

# 1264840

Registered provider: Esland North Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This privately owned home is registered to provide care for up to three children with emotional and social difficulties.

The registered manager left and a new manager was appointed. She has applied to register with Ofsted and is awaiting her suitable person interview.

### Inspection dates: 8 and 9 November 2022

|                                                                                           |             |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| <b>Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account</b> | <b>good</b> |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|

|                                                             |      |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| How well children and young people are helped and protected | good |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|------|

|                                           |      |
|-------------------------------------------|------|
| The effectiveness of leaders and managers | good |
|-------------------------------------------|------|

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

**Date of last inspection:** 17 August 2021

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement    |
|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------------|
| 17/08/2021      | Full            | Good                    |
| 04/09/2019      | Full            | Good                    |
| 30/01/2019      | Interim         | Sustained effectiveness |
| 09/05/2018      | Full            | Good                    |

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good**

Three children were living at the home at the time of the inspection. They told the inspector that staff and managers provide them with consistent love, care and support. Children said that they know this because staff listen to them and action all appropriate requests that they make. For example, children had a say in how they spent time with their family, who live a long distance from the home.

Children experience good outcomes. For example, one child who moved on from the home returned to live with a family member and remains settled and happy there.

Staff and managers work therapeutically with the children. They use 'playfulness, acceptance, curiosity and empathy' as an approach to the children's care. Staff take time to understand the children's life stories and the impact this might have on them daily. The inspector observed the staff welcoming the children with warm cuddles after school and they were eager to know how the children's school day had gone.

The children are investing and engaging in the support provided, such as accessing therapy and education. Children are thriving and making significant progress considering their starting point. For example, all children had significant gaps in their learning but are now accessing education, and one child has attained a qualification at college. The children told the inspector that staff help them with their homework and ensure that they have the correct uniform ready and ironed for the next school day.

The children's voices are paramount in everything that the staff do to meet their needs. They have various platforms to express their wishes and feelings, such as 'Focus Friday' meetings, house meetings, sit-down family dinners daily and one-to-one sessions with staff. The children are involved in making decisions about their day-to-day care and future. Because children are able to express their views and feel listened to, this contributes to children developing positive and trusted relationships with staff.

The children described the home as a family home and that it is beautiful. They take pride and ownership in their home. They have helped redecorate it and they have personalised their bedrooms. Children enjoy helping staff with jobs around the house.

The children have bonded well and enjoy spending time with each other. They all speak positively about each other and live together in harmony. Their faces lit up as they spoke about their summer holiday in Devon and the fun activities and quality time they had spent there with staff. They described the holiday as the best that they have had and will treasure the memories for a long time.

Children access various activities in the home and community, which they enjoy. For example, children enjoy day trips out to theme parks, going for bike rides, going trampolining and playing football. They enjoy baking with staff and participated in a 'Come Dine with Me' evening where the children budgeted for and prepared a meal. As a result of their positive experiences and range of opportunities, children are building friendships and their self-esteem and confidence is increasing.

Staff support children to gain independence skills such as cooking, cleaning their bedroom, doing laundry, budgeting and food shopping. This equips children with essential life skills, which helps them prepare for the future. However, staff have not been proactive in supporting one child with managing their own medication, despite the child's plan to move on from the home soon.

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

The children told the inspector that they feel safe living at the home. They said they have good relationships with staff and can speak with them whenever they are faced with difficult situations.

Risk management plans are clear and give staff sound guidance on how to keep the children safe. Children rarely go missing from home. When they do, staff follow safeguarding protocols and exercise professional curiosity to understand the reasons why children go missing and how they can support the children to prevent similar incidents from happening in the future.

The staff complete extensive one-to-one work with the children to help them to understand risks and learn how to keep themselves safe. They role model positive behaviours and give the children consistent routines and boundaries through the use of incentives and rewards. Subsequently, most of the children's risk-taking behaviours such as self-harm, verbal and physical aggression, missing from home and criminal exploitation have reduced.

All the children are settled and happy. Consequently, there have not been any significant safeguarding incidents or behaviours recently. Staff have not needed to physically intervene to keep children safe for over nine months.

