a main building which can accommodate up to six children. In the grounds there is a separate building, called The Lodge, which can accommodate up to two children. Currently all children in the home are boys and The Lodge caters for children with more autistic needs.

The provider runs a school for children with special educational needs and all the boys attend this school alongside day pupils.

### Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
27 January 2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
19 October 2015	Full	Good
4 March 2015	Full	Adequate
5 January 2015	Full	Inadequate

## Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
<p><b>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</b></p>	<p><b>Good</b></p>
<p>All the boys have positive experiences and make good progress, taking into account their needs and the length of time that they have been at the home. Staff work hard to provide a caring and nurturing environment, which has a beneficial impact on the resilience and self-esteem of the boys.</p> <p>The boys experience stability from staff, who are persistent and committed to helping them to succeed, despite the challenging emotional and behavioural needs of the boys. Over time, the boys learn to trust, and form positive attachments to, the adults who care for them. This emotional security helps them to improve their behaviour and to successfully adapt to the routines and expectations that contribute to their positive outcomes.</p> <p>All of the boys have very good school attendance and make good progress across a range of subjects. There is good integration between care and education staff, which is focused on improving the emotional well-being and behaviour of the boys. This joined-up approach is not as well developed when it comes to promoting the boys' learning at home. This reduces the opportunities for them to benefit from home study and reading for fun.</p> <p>The boys receive good support to live healthy lifestyles and to manage any health conditions. Most of them partake in regular exercise and enjoy the physical activities that they take part in. Healthy diets are encouraged, and staff are sensitive in helping boys who are overweight. All of the boys access primary healthcare services, and staff ensure that check-ups and health assessments are kept up to date. The manager ensures that regular medication reviews take place, successfully helping children to reduce the amount of medication prescribed to them. Where necessary, the boys access specialist services, such as those provided by a child psychologist and a dietician.</p> <p>The boys have a say in the day-to-day running of the home. They choose what to eat and enjoy helping with meal preparation, cooking and baking. They follow their chosen interests and hobbies, which include football, rugby, army cadets, a science club and drama. There are regular house meetings and the new deputy manager is developing a key-working system to promote the 'voice of the child' even further.</p> <p>Staff encourage the boys to help with domestic chores, such as laundry, keeping their rooms tidy and cooking. As they mature, they become more independent. For example, one of the boys has learned to travel by himself to his social activities.</p>	

The manager has introduced a new independence assessment format to provide more structure to promoting the boys' skills.

Staff promote regular family contact, which the boys enjoy. Some go home every weekend to stay with their birth families or carers. For the others, staff support regular face-to-face contact with a range of relatives. There are also good opportunities for frequent telephone contact. This promotes the boys identity and maintains their important family relationships.

	Judgement grade
<b>How well children and young people are helped and protected</b>	<b>Good</b>
<p>The boys are safe in this home. None of them are at risk from child sexual exploitation or radicalisation. Staff have received training on these and other safeguarding matters to ensure that they have an understanding of child protection issues. Compared to the times before boys' admissions, incidents of missing from home are rare. There are no concerns about substance and alcohol misuse and the boys do not smoke.</p> <p>Staff provide children with clear expectations of behaviour, setting out appropriate boundaries. They manage conflict between the boys with sensitivity and positive reinforcement, trying to limit the use of sanctions as a consequence. Generally, this helps them to get along better with each other and reduces the levels of challenging behaviour. Physical restraint of the boys is infrequent. This measure is a last resort to keep them and/or others safe. The boys are included in discussions about their behaviour to find alternative coping strategies for difficult situations. The manager monitors this practice, ensuring that it is safe and appropriate.</p> <p>While there is no bullying, there are times when the boys fall out with each other. Staff are quick to respond to these incidents and they make sure that the boys are safe and well. The manager and staff recognise that at certain times the boys are more disruptive, such as after school on a Monday. It would be beneficial for the boys if staff developed more effective care strategies to make these times more peaceful.</p> <p>There has only been one missing from home incident since the last inspection. Staff took appropriate action, making sure that the boys involved returned to the home safely. The use of written, individual, missing from home protocols would better inform future practice. This would help to make it clear for all staff what specific action needs to be taken for each boy.</p> <p>The management team generally considers admissions of children very carefully, to</p>	

avoid an unnecessary negative impact on the boys already living there. On one very recent occasion, the decision making did not reflect a thorough and robust approach. A referral risk assessment was completed, but consideration of 'matching' or assessment of the impact had not been fully deliberated. Potentially, this can compromise the current environment for all the boys. High staffing levels and the initial plans in place to meet this boy's needs limit this shortfall.

Robust recruitment practices help to protect the boys by ensuring that only safe and suitable staff are employed. The children live in a homely, clean and safe environment with plenty of indoor and outdoor space. The manager is taking further steps to improve the decor and furnishings of the dining room to make this area more child-friendly. Children have personalised their own bedrooms, the majority of which are exceptionally spacious, and some are well equipped with en suite facilities.

	Judgement grade
<b>The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>	<b>Good</b>
<p>The registered manager is an experienced, well-qualified individual who has been in post since March 2015. A new deputy has recently been appointed, who brings a wealth of experience and strengthens the management arrangements. Between them, they have a strong vision for improving the service, and they are constantly striving to make things better for the boys.</p> <p>The manager knows the strengths and weaknesses of the service and he encourages staff to be exemplary in their roles. The requirement from the last inspection has been met, as the revised children's guide is now complete with the boys' input and views. This provides them with key information about the home, but retains the provider's corporate style and presentation. The guide has not fully embraced a child-centred theme in order to encourage children to read it.</p> <p>Staff have a wide range of experience, skills and abilities. They complete a thorough induction, undertake relevant training, and receive good support from the manager. This is reinforced by effective supervision and team meetings, so that individually and as a team they provide the boys with good quality support. They work effectively, giving children consistency, stability and a secure base.</p> <p>The manager has systems in place to monitor the boys' quality of care. He also has a strong visible presence. He uses his observations of staff practice to help them to reflect on how they could further improve and be more effective as a team to give the boys the best care. There is additional oversight of the management of the home by an independent visitor. Her monthly visits and reports assist the manager</p>	

in complying with regulations and considering areas for improvement.

The manager's six-monthly written reviews of the service do not fully meet regulations. There is not sufficient consideration of how the views of children, their parents and placing authorities contribute to improving practice. The impact of this is minimised by the good day-to-day communication with parents, carers, and social workers about the boys. In addition, the boys' progress is captured in monthly reports that are shared with social workers.

The manager and staff work in close partnership with families, placing authorities and other agencies. The manager ensures that any issues in communication are addressed and keeps those important to the boys updated about their progress and any incidents. He challenges partner agencies with regard to any shortfalls in the support that children receive. He is a strong advocate for the boys and is committed to making sure that they get the best care from all involved in their lives.

## 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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