

## [Webinar recording: February 2020](#)

On 12 February 2020, Christine Tacon, the Groceries Code Adjudicator (GCA) delivered a webinar talking about:

- 10 years of the Groceries Supply Code of Practice (the Code)
- the importance of completing the GCA annual survey
- the Co-op investigation
- the importance of suppliers becoming confident in the Code

[Webinar update: February 2020.](#)

If you'd like to [complete the GCA survey](#) please visit [www.yougov.com/gca](http://www.yougov.com/gca)

[Register for the next webinar on 16 March](#)

To provide feedback on the webinar please email [enquiries@groceriescode.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@groceriescode.gov.uk).

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## [British Embassy Lima celebrates the magic world of Harry Potter with over 300 fans](#)

Hogwarts moved to Lima. The venue of The Triwizard Tournament moved to the Residence of the British Ambassador to Peru. The first Harry Potter Book Night held by the British Embassy in Lima brought together over 300 members of the Potterhead community to celebrate the magical universe created by J.K. Rowling.

HMA Kate Harrison said:

For many people, Harry Potter is the first contact they have with literature. And I'm honoured that this first contact is with a British author. There is no doubt that J.K. Rowling is one of the UK's most important cultural exports and one of the world's greatest literary successes.

At the beginning of the evening, guests had the opportunity to try on the Sorting Hat and be appointed to one of Hogwarts School's four houses. The newly initiated wizards from Gryffindor, Slytherin, Hufflepuff and Ravenclaw

spent the afternoon learning how to prepare potions, design and use magic wands, and train fantastic animals. Other activities for the nearly 300 people who attended the event included trivia, storytelling and virtual reality.

At dusk, volunteers dressed up as Voldemort, Harry Potter, Ron Weasley, Bellatrix and the dreaded Death Eaters performed the Battle of Hogwarts, encouraging attendees to join the final battle between the forces of good and evil in this magical universe.

At the end of the event, the Ambassador awarded the winner of the costume contest. Lucia Cabrera, dressed as Sirius Black, earned all the applause from the audience and convinced the jury with her excellent portrayal of the prisoner of Azkaban. The diplomat said:

British literature has stories for all audiences, from Harry Potter to Pride and Prejudice. I invite you to discover millions of these fascinating stories.

The Harry Potter Book Night, an event promoted globally by Bloomsbury Publishing, focused this year on The Triwizard Tournament. Británico, Cambridge Assessment English, Hollyfood, LUG Peru, Lego, the Order of the Sun Fan Club, among others, helped turn this event into a magical experience for all involved.

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## **Permanent Under-Secretary Sir Simon McDonald visits Lima to strengthen UK-Peru bilateral relations**

Sir Simon McDonald, Permanent Under-Secretary of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, met on 29 January in Lima with President Martin Vizcarra and Foreign Minister Gustavo Meza-Cuadra, with whom he discussed the long and close bilateral relationship between the United Kingdom and Peru.

Sir Simon McDonald also met with the Minister of Economy, María Antonieta Alva, and participated in the signing of two agreements between this sector and the Embassy of the United Kingdom in Peru, to continue promoting joint work on infrastructure. Sir McDonald said:

Peru has fully joined the United Kingdom's Global Infrastructure Program and these Memorandums of Understanding that have been signed today express the commitment of both countries to continue

working together, sharing methodologies and building institutional capacity to close the infrastructure gap and to promote sustainable development in Peru.

These two agreements will promote the exchange of information and good practices between the Peruvian Ministry of Economy, the British Infrastructure and Projects Authority and the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy.

During his visit, Sir Simon McDonald also witnessed the work done by the International Red Cross, with part of the more than 50 million pounds the United Kingdom has contributed to address the humanitarian crisis of Venezuelan migrants in the region.

The new agreements signed between the two Governments and the intense day of meetings that marked the visit of the Permanent Under-Secretary of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office are evidence of the United Kingdom's desire to continue strengthening trade and cooperation relations with Peru, in the new chapter that the United Kingdom is starting with its departure from the European Union.

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## [Change of Her Majesty's Ambassador to Hungary in September 2020](#)



Mr Paul Fox has been appointed Her Majesty's Ambassador to Hungary in succession to Mr Iain Lindsay OBE who will be retiring from the Diplomatic Service. Mr Fox will take up his appointment during September 2020.

