

R G Care Ltd

# Sands Lodge

## Inspection report

15 Kings Road  
Westcliff On Sea  
Essex  
SS0 8LL

Tel: 01702340501

Date of inspection visit:  
15 May 2017

Date of publication:  
05 June 2017

### Ratings

Overall rating for this service

Good ●

Is the service safe?

Good ●

Is the service effective?

Good ●

Is the service caring?

Good ●

Is the service responsive?

Good ●

Is the service well-led?

Good ●

# Summary of findings

## Overall summary

We inspected Sands Lodge on the 15 May 2017.

The service provides accommodation and support for up to 18 people with mental health issues. There were 18 people living at the service at the time of our inspection.

At our last inspection the service was rated as Good. At this inspection we found the service remained Good.

The service was safe. Care and treatment was planned and delivered in a way that was intended to ensure people's safety and welfare. People were cared for safely by staff who had been recruited and employed after appropriate checks had been completed. People's needs were met by sufficient numbers of staff. Medication was dispensed by staff who had received training to do so.

The service was effective. People were cared for and supported by staff who had received training to support people to meet their needs. The registered manager had a good understanding of their responsibilities in relation to the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards. People were supported to have maximum choice and control of their lives and staff supported them in the least restrictive way possible. People were supported with their nutritional needs and had access to healthcare when required.

The service was caring. Staff cared for people in an empathetic and kind manner. Staff had a good understanding of people's preferences of care. People's care was individually planned for their needs.

The service was responsive. People and their relatives were involved in the planning and review of their care. Care plans were reviewed on a regular basis and also when there was a change in care needs. People were supported to follow their interests and participate in social activities. The registered manager responded to complaints received in a timely manner.

The service was well-led. The service had systems in place to monitor and provide good care and these were reviewed on a regular basis.

## The five questions we ask about services and what we found

We always ask the following five questions of services.

### Is the service safe?

The service remains Good.

Good ●

### Is the service effective?

The service remains Good.

Good ●

### Is the service caring?

The service remains Good.

Good ●

### Is the service responsive?

The service remains Good.

Good ●

### Is the service well-led?

The service remains Good.

Good ●

# Sands Lodge

## **Detailed findings**

### Background to this inspection

We carried out this inspection under Section 60 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 as part of our regulatory functions. This inspection was planned to check whether the provider is meeting the legal requirements and regulations associated with the Health and Social Care Act 2008, to look at the overall quality of the service, and to provide a rating for the service under the Care Act 2014.

This inspection took place on the 15 May 2017 and was unannounced. The inspection team consisted of one inspector.

Before the inspection, the provider completed a Provider Information Return (PIR). This is a form that asks the provider to give some key information about the service, what the service does well and improvements they plan to make. We reviewed previous reports and notifications that are held on the CQC database. Notifications are important events that the service has to let the CQC know about by law. We also reviewed safeguarding alerts and information received from a local authority.

During our inspection we spoke with seven people, the registered manager, a senior care worker and two care workers. We reviewed five care files, three staff recruitment files and their support records, audits and policies held at the service.

## Is the service safe?

### Our findings

At this inspection we found the same level of protection from abuse, harm and risks as at the previous inspection and the rating continues to be Good.

People told us that they felt safe living at the service. One person said, "It's good here, you won't find anything wrong." Another person said, "I feel safe here, the staff make you feel safe."

Staff knew how to keep people safe and protect them from safeguarding concerns. Staff were trained and able to identify how people may be at risk of harm or abuse and what they could do to protect them. In addition staff were aware that the service had a safeguarding policy to follow and a 'whistle-blowing' policy. We saw the registered manager displayed external numbers and helplines that staff and people could call if they had a safeguarding concern. In addition staff told us that they had a safeguarding champion to promote people's safety and well-being. One member of staff said, "If I had a safeguarding concern I would tell the manager, if it was not dealt with I would go to the area manager. If needed I would go outside to the police or CQC." The registered manager had raised safeguarding's appropriately and worked with the local authority to ensure these were investigated and that people protected.

The registered manager supported people to manage their finances and where people's finances were protected by the court of protection under guardianship, we saw detailed accounts were kept.

Staff recruited were suitable for the role they were employed for and the provider had a robust process in place. Files contained records of interviews, appropriate references, proof of identity and Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks. This check ensured staff were suitable to work with vulnerable people. Staff told us that there were enough staff working to ensure people had all the support they needed including accessing the community and external appointments. One member of staff said, "We like to support everyone to go out each day if they want to go out." People we spoke with told us that there were enough staff available to support their needs.

