

# 1229229

Registered provider: Esland North Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This privately owned children's home provides care and accommodation for up to two children and young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

**Inspection dates:** 13 to 14 December 2017

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

How well children and young people are helped and protected **outstanding**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **outstanding**

The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

**Date of last inspection:** 11 October 2016

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** Outstanding

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** None

## Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is outstanding because:

- A motivated, aspirational manager leads a committed, skilled staff team to deliver excellent-quality individualised care. As a result, young people make outstanding

progress.

- Staff excel in engaging young people. They have made a difference by promptly developing nurturing, trusted relationships that have supported young people to settle and make positive choices.
- Young people benefit from their engagement in education and from taking part in a range of activities and opportunities. This is making a difference to their confidence and self-esteem, as well as enhancing their future prospects.
- Young people are supported to maintain safe, healthy relationships with friends and family.

The children's home's areas for development:

- There are a range of detailed risk assessments in place that include reference to online safety. However, safeguarding practice would be strengthened by a stand-alone risk assessment to address the risks associated with young people's use of digital technology.

## Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement |
|-----------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 11/10/2016      | Full            | Outstanding          |

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

### Recommendations

- Staff should continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5) This specifically refers to the need for staff to ensure that there is a specific risk assessment for each young person to address the risks associated with the use of digital technology.

### Inspection judgements

#### Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Since the last inspection, one young person has successfully moved on from the home and, after careful planning, another young person has moved in. The young person living in this home is experiencing excellent care, in a structured, child-centred environment. Staff are skilled in engaging young people and building positive relationships. This has helped this young person to settle in and respond to nurturing care arrangements immediately.

Before the young person moved into the home, all relevant information was shared, and visits have taken place. Staff were well prepared and the young person's professional and family network was in place from the start.

The young person who has moved on from the home has made exceptional progress in education, from her starting point. For example, she is motivated and able to travel independently to education. She has grown in confidence in performing arts, achieved awards and she has been predicted excellent grades in forthcoming exams. Young people who have had difficulties in engaging in education in the past are ambitious because staff are aspirational for them. Staff celebrate young people's achievements and successes. One young person said: 'What has made a difference is that staff are clear that they want me to do well, but there are consequences if I mess up. They support me when I try my best. I worked out quickly that not listening to them did not mean that they would go away. They kept encouraging me to try.'

Staff are proactive in facilitating and promoting contact with family and friends from the start. This supports staff to build trusted relationships with young people. This has also helped young people to repair relationships in some instances. Staff are acutely aware of the importance of young people maintaining significant relationships while living at the home. One young person will be spending Christmas with family. Staff will provide support calls and visits. One young person chose a summer holiday that would enable a parent to join the holiday.

Young people are supported to develop independence and life skills. The inspector observed excellent cooking skills by a young person. Staff reported that the young person has a healthy diet, she makes excellent food choices and she is skilled at budgeting. There was a relaxed, supportive atmosphere in the home during the inspection.

Staff support young people to look for part-time employment or voluntary work to provide experience and enhance their future prospects.

Young people have detailed individual healthcare plans which include their health history. From the start of the placement, young people benefit from preventative health appointments with universal services. If there is any reluctance to attend, staff encourage young people and provide support. Referrals to specialist services are made where appropriate. Staff are sensitive to young people's emotional health needs. The home works in partnership with a service that provides assessment and counselling.

A professional said: 'I believe this young person has settled well because staff are consistent in their care. There are clear, explicit boundaries and expectations. I know that this young person responds well to this and feels safer.'

There are positive nurturing relationships between young people and staff. Young people have access to, and benefit from, a range of interests and activities. The young person currently resident has been able to continue with their interests, and is currently learning about caring for and preparing for a pet. Young people develop confidence and social skills as a result of support and encouragement.

Staff maintain excellent-quality, timely records to support the assessment of young people's needs and to support meeting needs. Records have child-friendly assessment tools to support staff to include young people's views and wishes.

The culture within the home is open and inclusive. Young people are encouraged to contribute to their records and participate in their care planning and meetings. They have a range of opportunities to share views, wishes and feelings with social workers and with independent visitors and advocates. The children and young people's guide is shared as part of the admission process. Young people have regular consultation sessions about their day-to-day care. There has been one complaint by a young person since the last inspection, which has been resolved and did not raise any concerns about safety and welfare.

### **How well children and young people are helped and protected: outstanding**

Staff are skilled and experienced in identifying and meeting the complex needs and vulnerabilities of young people living at the home.

Staff have had training in safeguarding and understand the histories of the young people and the impact of life experiences on their behaviours. Young people have significantly reduced their harmful and/or concerning behaviour as a result of the care they receive and the safe environment provided by the home.

