

2483823

Registered provider: Esland North Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is privately owned. It is registered to provide care for four children who may have social and emotional difficulties and/or learning disabilities.

There is an experienced registered manager.

Inspection dates: 3 and 4 January 2024

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 14 March 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: not applicable

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/03/2023	Full	Good
18/01/2022	Full	Good
17/12/2019	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
29/07/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Four children were living at the home at the time of this inspection. Children are well cared for. They build positive relationships with staff and enjoy activities together such as board games, days out and holidays. Special memories are captured in photo albums for each child to keep. One child has a particular interest in horses, which is very much encouraged. The manager recognises the importance of all children having opportunities to join clubs, try new interests and increase their social skills with other children.

The manager makes careful decisions about children moving into the home. He considers the wishes and feelings children already living at the home. This means that the home is generally settled and children get along. If issues arise between the children, staff help to resolve them.

The manager and staff have supported two children to move on successfully after living at the home for a significant period. Their moves were well planned in a child-centred way. Staff encourage children to stay in touch with the home. This helps children to maintain relationships with people who are important to them.

Overall, children have good school attendance and staff encourage their learning. Two children, who moved in recently, have been without formal education for four months. The manager has been advocating for a resolution. However, there has been delay due to wider circumstances. The manager is escalating his concerns, which is now having a positive impact. A timetable of educational activities has been implemented for the children until their education is secured.

Children are well supported with health needs and they attend routine appointments. They receive therapeutic help when needed. Staff help children with their personal hygiene and self-care. Two children have made progress with eating more healthily and taking care of their teeth.

The manager and staff keep detailed records about children's lives. The language used is mostly positive. However, staff occasionally use terms that can be construed as institutionalised.

Children have individualised behaviour support plans which guide staff in their care. However, some strategies designed to help communicate emotions have not been included for two children. This has the potential to cause confusion about implementing children's care plans.

There have been errors in relation to administering and recording medication. These took place over a specific period when staff were feeling demoralised. The manager has responded by providing extra training and supervision which has improved

practice in this area. The manager recognises the importance of having appropriate audits to ensure that errors do not recur.

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

Staff have the skills and training to help children when they feel overwhelmed or distressed. Serious incidents are rare. Staff maintain positive relationships with children through these times and physical interventions are seldom used.

Children rarely go missing from the home. There has been one occasion since the last inspection and staff responded to this in a well-co-ordinated way. The child was soon located and returned safely. A return interview was undertaken, and the child was able to talk to staff about the reasons why they went missing so that actions could be taken to support them.

Children rarely raise concerns about staff. There has been one allegation which was responded to well through the relevant child protection procedures. There have been two less serious allegations which were not fully investigated as the alleged incidents were witnessed by staff. Following the inspection, the manager recognised the importance of following up all allegations due to the potential for collusion between staff which could put children at increased risk of harm.

Children have opportunities to talk about their emotions and develop healthier ways of managing their feelings. However, staff record less serious incidents as key-work sessions. This does not provide an accurate picture of the number of incidents at the home. This limits opportunities for the manager to evaluate and analyse incidents as a whole and consider any emerging patterns which would be significant to children's care plans.

The manager and staff understand the risks posed to children. Risk management plans are detailed and regularly updated when there is an incident or accident. Social workers are informed when children have accidents or hurt themselves in play. However, the manager does not have a system to monitor and review children's injuries, which can limit opportunities to identify when injuries may be non-accidental.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager has led the home through a period of instability over the last few months. He has dealt with considerable staffing issues with the support of the responsible individual. This has taken a lot of time and energy. However, the manager has demonstrated resilience despite recent events and ensured that the impact on children has been minimal.

The provider has shown commitment to continuing improvements. They recently commissioned an independent quality assurance audit of the home. This identified actions to be taken to improve practice.

Some staff have left since the last inspection and new members of staff have joined. New staff receive a thorough induction and regular supervision. They unanimously say that support from the manager has been excellent. Staff feel that the atmosphere at the home has improved more recently. Staff have received particularly good support with personal circumstances. As a result, they feel valued and can carry out their work effectively.

The manager has appointed a deputy, who has begun to implement new systems at the home. These are beginning to embed and have a positive impact. The manager has a thorough development plan in place. However, he has not had the capacity to fully implement it yet.

External professionals have confidence in the home. They are happy with the standard of care provided. The manager has positive relationships with other professionals and advocates well on the behalf of children. As a result, children's wishes are listened to and they participate in decision-making about their lives.

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
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— 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)) In particular: analyse and evaluate patterns and trends and concerns relating to incidents involving children; ensure that the home's development plan is implemented in a timely way with regular reviews of progress and effectiveness.	1 April 2024

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff record information on individual children in a non-stigmatising way avoiding institutionalised language. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 62, paragraph 14.4)

- The registered person should ensure that any allegation of harm or abuse is addressed in line with the home's child protection policy. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 44, paragraph 9.17)
- The registered person should ensure that the care provided meets the child's needs. They should ensure that children are given opportunities to discuss the impact of the care or any changes that they feel they might need to it and these will be followed through into their care plans. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 18, paragraph 3.31)
- The registered person should ensure that 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)
- The registered person should ensure that staff can access appropriate resources to support their training needs in respect of understanding what constitutes an incident and how this needs to be recorded in children's files. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 53, paragraph 10.11)

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: 2483823

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Esland North Limited

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

Responsible individual: Karl Haywood

Registered manager: Lee Mangnall

Inspector

Laura Walker, Social Care Inspector

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