Staff had the information they needed to support people safely. Staff undertook risk assessments to keep people safe. These assessments identified how people could be supported to maintain their independence. The assessment covered access to the kitchen and using appliances, road safety, managing money, environmental risks and challenging behaviour. Risk management processes were intended to enable people to continue to enjoy things that they wanted to do rather than being restrictive. Staff demonstrated a good awareness of areas of risk for individuals and told us how people were supported to manage the risks. For example one person rated how safe they felt on a scale of one to ten; depending on their self-rating the staff knew how much support they needed at that time and adjusted their intervention to meet their needs. Staff were trained in first aid and if there was a medical emergency they would call the emergency services. Staff also received training on how to respond to fire alerts at the service.

People were cared for in a safe environment. The registered manager ensured there were regular risk assessments completed of the premises and equipment used and there was an emergency contingency

plan in place should there be an event that effected the running of the service. This included having a grab bag containing important information that could be taken in the event of the service being evacuated. For day to day repairs and refurbishment the registered manager used the provider's maintenance service.

People received their medication safely and as prescribed. The service had effective systems for the ordering, booking in, storing and disposing of medicines. Medication administration records were in good order. Medication was stored safely and securely. Senior staff who had received training in medication administration dispensed the medication to people. The registered manager observed staff practice regularly when administering medication to ensure they maintained their standards. People were encouraged to manage their own medication and to work towards taking their medication independently, one person told us, "I have my medication in my room." We saw that the registered manager had policies and procedures in place to support people to self-medicate safely.

## Is the service effective?

### Our findings

At this inspection, we found staff had the same level of skill, experience and support to enable them to meet people's needs effectively, as we found at our previous inspection. People continued to have freedom of choice and were supported with their dietary and health needs. The rating continues to be Good.

The registered manager ensured staff had the correct training and skills to perform their roles. The service used a mixture of on-line, written and face to face training. One member of staff said, "I have recently done a team leading course." People told us that they felt staff had the right training one person said, "Staff are always training usually in the afternoon." New staff were supported with a full induction to the service and were supervised by more experienced staff during their induction. Staff told us that they felt supported by the management team and had regular opportunities to reflect on their practice and to discuss the running of the service during staff meetings and supervision sessions. The registered manager also completed a yearly appraisal on staff performance and identified goals with them for the up-coming year.

People who lack mental capacity to consent to arrangements for necessary care or treatment can only be deprived of their liberty when this is in their best interests and legally authorised under the Mental Capacity Act (MCA). The procedures for this in care homes and hospitals are called the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS).

Staff knew how to support people in making decisions, even if these could be perceived as unwise and knew how people's ability to make informed decisions can change and fluctuate from time to time. The registered manager took the required action to protect people's rights and ensure people received the care and support they needed. Staff had received training in MCA and DoLS, and had a good understanding of the Act. Nobody at the service was detained under a DoLS and we saw people could enter and leave the service freely. Where people lacked capacity to manage their own finances we saw the registered manager was working with people's guardians to ensure their finances were protected. The registered manager kept detailed records of people's spending and provided these accounts to the appropriate people to monitor and ensure that their finances were protected.

People had enough to eat and drink. Staff prepared food for people or assisted them in making their own food. We saw that people liked to support the cook in the kitchen and helped with making drinks for everyone. Each morning the cook asked people what they would like to eat for their main meal, there were usually two main options but if people did not want either of these the cook would make them a meal of their choice. People were very complimentary of the food and cooks at the service. One person said, "[staff name] is a lovely cook, they make lovely food and always put food by for you if you are out." Another person said, "The food is marvellous I like the roast dinners." We observed a lunchtime meal and saw that people had a varied choice.

People had access to healthcare as required. The registered manager supported people to attend out-patient appointments with specialist such as the community mental health team. People were also supported to access their GP, dentist and optician in the community. During our inspection we saw one

person being supported to attend a GP appointment. Another person told us, "I go and have my blood tested regularly."

## Is the service caring?

### Our findings

At this inspection people remained happy living at the service, they continued to be very complimentary of the staff and felt cared for. The rating continues to be Good.

Staff had positive relationships with people. People were very complimentary of the support they received from staff. One person said, "I love living here, the staff treat me very good, they are helpful and will do anything for you." Throughout the day we saw staff interacting with people in a supportive and caring way. We saw the atmosphere at the service was relaxed and that people got on well with each other and with staff. One person said, "It feels like a home here everyone is friendly, everybody helps each other." Another person said, "I like the staff you can talk to them and we go out for coffee."

People felt supported at the service. Staff demonstrated a good knowledge of people's individual support needs. Each person had a key worker this is an allocated member of care staff who works alongside the person to help them with their rehabilitation or to maintain their independence. One person told us, "I have a key worker, we have chats and go through my care plan, and they try and help me with my diet as I have diabetes." The registered manager told us that staff reviewed care plans monthly and updated them more frequently if needed. This meant people's care records were relevant and support needs were up to date for staff to follow.