There are detailed, individualised risk assessment and behaviour management plans. Young people contribute to these assessments. They are supported to share what works for them and what responses do not help. Staff continue to assess and are alert to changing and emerging behaviours.

A member of staff said: 'What we are good at here is consistent parenting. Young people respond positively to this and build healthy relationships with staff.'

Staff have had training in responding to allegations and in safe recruitment. The manager is confident that staff would raise any safeguarding or conduct concerns. Staff demonstrate knowledge and understanding about safe care.

Staff receive training and develop their practice in safeguarding and are able to identify concerns. Records show that staff follow procedures, share information in a timely way and seek advice where appropriate.

Staff and young people report that, due to positive relationships and positive care experiences, incidents are reduced. There has been a reduction in self-harm concerns, no concerns about substance misuse and one very limited incident of a young person missing from the home for two hours. Due to risk assessments and risk management plans, young people have significantly reduced vulnerabilities, particularly to the risk of exploitation.

Risk assessments include reference to the risks of online access for young people. However, practice would be strengthened by each young person having a specific risk assessment addressing the risks associated with the use of digital technology. This will ensure that there is an explicit discussion about this with social workers and it will support young people to keep themselves safe.

One young person said: 'The staff are brilliant, they have helped me to keep safe.'

The manager ensures that there are robust systems in place to maintain a safe home environment, and staff complete daily health and safety checks. There are regular health and safety audits and the independent visitor also reviews the safety of the environment.

The manager is experienced in safe recruitment, and there are robust recruitment processes in place. She is confident that staff understand the principles of safe care and conduct, and that they would report any concerns.

The registered manager keeps up to date with research and evidence-based practice in safeguarding and cascades information in team meetings and training sessions. Staff supervision also covers the safeguarding of young people.

Staff liaise closely with social workers and voluntary agencies to reduce risks and to change behaviours. Partnership working helps to keep young people safe.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding**

Since the last inspection there has been a change of registered manager. The manager is experienced and has a range of relevant qualifications. She is undertaking the required leadership and management qualification. She is an accessible manager and knows the young people's needs well. She is enthusiastic and committed, and an excellent role model for the staff team.

Staff report that they receive regular supervision, and development opportunities that add value to their practice. During the inspection, all staff were very positive about their team and the work environment. As a team, they are ambitious for the young people they are working with. They prioritise developing positive, nurturing relationships so that they can make a difference to outcomes for young people.

The staff team is stable. There is very low sickness absence and there are no vacancies. This means that young people benefit from continuity of care.

The manager is very complimentary about the range of experiences, skills and knowledge that the staff bring to their work. It is a team that is enthusiastic about learning and developing. There are regular team meetings and seniors meetings. Any staff with supervisory responsibility have supervision training. There are structured staff inductions and appraisals. Staff records include an evaluation of progress and areas for development. Staff were able to clearly articulate their roles and responsibilities. The manager encourages learning by sharing up-to-date information about research and practice, and by promoting training opportunities. Good-quality supervision records, staff development records and team meeting records evidence that staff have opportunities to reflect on practice. Supervision meetings include a discussion about safeguarding practice.

Staff report that they feel valued and that they feel listened to. For example, there have recently been changes to staff rotas as a result of consultation with the team.

The manager has high expectations about the quality and maintenance of young people's records. They are regularly subject to auditing and quality assurance, in addition to monitoring by the independent visitor. Young people's files start with the relevant quality standards and regulations so that staff are clear regarding the purpose of recording. As a result, recording is consistently better than good. They are purposeful, they include young people's views and they track and evaluate progress from the start.

The manager believes that staff demonstrate excellent skills in engaging young people because they are enthusiastic about their role and the difference that they can make. They have experienced the impact of consistent care and young people making significant changes and progress.

The manager has systems in place to track where staff have challenged drift or delay with professionals providing services for the young people. Staff are aware that there are clear lines of reporting. As a result, there are limited occasions when the manager has escalated concerns. The staff and manager are confident advocates for young people.

Professionals and families report excellent partnership working and report that staff are proactive on behalf of young people. They are kept up to date with information and they are involved in decision-making about care arrangements. They also comment on the

exceptional progress that young people have made as a result of the care they are receiving or have received at this home.

There are good-quality reports from the independent visitor, which demonstrate detailed, rigorous monitoring. The manager is receptive to advice and learning. She encourages staff to be involved in quality assurance developments and the team responds to recommended actions in a timely way.

## **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:** 1229229

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** Esland North Limited

**Registered provider address:** 1 Foundry Lane, Milford, Belper DE56 0RN

**Responsible individual:** Lyndsey Sim

**Registered manager:** Danielle Betts

## Inspector

Cathey Moriarty, social care inspector

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