Full name: Paul Leonard Fox

Married to: Vicki Ann Fox

Children: Three daughters

2018 to 2019 Moscow, Minister Counsellor

2015 to 2018 Dubai, Consul-General  
2012 to 2015 Abu Dhabi, Deputy Head of Mission  
2010 to 2012 FCO, Head, Afghanistan Department  
2008 to 2010 Warsaw, Deputy Head of Mission and Consul-General  
2006 to 2008 Warsaw, EU/Commercial Counsellor and Consul-General  
2005 to 2006 FCO, Deputy Director and Head of Iraq Policy Unit  
2003 to 2005 FCO, Deputy Head, Eastern Adriatic Department  
2001 to 2003 FCO, Deputy Head, Whitehall Liaison Department  
2000 to 2001 FCO, Press Spokesman – Balkans, Eastern and Central Europe, Russia  
1999 to 2000 FCO, Head, Devolution Section, Devolved Administrations Department  
1996 to 1999 Bangkok, Commercial Officer  
1994 to 1996 Baku, Deputy Head of Mission  
1990 to 1993 New Delhi, Entry Clearance Officer  
1988 to 1990 FCO, Yugoslavia Desk Officer, Eastern Europe Department  
1987 to 1988 FCO, Yugoslavia Research Analyst, Eastern Europe Section, Research Department

## **Further information**

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# **[Social care commentary: creating the environment for excellence in residential practice](#)**

Over 80% of children's homes are judged good or outstanding, which is a good news story and good news for the children who live there. We want all homes to be good or outstanding. I know staff in the sector are keen to think how they can make their service and the experience and progress of children even better.

There's a question we want to better understand the answer to: 'What are the ingredients that lead to successful outcomes in residential care?'

To explore this, we looked at how a small sample of children's homes maintained their good or outstanding rating across inspections. We know the importance of good leadership in ensuring high standards and excellent care.

We are sharing our findings with you in this commentary.

## How we investigated

We looked at children's homes that have been judged consistently good or outstanding for 5 years or more. All had kept the same manager in post. We gathered information on the common experiences of these managers to understand why they were so successful and what we could all learn from their experience.

The homes came from across [our 8 regions](#), were of varying size and catered for children with a broad range of needs. We sampled homes run by the local authority, and both private and voluntary providers.

We carried out 8 interviews in total, with registered managers and responsible individuals. I would like to thank our colleagues for their time and their insights into 'what works'.

We asked questions based on 4 main areas:

- what the home is trying to achieve
- what the key responsibilities of the manager are
- external support for the manager
- resources available to the manager

From this, we identified several common themes.

## The statement of purpose

Every home is required to have a 'statement of purpose'. The content is set out in regulation and should include the needs of the children that the home can care for and the ethos of the home.

In homes that are consistently successful, there is a strong sense of ownership of the home's statement of purpose by the registered manager and their staff team. They keep the statement of purpose up to date and it accurately reflects the purpose of, and service provided by, the home.

One manager told us that their staff team regularly reviews the statement of purpose to ensure that the whole team 'understands the vision and purpose of the home and how to make it work in practice'.

Managers told us that, even if the statement of purpose was based on an organisational template, they were able to adapt it to make sure it was relevant and specific for their home. Managers regarded the statement as 'theirs' and not something they had just to meet regulation.

## Making good decisions about children coming into the home

We found that the admissions process in these homes is detailed and thorough and involves the registered manager throughout. Many managers told us they make the ultimate decision as to whether a child is admitted to the home.

This leads to good or outstanding matching of children, promoting excellent experiences for them.

One manager makes extensive enquiries about the children referred to the home. She will contact the social worker obviously, but also, if the social worker is new, she will speak to the previous one, or a team manager and then anyone who knows the child. This means that the home can support the child and it leads to a smooth transition for the child on arrival.

Another manager who provides short breaks for disabled families set out her admission criteria. As demand for places at her home exceeds what she can provide, she looks for children who can benefit the most from the care provided.

All managers took a detailed and personal interest in the children coming to live or stay at their home. This means that children, often with very complex and multiple needs, are both matched and welcomed into these homes. Managers ensure that the appropriate support and resources are in place for the children and this leads to good outcomes. Managers and staff know what they can achieve for their children and are confident in their practice.

## **Visible leaders**

In consistently good or outstanding homes, the registered manager (and often the responsible individual) are very visible to staff, other colleagues and, most importantly, the children.

They provide a very 'hands on' model of good practice. Managers frequently work in the home, spending time with children and the staff. They seek regular feedback from children, staff and colleagues.

Managers regularly observe practice and provide constructive feedback to staff and take the opportunity to 'model' the practice they want. This gives staff confidence and reassurance that they were 'doing the right thing'. It also enables managers to identify poorer practice early and prevent it developing.