Staff treated people with dignity and respect and supported them in spending their time in the way they chose. Staff encouraged people to be as independent as possible whilst supporting them with their preferences on how they wished to spend their time. One person told us, "Sometimes I like to go to the pub for lemonade." Another person told us, "I like to go to the cinema sometimes [staff name] comes in on their day off and we go together." People could choose to spend their time with others but staff also respected people sometimes like to spend time on their own. Staff encouraged people to maintain and develop their independent living skills one member of staff said, "We have recently had three people move on to more independent living."

People's diverse needs were respected. We saw that other people had access to the religious support of their choice and could also access religious support in the community. The service promoted the use of advocates for people to help them with independent decisions making. We saw that people were also being supported with their democratic right to vote and that they had been registered to vote at the up-coming general election. The registered manager told us that they would support people to access polling stations if they wished to vote. One person told us, "I don't usually bother to vote but I may do this time."

People were supported and encouraged to maintain relationships with their friends and family, this included supporting trips home and into the community. One person told us, "I go out every day to visit my girlfriend."

## Is the service responsive?

### Our findings

At this inspection we found staff were as responsive to people's needs and concerns as they were during the previous inspection. The rating remains Good.

People continued to receive care that was individual and personalised to their needs. The registered manager ensured people had a thorough assessment before they agreed to support people. In addition people and their relatives were encouraged to spend time at the service to see if it was suitable and if they would like to live there. Before people finally came to live at the service there was a gradual increase of time spent there. This included spending days and then having overnight stays. This gradual build up gave people and staff the opportunity to get to know each other to ensure their needs could be met and that they would be happy living there.

The service has remained responsive to people's needs. Since our last inspection the provider had been undertaking refurbishment and redecoration of the service. People told us that they were very pleased with the new furniture in the lounge and how it had been redecorated. The registered manager told us that people had input into the redecoration and that when their rooms are redecorated they can choose their colour schemes. One person who came to live at the service wanted to have a pet dog however the service already has a cat and it was decided a dog would probably not be appropriate. As a compromise the registered manager agreed the person could acquire some guinea pigs instead. We saw the person had set up a run and hutch in the services garden. The registered manager told us how the person had spent their own money to buy extra items for the guinea pigs and how the person really had gained value from looking after them. We spoke with the person and they were really proud to tell us about their guinea pigs.

People were encouraged to follow their own interest and hobbies. People were supported with social activities of their choice, these included attending local clubs and church groups for social activities. Staff told us that they liked to support people with activities of their choice every day and that they encouraged people to go out either independently or with staff. Some people like to go out for walks and to visit the local cafes. People told us that they had active lives including visiting friends and family and going to college and social clubs. Another person told us how they liked playing scrabble at the service. In addition to doing social activities of their choice if people wished to go away on holiday the service supported them to make the arrangements with their family or independently with a holiday support service.

The service had a robust complaints process in place that was accessible and any complaints were dealt with effectively. One person told us, "If I had a complaint I would talk to the manager, but everything is okay here."

# Is the service well-led?

## Our findings

At this inspection we found staff was as well led as at the previous inspection. The rating remains Good.

The service had a registered manager. A registered manager is a person who has registered with the Care Quality Commission to manage the service. Like registered providers, they are 'registered persons'. Registered persons have legal responsibility for meeting the requirements in the Health and Social Care Act 2008 and associated Regulations about how the service is run.

The registered manager was very visible within the service. One member of staff said, "The manager is always here and sometimes they come in at the weekends too." Staff shared the registered manager's vision for the service. One member of staff told us, "We want to support people to have the best quality of life, to be healthy and as independent as possible."

Staff felt supported at the service. One member of staff said, "We get enough support from the team leaders and manager, we work well together as a team." Staff were able to describe to us their role within the service and what their responsibilities were. They told us that they had regular staff meetings with the registered manager to discuss the running of the service and any ideas they may have; for example obtaining protecting covers for shoes to stop them getting wet when supporting people to use the shower. Staff told us that they had good communication methods to ensure everyone was kept up to date with people's care needs. This included using the computerised care notes, handovers and the use of a communication book.

People's opinions were sought within the service. We saw the registered manager held regular meetings with people and sought their opinions on activities. The registered manager also spent time talking to people each day to gain their feedback. One person told us, "We have meetings every month." Another person said, "The manager is very good I can talk to them about anything." In addition the provider sent out questionnaires to people, relatives, staff and other health professionals gain feedback on the service. This demonstrated that the registered manager listened to people's feedback and acted.

The registered manager had a number of quality monitoring systems in place to continually review and improve the quality of the service provided to people. They carried out regular audits on health and safety, infection control and care records this information was used as appropriate to continually improve the care people received.