

# 2623568

**Esland North Limited**

Monitoring visit

## **Information about this children's home**

The home is operated by a private organisation and provides care for up to three children who have experienced emotional difficulties and have complex needs.

The previous registered manager has voluntarily cancelled his registration with Ofsted in February 2022 and is no longer working in the home. There is an interim manager in post who is yet to submit an application to register.

**Inspection date:** 7 March 2022

## **This monitoring visit**

Ofsted visited this setting on 19 January 2022 to carry out an interim inspection. The home was judged to be declined in effectiveness and concerns were identified in respect of the leadership and management of the home. Consequently, Ofsted issued a compliance notice against regulation 13 (the leadership and management standard). This visit examined the progress made in meeting the compliance notice.

Staff do not consistently safeguard children in the home. Since the last inspection, an incident occurred when a member of staff left the home during the night when they were working a sleep-in shift. At the time this happened, one of the children was anxious and unsettled. The child reported this information to other staff and the deputy manager. However, the child's views were not listened to, acted on or reported to the interim manager of the home. Furthermore, another staff member who witnessed what happened failed to follow the organisation's whistle-blowing procedure and report the incident. These shortfalls mean that staff do not always prioritise the safety and welfare of children.

Senior leaders do not always take effective action to safeguard children. For example, when allegations have been made against staff, the interim manager of the home reported her concerns to senior managers and sought to suspend a member of staff pending an investigation. However, this recommendation was overruled by a human resources manager and no guidance was provided by senior leaders.

Consequently, a member of staff subject to the allegation remained working in the home. This potentially left children at risk of harm.

Staff do not always follow the home's safeguarding policies for recording and reporting information shared by children. For example, following a disclosure by a child, one staff member failed to report and record this conversation for three days. The policy states that this information should be shared with the home's manager within 24 hours of the disclosure. This means that there was a delay in notifying the relevant professionals. This shortfall leaves children vulnerable and has the potential to compromise their safety.

Senior leaders and managers have failed to ensure that the home's policies provide clear guidance to safeguard children. For example, the home's safeguarding and whistle-blowing policies fail to identify who is responsible for making important decisions in response to allegations made against staff. As a result, the response to concerns raised about staff has been slow, and these staff have continued to work with children. This inadequate leadership has the potential to impact on the safety of children.

Due to the leaders' poor responses to safeguarding concerns, a compliance notice has been issued under regulation 13 (the leadership and management standard).

Despite some of the shortfalls identified, some children make progress. For example, one child has continued to make progress in his employment. He informed the inspector that he is to complete a leadership course as part of this role. Also, the interim manager has introduced an independence plan and the child is accessing driving lessons. This support helps children to develop their confidence and independence skills.

Staff are now receiving regular supervision. Sessions are of good quality and are reflective. They review children's progress and allow staff the opportunity to discuss any matters that are arising. As a result, some staff feel more supported and have commented positively on the changes made by the interim manager.

Since the last inspection, two staff have left the home and the home has suffered with periods of staff absence. This has had an impact on the home's rota. However, the interim manager has ensured that sufficient staffing levels are in place to support the two children. Furthermore, the manager has provided a supportive approach to ensure that staff, who are new to the home, are provided with the specific information to meet the children's needs. This means that staff understand children's plans and ensure that daily routines are maintained.

The interim manager is developing a good oversight of the home. She uses internal and external monitoring systems to identify actions, which improve the quality of care received by children.

Staff ensure that children's risk assessments are reviewed and regularly updated. Also, risk assessments now identify clear strategies for staff to follow to support children. Furthermore, staff have consulted with children and placing authorities and made changes to respond to children's wishes. This means that children's plans are current, reflective and provide staff with guidance to keep children safe.

The interim manager has taken action to improve the home's environment since the last inspection. She ensures that daily checks are carried out and any hazards posing a risk to children are identified and removed. Children were keen to show the inspector their bedrooms and the improvements made. This means that children now live in an environment which is safe and meets their needs.

Since the last inspection, external professionals have carried out visits to the home. They have commented positively on the changes and improvements made by the interim manager. One professional stated that they were 'very confident in the interim manager,' and that she had a 'far different approach, and she is totally on it'.

## Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement            |
|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| 18/01/2022      | Interim         | Declined in effectiveness       |
| 22/09/2021      | Full            | Requires improvement to be good |

## 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 protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child;</p> <p>have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm;</p> <p>understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person;</p> <p>take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and</p> <p>are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies.<br/>(Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(iii)(v)(vi)(vii))</p> <p>In particular, the provider should ensure that staff understand and follow strategies in children's risk assessments to keep them safe. The provider should also ensure that staff understand and take effective action in line with the home's safeguarding policies to protect the safety and welfare of children.</p> <p>This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.</p> | 24 April 2022 |

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| <p>The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(b))</p> <p>In particular, the provider should ensure that the home's rota is planned and delivered to ensure that staff working with children are suitably assessed to protect children from harm.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | <p>24 April 2022</p> |
| <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>lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose;</p> <p>ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; and</p> <p>understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(c)(f))</p> <p>In particular, senior leaders and managers should have clear systems in place to ensure that staff have the knowledge, skills and experience to safeguard children. Furthermore, leaders should implement systems to improve practice and ensure that staff understand children's progress.</p> <p>This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.</p> | <p>24 April 2022</p> |

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| <p>The registered person must operate a disciplinary procedure which, in particular—</p> <p>provides for the suspension from work of an employee if necessary in the interests of the safety or welfare of children; and</p> <p>provides that the failure on the part of an employee to report an incident of abuse, or suspected abuse, whether past or present, in relation to a child to the appropriate person is a ground on which disciplinary proceedings may be instituted. (Regulation 33 (2)(a)(b))</p> <p>In particular, senior leaders and managers must ensure that appropriate action is considered and taken with staff when they have failed to report an incident of abuse in relation to a child.</p>                                                       | <p>24 April 2022</p> |
| <p>The registered person must prepare and implement a policy which—</p> <p>is intended to safeguard children accommodated in the children's home from abuse or neglect; and</p> <p>sets out the procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation of abuse or neglect.</p> <p>The procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation of abuse or neglect must, in particular—</p> <p>describe the measures which may be necessary to protect children following an allegation of abuse or neglect. (Regulation 34 (1)(a)(b) (2)(e))</p> <p>In particular, senior leaders and managers should ensure that safeguarding policies in the home provide clear guidance on the actions to take when there are concerns with staff practice when safeguarding children.</p> | <p>24 April 2022</p> |

\*These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

## Information about this inspection

The purpose of this visit was to monitor the action taken and the progress made by the children's home since its last Ofsted inspection.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

## Children's home details

**Unique reference number:** 2623568

**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:** Jodie Whitehouse

**Registered manager:** Post vacant

### Inspector

Dean Wilton, Social Care Inspector

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