

2772637

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 part of a large organisation. It is registered to provide care for up to four children with social and emotional difficulties.

The home registered with Ofsted in May 2024. This was the home's first inspection.

At the time of this inspection, two children were living in the home. Both children shared their experiences of the home and their care during the inspection.

The registered manager is not currently at work. The home is led by an experienced manager who has submitted their registration application.

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 November 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: not previously inspected

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: not applicable

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Three children have moved into the home since it opened. Children are provided with gifts, such as name signs for their bedroom doors to make them feel welcome. The children's guide helps children to understand what life at the home is like, but it is lengthy and contains lots of writing. Managers updated the guide to make it more age-appropriate during the inspection.

One child has moved on from the home in line with their plan to live nearer to their family. Their ending was positive, and they were given a memory book which contained lots of photos of their time at the home. This helps to build the child's life story.

Children like the home. They personalise their bedrooms with their favourite toys and teddies, and photos and certificates of achievement are displayed. This creates a sense of permanence and belonging, which contributes to children feeling secure.

Children are making progress from their starting points. They respond well to the daily routines in the home, which is achieved through the implementation of consistent boundaries. As a result, children are sleeping well, and they are gaining confidence. One child is currently growing their hair because they want to look like a rock star. This is helping them to explore their identity.

Children and staff share positive relationships. Staff are proud of the children and smile when they talk about them. Children and staff have lots of fun together, for example, one child was very excited and enjoyed playing in the garden making snowballs with staff.

Children enjoy an active lifestyle, and their hobbies and interests are well supported. Children attend weekly swimming, boxing and horse-riding lessons. They also have opportunities to experience new things. One child tasted sushi for the first time during the inspection and said they liked it.

Children receive encouragement to do well in their education. Children's school attendance is good, and they are working hard to meet educational targets. Teachers describe communication with the home as 'excellent' and have noticed improvements in the children's behaviour since they have lived at the home. This is due to the children feeling settled. One child recently attended a residential school trip for the first time, supported by staff. This was a big achievement for the child.

The children are siblings and on occasion squabble and argue. The use of therapeutic approaches helps the children to feel calmer when they become angry or frustrated with each other. This is helping the children to improve their relationship and supports their overall development. There is a clear plan to support the children to enjoy spending time together at Christmas.

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

Children say they feel safe and named the staff they would talk to if they were worried about anything. This is a testament to the positive relationships children share with the adults looking after them.

Staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities and understand children's risks and vulnerabilities. Clear risk assessments and safety plans are in place. The plans are kept under constant review and are frequently updated to ensure that staff have the accurate information that they need to keep the children safe.

Staff look beyond children's presenting behaviours, to try to understand what may cause them to be upset. They provide reassurance and strategies to help the children to express themselves without causing harm to themselves or others.

Direct work with children is strong. Staff have important discussions with children about being kind to each other and the staff. The local police community support officer has also visited the children to reinforce this important message. This direct work is helping the children to understand how their behaviour has an impact on others and to develop socially acceptable behaviour. As a result, the children's life chances are improved.

Staff use physical intervention as a last resort. When physical intervention is used, it is necessary and proportionate and children's views and feelings about being held are gathered. The manager generally has good oversight of restrictive practice and supports her staff to learn from each incident. However, on one occasion, managers did not talk to staff about a physical hold within 48 hours. This delay could hinder the ability to address any practice concerns. In addition, managers had difficulty locating some electronic records to demonstrate discussions with staff had been held.

Children's health needs are understood. However, on three occasions, staff have failed to follow safe medicine practice and made errors. The errors were quickly identified and did not impact on children's safety. Prompt action was taken to improve medicine safety, and staff received further training in this area. This shows lessons have been learned because no further errors have occurred.

The manager responds well to complaints and disclosures from children. Complaints are listened to and thoroughly investigated following advice from the local authority designated officer. Restorative meetings to help the staff and children to repair relationships are held, and the learning from the internal investigations is shared with professionals. Letters are sent to the children to share the outcome of their complaints, but the letters are long and are not age appropriate. The manager gave assurance she will address this.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is well led. The manager is experienced and suitably qualified. She has good oversight of children's care and has been in post for four months. She is managing the home while the registered manager is not at work. She is supported by a competent deputy manager and the responsible individual.

The manager has high standards and high aspirations for children. Staff say her leadership style is very good, and her support encourages them to continually improve to the benefit of children.

The manager is a strong advocate for children and challenges decisions when they are not made in children's best interests. This shows her dedication and commitment to wanting the best outcomes for the children.

Staff feel supported and say morale is high. They receive training and regular reflective supervision to support their practice and development. Staff say their training helps them to care for children well. This includes training in relation to the therapeutic model of care used.

Team meetings are held monthly. During meetings, staff are given the opportunity to share information and refresh their knowledge around procedures. Staff contribute to the meetings and can reflect on their practice as a group.

Leaders understand the strengths and weaknesses of the home. They are realistic about some areas that need to be developed further, particularly given the relative inexperience of the newly formed team.

The manager is working hard to navigate the electronic records system, which was upgraded to its newest format in September. They acknowledge that this caused a delay in providing some care records. The manager welcomed feedback and gave assurance that the shortfalls identified at this inspection would be addressed.

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 registered person must ensure that— within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes— the name of the child; details of the child's behaviour leading to the use of the measure; the date, time and location of the use of the measure; a description of the measure and its duration; details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure; the name of the person who used the measure ("the user"), and of any other person present when the measure was used; the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result of the measure; within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")— has spoken to the user about the measure; and has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and	27 December 2024

within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure.

(Regulation 35 (3)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(b)(i)(ii)(c))

Specifically, the registered person must ensure that staff are spoken with following incidents of restraint within 48 hours to provide the opportunity for reflection and identify any learning to improve practice to benefit children.

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that all care records stored electronically can be easily accessed by anyone with a legitimate need to view them and, if required, to reproduce them in a legible form. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 14.2)
- The registered person should ensure that information, including the children's guide and the outcomes of complaints, are age-appropriate and available in an accessible format to make sure each child can understand it. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 24, paragraph 4.21)

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: 2772637

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, England DE56 0RN

Responsible individual: Sarah Bourne

Registered manager: Kim Calder

Inspectors

Amy Richards, Social Care Inspector
Julia Thompson, Social Care Inspector

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