

2501791

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 social, emotional and mental health difficulties, and mild to moderate learning disabilities. At the time of the inspection, one child was living in the home.

There has been no registered manager in the home since the last full inspection.

Inspection dates: 20 and 21 June 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: 27 February 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: inadequate

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
27/02/2024	Full	Inadequate
14/06/2022	Full	Good
09/06/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the last full inspection, adults and the manager have worked hard to advocate for one child to remain living in the home. The child said, 'I feel heard.' Since then, the child has started equine therapy, had taster sessions with the air cadets and now plays for a football team each week. These enriching opportunities and activities are helping the child to feel a sense of belonging and permanency.

Adults have built and continue to build strong and nurturing relationships with the child. The child says that this is their home, and the child is a good advocate for the agreed 'house rules'. This is enabling the child to take pride in their home and take responsibility for reminding others to be respectful, for example by removing shoes before entering bedrooms and not eating in the lounge.

Adults have thoughtfully captured the child's voice throughout their plans. Adult guidance and practice are therapeutically informed and overseen by the home manager. When needed, adults receive additional training and strategies from the provider's clinician. One adult said, 'The additional oversight has helped inform and improve my relationship with the child.'

The manager and adults attend regular meetings for the child and have obtained all necessary statutory documents. However, some actions, agreed before the child moved into the home, have not been appropriately followed up by managers. This includes the placing authorities' difficulties in developing links with the child's family. The manager has worked hard to prioritise and advocate for the child in recent months and plans to address this next.

Adults supported the child to make a complaint to their placing authority to appropriately support them back into education. This has been successful. The manager is working closely with the child's school to review the amount of time that the child spends in the classroom and socialising with other children. However, during this period of transition, there is no clear plan outlining how adults should continue to support and promote the child's opportunities to learn informally in the home during school hours.

Adults sensitively support the child with personal matters. They use a nurturing approach that reduces any uncomfortable feelings, and they keep good records. The manager uses these records to monitor any patterns and has recently obtained therapeutic resources to help further inform adult practice. However, the child's general practitioner has not been consulted with. This has reduced the confidence of adults to develop long-term plans about how best to help the child to understand this matter in a way that is appropriate to their understanding and experiences.

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

Adults are positively supporting and promoting positive behaviours with the child. This has resulted in a reduction in how often adults need to hold the child to keep them and others safe. There has also been a significant reduction in the child using inappropriate language. The child said, 'I am learning to manage myself better. Adults see the best in me.' This approach is helping build the child's self-esteem and abilities in managing, at times, their difficult emotions.

Staff keep good records of when they need to hold children to keep them safe. When staff talk to children, they use caring language and take time to understand how holds and difficult incidents make children feel. The child values these conversations, and they help them to understand the steps that adults have taken to learn from incidents.

The manager has reviewed the child's individual behaviour support plan to make information for adults more streamlined and accessible. Strategies about how to support children are underpinned by the provider's therapeutic model of care, which all staff have received training in. The manager has good oversight of incidents and regularly meets with adults to review their actions and identify any learning. Consequently, children's plans evolve with children, and adults have a good understanding of their needs.

Adults talk to children about how to stay safe. They think creatively about how to engage children, acting as appropriate role models and making learning fun and accessible. For example, adults act out different scenarios and support the child to think about the right choices in tricky situations. This helps children to think for themselves and gives them opportunities to learn and explore their options in a safe and meaningful way.

Adults explain to children how greater independence, such as having access to internet enabled devices, can be achieved. This means that children understand what is expected of them and are supported to achieve their goals and aspirations.

Adults are creative in how they share important messages with children and use children's interests to help plan conversations with them. This way of working helps children to learn key lessons, for example when it is safe to talk to people online.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

A new manager was appointed on 1 May 2024 and has applied for registration with Ofsted. On the day of the inspection, the responsible individual, who has temporarily managed the home, was present and provided valuable support throughout the inspection process.

Adults say that the new manager is approachable and always takes time to check in with them. He has a good knowledge of how to increase children's skills and positive life opportunities. Adults say that this support and understanding have been invaluable in contributing to a more settled and relaxed environment for everyone.

The manager has a clear vision of empowering and upskilling adults. His succession planning and assignment of individual roles and responsibilities mean that adults feel invested in and part of a wider team. One adult said, 'I am now strongly being encouraged and supported to progress in my development.'

Adult supervision sessions are reflective and aid their professional development. Actions are systematically reviewed, and the manager monitors adults' progress in training and child-focused qualifications. Consequently, children are supported by a well-informed and appropriately trained workforce.

The manager has reviewed where adults store chemicals and sharp objects in the home, and this has helped the child to safely use the utility area. However, removed locks have left unsightly holes and marks on cupboard doors. Furthermore, there is a small area off the utility room that is cluttered and used for storage. This detracts from the otherwise homely environment adults and the child have created in the home.

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, The 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 education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— promote opportunities for each child to learn informally. (Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(v)) In particular, ensure that during a period of transition, there is a clear plan about how staff will continue to support and promote the child's opportunities to learn during school hours.	24 September 2024
The health and well-being standard is that— the health and well-being needs of children are met; and children receive advice, services, and support in relation to their health and well-being; and children are helped to lead healthy lifestyles. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff help each child to— achieve the health and well-being outcomes that are recorded in the child's relevant plans; and understand the child's health and well-being needs and the options that are available in relation to the child's health and well-being, in a way that is appropriate to the child's age and understanding. (Regulation 10 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(i)(ii))	24 September 2024

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that they provide a nurturing environment that is welcoming and supportive for children. In particular, review the homeliness of the utility room. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 14, paragraph 3.7)
- The registered person should understand for each child what the placing authority has recorded in the relevant plan as an appropriate level of contact with family and friends and continue to follow up and advocate for this in the best interest of the child. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 38, paragraph 8.3)

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: 2501791

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Esland North Limited

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

Responsible individual: Lucy Knox

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Kelly Monniot, Social Care Inspector

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