

OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT STATEMENT

Prepared on behalf of: Last Chipendo / Diana Chipendo – DMC Consulting Services Ltd

Site address: 73 Beaumont Drive, Northfleet, Gravesend, Kent, DA11 9NN

Application reference: GB/20250016

Application type: Full Planning Permission

Prepared by: Inhaus Planning, Suite Ra01, 195-197 Wood Street, London, E17 3NU

1.0 Introduction

This Operational Management Statement has been prepared by Inhaus Planning on behalf of Last Chipendo and Diana Chipendo of DMC Consulting Services Ltd in response to the information request issued by Gravesham Borough Council on 14 August 2026 in connection with planning application GB/20250016. The document addresses each of the eight operational questions raised by the case officer and additionally clarifies the revised parking position following works completed at the site.

The proposal seeks full planning permission for the change of use of the property at 73 Beaumont Drive, Northfleet, Gravesend, Kent, DA11 9NN from Class C3 (dwellinghouse) to Class C2 (residential institution) for use as a small children's home. The home will accommodate a maximum of two children and will be operated by DMC Consulting Services Ltd, a specialist provider of residential childcare services.

2.0 Age Range of Children

The home will accommodate children between the ages of ten and seventeen years. Placement decisions are made by the placing local authority in accordance with the assessed needs of each individual child. The age range of ten to seventeen reflects the typical profile of children placed in residential children's homes and is consistent with the registration parameters that will be submitted to Ofsted as part of the formal registration process.

It is important to note that the home will not commence operation until Ofsted registration has been granted. The regulatory framework governing children's homes in England — principally the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 — requires registration before any child can be accommodated. This provides an independent check on the home's suitability and management that operates entirely separately from the planning regime.

3.0 Type and Nature of Care

The home will provide therapeutic residential care for children with emotional and behavioural difficulties (EBD) and social, emotional and mental health needs (SEMH). These are among the most commonly presenting need profiles in children placed in residential care in England. Children with EBD and SEMH needs benefit significantly from the consistent, structured environment that a small, stable residential setting provides.

The care model is based on a relational, trauma-informed approach. Staff will develop consistent relationships with each child through keyworking, structured daily routines, and therapeutic support. The small scale of the home — a maximum of two placements — is fundamental to this approach, as it enables the kind of individualised, consistent care that supports recovery and development. The domestic character of the property, indistinguishable externally from any other family home on the street, directly supports the therapeutic aim of providing a normalised, community-integrated living experience for the children.

4.0 Duration of Placements

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The home is designed primarily to provide long-term settled placements. The operator's intention is to offer stable, consistent homes for children who require medium to long-term residential care, enabling them to build relationships, engage with education, and develop the skills and resilience they need to progress toward greater independence.

Short and medium-term placements may also be accommodated where appropriate to a child's individual care plan. The home will not, however, operate as an emergency placement facility. Placements will be planned in advance and subject to a thorough matching process to ensure that the home's environment and staffing are appropriate to the needs of the individual child.

5.0 Staffing, Shift Patterns and Night Staff Arrangements

The home will maintain a staffing ratio of two members of staff per child. During the day shift, running from 07:00 to 19:00, a maximum of four members of staff will be on site. During the night shift, running from 19:00 to 07:00, two members of staff will be present.

Staff will work extended shifts of twenty-four to forty-eight hours. This approach is adopted deliberately to minimise the frequency of staff changeovers, thereby reducing associated vehicle movements and maintaining the continuity of care that is so important for children with EBD and SEMH needs. Fewer shift changes also mean a quieter, more settled domestic environment for the children and for neighbouring residents.

In terms of night-time arrangements, staff will remain present and available throughout the night. Whether individual staff members sleep during the night shift is determined by the assessed needs and risk profile of the children in residence. Where the risk assessment indicates that a sleeping arrangement is appropriate, one member of staff may sleep whilst the other remains waking. Where the assessed needs of the children require waking night cover, both staff members will remain active. This is a needs-led determination made in accordance with the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and will be subject to Ofsted scrutiny at registration.