Managers made a decision not to follow through on recommendations raised by fire safety officers when they undertook a risk assessment of the premises. However, they did not do this in liaison with the fire service. This has not had a detrimental impact on the children's safety to date. Managers took on board concerns raised by the inspector and took steps to urgently address the issue during the inspection.

Not all new staff are promptly trained in fire prevention, or practise fire drills before they lone work at the home. As a result, staff are not practised in how they can evacuate the home quickly and safely in the event of a fire emergency.

Safer recruitment practice is mostly good. However, managers have not followed up on queries relating to a reference for an agency worker.

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

The current manager has been in post since May 2022 and has worked hard to improve the quality of care provided to the children. The home experienced a high turnover of staff when the registered manager left. However, managers have worked hard to manage this turnover of staff, so that this has not had a detrimental impact on children's care and experiences.

Managers carefully considered how they could care for children when the home was experiencing staff shortages. Managers risk assessed this and used experienced staff carefully. When there has been a need to use agency staff, these are consistent individuals who are able to provide continuity of care to children. Managers are in the process of recruiting new staff to fill remaining vacancies.

The manager has been caring directly for children and supporting less experienced staff to provide children with good-quality care and experiences. This strong leadership has enabled children to make good progress, and for staff to feel well supported.

Although the manager is aware of the strengths of the home and areas for development, some monitoring systems have not yet been fully implemented. For example, staff training records are not up to date and it is not easy to determine if staff have taken refresher mandatory training courses. In addition, two staff have not been able to complete their level three qualifications within the recommended timescales.

Close partnership working between managers and staff and education, health and local authority professionals means that the children's needs are met. This collaborative approach to children's care means that the children are making good progress. Professionals report that communication with them is largely good and has improved since the new manager took over. Importantly, professionals are pleased with the progress their children have made as a result of the good care that they have received.

Staff feel supported by the managers. They receive regular supervision and use this forum, together with staff meetings, to reflect on their practice and support their development.

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

### Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to meet 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(s) must comply within the given timescales.

| Requirement                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Due date         |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| <p>The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that—</p> <p>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and</p> <p>promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(h))</p> <p>This requirement is repeated so that the manager fully implements the monitoring systems in place to support the ongoing development of staff and the service provided to children.</p> | 31 January 2023  |
| <p>After consultation with the fire and rescue authority, the registered person must—</p> <p>make arrangements for persons working at the home to receive suitable training in fire prevention; and</p> <p>ensure, by means of fire drills and practices at suitable intervals, that persons working at the home and, so far as reasonably practicable, children are aware of the procedure to be followed in case of fire. (Regulation 25 (1)(c)(d))</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | 10 December 2022 |
| <p>The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety.</p> <p>The registered person may only—</p> <p>employ an individual to work at the children's home; or</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | 31 March 2023    |

if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home,

if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3).

For the purposes of paragraph (3)(b), an individual who works in the home in a care role has the appropriate qualification if, by the relevant date, the individual has attained—

the Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare (England) ("the Level 3 Diploma"); or

a qualification which the registered person considers to be equivalent to the Level 3 Diploma.  
(Regulation 32 (1) (2)(a)(b)(4)(a)(b))

In particular, support those staff who are out of timescale to complete the Level 3 Diploma as soon as possible.

## Recommendations

- The registered person should help each child to prepare for any moves from the home, whether they are returning home, moving to another placement or adult care, or to live independently. In particular, staff need to be proactive in supporting and educating children on medication management and administration. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 17, paragraph 3.27)
- The registered person should maintain good employment practice. In particular, when using agency staff, they should make follow-up queries as necessary with the recruiting agency about references and any gaps in employment. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1)

## Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people, 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:** 1264840

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

**Registered provider:** Esland North Limited

**Registered provider address:** Suites 1 & 5, Riverside Business Centre, Foundry Lane, Milford, Belper, Derbyshire DE56 0RN

**Responsible individual:** Karl Haywood

**Registered manager:** Ellie Twaites

## Inspector

Rumbi Mangoma, Social Care Inspector



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