

Inspection report for children's home

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| <b>Unique reference number</b> | SC005067        |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Christy Wannop  |
| <b>Type of inspection</b>      | Interim         |
| <b>Provision subtype</b>       | Children's home |

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|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Registered person</b>         | Esland North Limited                                                  |
| <b>Registered person address</b> | Unit 4, Ednaston Home Farm Brailsford<br>ASHBOURNE Derbyshire DE6 3AY |
| <b>Responsible individual</b>    | John Stamp                                                            |
| <b>Registered manager</b>        | Victoria Chant                                                        |
| <b>Date of last inspection</b>   | 14/08/2013                                                            |

|                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Inspection date</b>                   | 07/08/2014                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Previous inspection                      | adequate                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Enforcement action since last inspection | In June 2013, Ofsted issued a compliance notice to ensure the registered person notified relevant parties of significant events and to ensure HMCI was sent a copy of the report of each visit undertaken to monitor the conduct of the home. At a subsequent full inspection in August 2014, the registered person had taken sufficient action to meet the compliance notice. |

## This inspection

This home was judged adequate at the last full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has **sustained effectiveness**.

This service has had a new manager since July 2013, who was registered in October 2013. She holds a level 4 qualification in working with children and managing residential services and has a history of working in residential care and management. The company providing the service has changed its name, though the responsible individual remains consistent.

The Registered Manager demonstrates the service's capacity to improve through effective action to meet three regulatory shortfalls and five national minimum standard recommendations made at the last inspection in August 2013. Records of behaviour management and restraint now clearly identify patterns for individuals. Strategies used to address unacceptable behaviours are now consistent, documented and regularly reviewed. Consequently, young people benefit from a comprehensive approach to managing their behaviour. The Registered Manager has ensured that young people understand if their complaints cannot be upheld and details of the actions taken by the home are now transparent. One young person wanted a riding hat, and after an explanation about how she could contribute and get one, wrote: 'I am happy.'

The Registered Manager has also worked proactively to improve the quality of documentation and response from local authorities to the service. They now have a good response to requests for statutory information. Internal plans for current residents are now consistently supported by up-to-date statutory placement plans and case files include all essential documentation.

Young people have significantly increased their life chances since moving to the home. From living rough, risky behaviour and non-school attendance, young people are now planning futures that involve further education at BTEC or foundation level. The Registered Manager has implemented and models a clear approach of positive parenting that young people have lacked. She has an insightful understanding of the meaning behind young people's behaviour and the challenges they present. Staff are alert to insecurity and anxiety and the Registered Manager provides them with support to deliver her 'robust parenting' approach. She promotes independence but is clear that when young people are unable to care for themselves, because of their past experience, staff will step in. Staff are sensitive and respectful of young people's personal care needs. They advise on personal hygiene, clean rooms, cook and provide the essential nurturing needed until young people are sufficiently secure to develop their own skills for self-reliance. Young people accept guidance and boundaries from staff.

Young people who have previously gone missing on a regular basis and been vulnerable because of drugs and alcohol, are now safe. They have responded to firm parenting and close staff care to establish trust and relationships. They now plan for overnights with friends and talk to staff, instead of getting involved in risky behaviour. When they are ready, young people learn to take responsibility for their health successfully.

Criminal behaviour has ceased for all. Young people get help to stop involvement with drugs and alcohol and are encouraged to reduce smoking, getting double pocket money if they do not: a real incentive.

School attendance is dramatically improved and all young people are in full-time education. Young people who have not previously attended school, now attend and are studying for full range of GCSEs. Staff support the education of some young people by being available in school at break times when they face a greater challenge. The Registered Manager has worked with educational psychologists to support changes in school placements and ensure that young people maximise their opportunities.

Young people get the support they need to make and sustain safe, positive friendships with people in their local community, through school or college. Friends and family are welcome and placing authorities have commented on the service's success with this: 'Staff build up good relationships with family members.'

The Registered Manager ensures that everyone gets a good holiday of their choice, whether abroad or visiting London for shows and overnight hotel stays. She is planning a summer camping trip with young people and their friends. Social workers

commented about the benefit from the staff's approach to active, healthy leisure: 'A lot of activities through which the young people can build self-esteem and develop new pursuits.'