## **Continuing professional development**

Managers and responsible individuals value their personal development. In the discussions, they were up to date with current practice and knew why they did what they do.

One manager said:

We never give up on a child and we are constantly finding ways to support children better

This includes talking to other professionals, reading latest research and trying different ways to engage children.

These managers were confident in their practice and not afraid to try something new just in case it might work for a child. They attend training, workshops, multi-agency meetings and carry out additional research to inform their practice. Learning is disseminated to all staff effectively. Teams discuss research and learning, developing and trying individual strategies to work with children.

## **High ambition for children and monitoring children's progress**

Managers have a 'can do' attitude towards the potential achievements of all children.

One manager stated: 'disability is no block. We encourage and support children with all the opportunities and experiences they should have at their age.' Others went further and described setting ambitious challenges, such as recording a song at Abbey Road studios.

Managers and staff celebrate children's achievements and have high aspirations for all children. They use monitoring effectively to identify progress towards targets and what else needs to be done to support children to achieve.

All managers have monitoring systems that identify individual progress and achievement of children. Managers and staff use monitoring as a tool for reflection, examining what is working and what needs to change.

The systems they have are not necessarily complicated or high-tech. But what was clear from our conversations was that managers knew the children well enough to be able to articulate the progress each child made and how this had been achieved.

## **Budget holders**

Managers in these homes are delegated budget holders, although the levels of responsibility vary. Some have responsibility for the smaller costs within the home, including direct spending with children, while others have responsibility for most costs. This appears, perhaps not surprisingly, to be dependent on the size of the organisation.

With a wider budget oversight, managers can plan with confidence their staffing costs and how much can be spent on each child.

Managers can respond quickly when a situation arises, for example an impromptu celebration or the need to buy in additional resources to support a child with their education.

Managers were not reliant on asking each week or month for additional monies or, worse still, not actually knowing how much money they have at their disposal on a weekly basis.

## **Support for the staff team**

A common feature of these managers was that they clearly identify staff as their most valuable asset and therefore there is a desire to support them as well as they possibly can. They recognise that, without an experienced, skilled and confident staff team, they cannot carry out their role effectively.

The importance of recruitment and retention featured strongly throughout the interviews. Managers spoke of the need to employ highly committed and/or experienced (including life-experienced) staff. Some recruitment strategies included the use of graduate trainee programmes, advertising abroad and offering more flexibility in working patterns. Most managers said that they would rather invest in a thorough and often time-consuming recruitment process and attract the right staff, than deal with poor staff through a weaker process.

Managers describe their staff as passionate, dedicated, committed, diverse and risk-takers. They provide regular, effective supervision that both supports and challenges staff. Team meetings are a forum for sharing good practice as well as providing training and learning opportunities for staff.

Both e-learning and face-to-face training are provided. But in these homes, most managers stated that they need to discuss any e-learning training as a team in order to share learning and get the most from the experience.

Staff receive debriefs after any incidents to identify learning and good practice. Staff are supported to understand their emotions and feelings. Managers value the importance of staff resilience and well-being and identify the key role they have as managers in ensuring that staff are supported.

Managers were aware of the dilemmas of developing good staff and the risk that this then equips them with the opportunity to leave and gain employment elsewhere. What managers aimed for was a team of staff who were skilled and experienced but supported and valued so well that they would choose to stay. One manager referred to Richard Branson's quote as her mantra: 'Train people well enough so they can leave; treat them well enough so they don't want to'.

## **Leadership journey**

Nearly all the managers said that they had worked their way 'through the ranks' in residential care, often with the same provider and sometimes even within the same home. Others, with different managerial experience, said that the quality of the induction process was important when they became a residential home manager. Managers said that this meant that they knew what it was like to be a care worker, working longer hours sometimes in difficult situations. However, they also knew what success looked like when a child who did not appear to be making any progress suddenly did something amazing, like go to school following a period of refusal.

One manager said that she knew they had turned a corner when, in asking a



child if they had enjoyed their weekend, the child asked her the same question: the first time he had shown any interest in something else other than himself. It takes a skilled leader and practitioner to recognise that small progress. These are leaders who know what good practice looks like.

## **Support for the registered manager**

Support for registered managers is an important theme. Support does not just come from their managerial supervisor, but from their peers, the independent visitor and other professionals.

Most commented on the role of Ofsted and that inspection helps the manager and the home improve. Inspection offers recognition of effective practice. These providers did not fear Ofsted and were confident enough in the quality of their service to know that they were doing a good job and all we did was confirm that.

## **Summary**

We hope you find the information from these good and outstanding homes useful for your own practice.