6.0 Visits by Social Workers, Healthcare Professionals and Other Support Professionals

Professional visits to the home will be pre-planned and managed in a structured manner. The frequency and nature of visits will depend on each child's individual care plan and the requirements of the placing local authority.

As a general guide, each child's allocated social worker would typically visit on a fortnightly to monthly basis, depending on the child's placement stage and the placing authority's requirements. The Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) would visit on a quarterly basis or in conjunction with statutory Looked After Children review meetings. Healthcare professionals, including CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services) workers, therapists, or GP attendances, would visit as required by the child's health and therapeutic plan.

In practice, professional visits of this nature are a routine feature of any family home in which a looked-after child is living. They are infrequent, brief, and entirely unremarkable in character. A single professional visit to the property generates no greater impact on the surrounding area than any other

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routine domestic visitor and is not distinguishable from the ordinary pattern of life in a residential street.

7.0 Family and Visitor Contact Arrangements

Contact arrangements for each child with their family members will be managed in accordance with the child's individual care plan, as agreed by the placing local authority and the child's social worker. Contact is a carefully managed aspect of residential childcare that balances the child's welfare, their relationships with family members, and the therapeutic aims of their placement.

In the majority of cases, family contact visits will be arranged to take place at a neutral or community venue rather than at the home itself. This approach is standard practice in residential childcare, as it maintains appropriate boundaries and supports the therapeutic integrity of the home environment. Where contact at the property is considered appropriate and agreed by the responsible professionals, such visits will be pre-planned and supervised by staff. The frequency and nature of any such visits will remain low and will not give rise to any perceptible impact on the surrounding residential area.

8.0 Regular Deliveries, Collections and Servicing

The home will generate no deliveries, collections or servicing requirements that are distinguishable from those associated with a typical family household. Grocery and household supply deliveries will be conducted in the same manner as any residential property, via standard domestic delivery services. There are no specialist medical supplies, clinical waste collections, or commercial servicing requirements associated with the proposed use.

Waste and recycling will be managed in accordance with Gravesham Borough Council's standard kerbside collection arrangements for residential properties. The volume of waste generated by a household of two children and staff on shift is consistent with or less than that of a typical family of equivalent size.

9.0 Anticipated Vehicle Movements

The anticipated level of vehicle movements associated with the operation of the home is low and consistent with a typical family household. The primary driver of vehicle movements is staff shift changeovers. As noted at section 5.0 above, the adoption of twenty-four to forty-eight hour extended shifts means that staff changeovers occur infrequently — typically once every one to two days rather than multiple times per day. This substantially reduces the frequency of staff-related vehicle movements compared with a conventional shift pattern.

Additional vehicle movements will arise from professional visits and from transporting the children to school, appointments, activities and other community engagements. These movements are characteristic of any family with children of school age and do not constitute an unusual or disproportionate traffic impact. There will be no deliveries, collections or vehicle movements of a commercial or institutional character.

10.0 Parking Provision — Updated Position

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It is confirmed that the parking position previously set out in the supplementary information submitted to the Council is no longer current. That information stated that the front entrance and dropped kerb would not be used. Since that submission, a dropped kerb has been installed at the front of the property with the approval of Kent County Council's Vehicle Crossing team, and the front driveway is now in active use.

The application accordingly benefits from three parking spaces: two spaces on the front driveway (served by the newly approved dropped kerb) and one space at the rear of the property. This provision of three spaces is consistent with the assessment of KCC Highways, who confirmed in their consultation response of 13 November 2025 that three spaces are acceptable for the proposed staffing levels. Revised site plans showing all three spaces with dimensions are being prepared and will be submitted to the Council in advance of the committee hearing.

11.0 Conclusion

This Operational Management Statement has addressed each of the information requirements set out in Ms Fisher's letter of 14 August 2026. The information provided demonstrates that the proposed children's home will operate in a manner consistent with a well-managed family household: quiet, domestic in character, professionally staffed, and subject to comprehensive regulatory oversight through the Ofsted registration process.

It is submitted that the operational information now provided, together with the accompanying planning and management documents, provides the Council with a complete picture of the proposed use and its likely impacts. The application is respectfully commended to the committee.