The manager has inducted and motivated a largely new staff team, though some agency staff are still needed. The manager monitors their use closely. Staff training and induction is systematic and relates well to the functions of the home and the needs of the young people. All staff are either appropriately qualified, or enrolled to complete the nationally recognised level 3 qualification. Staff value professional supervision and say they have the time to learn about the young people's needs before starting to work directly with them. Staff are clear about their responsibilities to respond and report child protection incidents. The Registered Manager is rigorous in her analysis of any staff action to ensure that young people are safe at all times. The local authority safeguarding officer reports no concerns.

The Statement of Purpose gives the aim of the service to offer, 'an enduring sense of permanence.' For the current five young people, and since November 2013, they have been successful in delivering this. The Registered Manager has established good practice in the admissions she has managed. Placing social workers have confidence in her, based on their experience with other children and approach her when they have young people in mind, rather than wait till the point of crisis for an emergency placement. She meets with young people in their existing placements, they visit and talk about what living at the home is like and what is on offer. The care taken over planned admissions has paid dividends. Managerial monitoring is generally effective. The Registered Manager has a comprehensive knowledge of young people and how to organise and deliver the care they need.

However, there have been some weaknesses in the organisation of the service. In October 2013, the organisation's directors admitted a young person in crisis for a short period, in the absence of the Registered Manager. The new admission policy states that the home: 'will offer emergency admissions and respite care, provided this is not detrimental to the young people already residing in the home.' However, there was no evidence that the organisation had any information about the young person's care needs to enable staff to care for everyone safely, nor that they had carried out an assessment of the impact of the young person's challenging behaviour and complex needs on the other young people in placement. The placement ended when the young person was moved to another home operated by the organisation. This high-risk, emergency admission jeopardised the permanence of the three young people in situ because the registered person did not consider their welfare and safety at the time.

The results of the manager's informal consultation with placing authorities, young people and their families is not reflected in the formal review report about the quality of care. Additionally, a report on behalf of the registered provider in January omitted crucial information about a safeguarding referral and so the registered person may have been unaware of this aspect of the conduct of the home and the

standard of care. However, the organisation has very recently changed the arrangements for these visits and reporting to the registered person in response to new regulations in April this year. Previous reports have been done by employees of the organisation who hold other responsibilities at the home, or by a relative of a director. The registered person plans that in future they will be carried out by an independent person.

This is a service on a trajectory of improvement, under clear, confident and skilled leadership from the Registered Manager. She is developing child-friendly young people's plans; the format and presentation is tailored to their interests, for example in cartoon characters. As a result, young people have the opportunity to be better engaged in plans for their care. The manager also advocates for additional therapeutic intervention, such as counselling and art therapy where she thinks young people would benefit. She has often provided a consistent link for other professionals, when there has been turnover of local authority social workers. The staff have helped young people to seek satisfaction from their placing authority when not happy with their service. Placing authorities view staff positively: 'Generally a consistent staff group who can build relationships'. Young people's meetings have been transformed into effective forums for discussion about life topics. They have constructive, but also wishful ideas about how they think the home could improve. They want: a trampoline; better basketball and hard play areas for ball games; a sauna and a dog. Young people are doing very well at this home and their outcomes are good. The service is successful in helping them to turn their lives around and make positive choices.

## Information about this children's home

The home is part of a small private organisation providing up to six placements for young people who have emotional and behavioural difficulties.

## Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement  |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------------|
| 14/08/2013      | Full            | adequate              |
| 24/06/2013      | Full            | inadequate            |
| 04/02/2013      | Interim         | satisfactory progress |
| 14/11/2012      | Full            | adequate              |

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

## Statutory Requirements

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person/s meets the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

| Reg.         | Requirement                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Due date   |
|--------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| 11<br>(2001) | conduct the children's home so as to promote and make proper provision for the safeguarding and welfare of children accommodated there. Specifically, the registered person should ensure good practice in line with their Statement of Purpose and admission policy, about balancing the needs of existing children in placement with any emergency admissions (Regulation 11(1) (a)) | 30/09/2014 |
| 34<br>(2001) | ensure the system for monitoring Schedule 6 matters and improving the quality of care provided in the children's home, provides for consultation with children accommodated in the home, their parents and placing authorities. (Regulation 34)                                                                                                                                        | 30/09/2014 |

## Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the service should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure visits carried out under Regulation 33 include relevant checks set out in regulations and guidance. (NMS 21.7)

## **What inspection judgements mean**

At the interim inspections we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

## **Information about this inspection**

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service and to consider how well it complies with the relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the framework of inspection for children's homes.