

SC005067

Registered provider: Esland North Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is run by a private organisation and provides medium- to long-term care and accommodation for up to six young people who have experienced adverse childhood experiences that have led to associated complex behaviours.

The manager registered with Ofsted in 2018.

Inspection dates: 28 to 29 November 2019

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **requires improvement to be good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **requires improvement to be good**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **requires improvement to be good**

The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 19 February 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
19/02/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
29/08/2018	Full	Good
30/05/2017	Full	Requires improvement to be good
31/01/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

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— 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)(f)) In particular, ensure that staff have regular opportunities to reflect on the challenging behaviour of young people and use learning to develop their practice.	20/01/2020
The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that children are admitted to the home only if their needs are within the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home's statement of purpose. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b)(2)(a))	20/01/2020

Recommendations

- When a child needs additional health or well-being support, staff should work with the child's placing authority to enable proper and immediate access to any specialist medical, psychological or psychiatric support required, and challenge them through Regulation 5 - engaging with the wider system to ensure children's

needs are met, if this does not happen. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 34, paragraph 7.10)

- The registered person must ensure that staff have the relevant skills and knowledge to be able to: respond to the health needs of children; administer basic first aid and minor illness treatment; help children to manage long-term conditions and where necessary meet specific individual health needs arising from a disability, chronic condition or other complex needs. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 34, paragraph 7.12)

In particular, ensure that specialist advice and support is consistently recorded.

- Staff should be familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

Young people's experiences and progress are mixed. Poor dynamics and relationships between some young people mean that recently there has been a high level of challenging incidents in the home. Staff have required support from the police and paramedics on a significant number of occasions to keep young people safe. As a result, some young people's recent day-to-day experiences have been unsettling, leaving them feeling anxious and distressed.

The inspection identified evidence of how young people's distress results in significant damage to the home. For example, young people had smashed a window and patio doors. Challenging incidents and a period of instability has had a significant impact on some young people. A young person told the inspector, 'It's been really stressful. It reminds me of stuff from my past. I go to bed thinking that something is going to kick off. It affects me at school.'

A young person's education progress has been impacted by recent challenging incidents in the home. However, overall, she has made progress considering her starting point. Another young person has achieved several qualifications and is planning to start college. Staff support her to write CVs and apply for jobs. She has developed a range of independence skills and feels increasingly positive about her future.

Young people have strong and trusting relationships with staff. They speak positively about staff and feel that their support has helped them to make progress. Staff's and young people's interactions are nurturing and affectionate. A young person told the inspector, 'Staff have helped me a lot. They kept pushing me to do better in life and get somewhere. I think they're amazing. They comfort me.'

Regular consultation with the in-house therapist provides staff with a specialist oversight of the care young people receive. Unfortunately, this learning is not always recorded and shared across the staff team. This has the potential to develop inconsistent staff practice.

Some young people have benefited from direct therapy sessions. In addition, they learn strategies to self-regulate when they are distressed and anxious. Recently, one young person's mental health has deteriorated. As a result, she has required crisis support from paramedics and hospital staff. Managers did not request an up-to-date mental health assessment of the young person's needs in a timely manner. This was a missed opportunity to provide the young person with specialist care in line with her needs.

Young people enjoy a range of activities and enjoyable experiences. This includes trips to local theme parks and impromptu shopping trips. Staff support young people to develop hobbies and interests. One young person has recently joined a boxing club while another was a member of a football team. Another young person enjoys spending time with her friends in the community. These experiences support young people to feel part of their local community.

Feedback from professionals is generally positive about the overall progress of young people and the quality of care they receive. A social worker told the inspector that a young person 'had made progress in the majority of their issues'. An independent reviewing officer stated, 'Staff are caring and supportive and provide a nurturing environment for her [young person].'

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

Some young people's behaviours have been extremely challenging. Poor relationship dynamics between young people have undermined staff efforts to address this behaviour. As a result, there have been a large number of challenging incidents, including physical interventions. Records of these incidents are largely well detailed, and management oversight is in place. However, the registered manager and staff do not have enough opportunities to fully reflect on these incidents. This undermines their ability to recognise possible patterns and triggers and to use learning to improve the quality of care young people receive.

Some young people say that bullying has taken place in the home. Staff challenge incidents of bullying and ensure that work is undertaken with young people to improve relationships. Unfortunately, on occasions, the poor dynamics between some young people have had a significant impact on their emotional well-being. Managers have recently moved a child into temporary accommodation while an alternative placement is found for him. This has had a calming effect on the home and improved young people's safety and wellbeing.

Risk assessments are detailed and up to date. They provide staff with clear measures to keep young people safe. Staff offer young people targeted key-work sessions to help

them understand and address their risk-taking behaviour. Staff also provide young people with a high level of supervision and support.

Young people can seek support from trusted members of staff when they feel anxious or troubled. They feel that staff listen to them and take their concerns seriously. This open and supportive ethos helps them to feel safe.

There are occasions when young people go missing from the home. Overall, staff offer a robust response to keep them safe. For example, they actively search for them and work effectively with the local police to return young people safely. Staff use key-work sessions to help young people explore the triggers to these incidents and understand the risks that they are exposed to. Young people also have the opportunity to talk to someone independent of the home upon their return.

The registered manager has effective links with some key safeguarding agencies. When necessary, she initiates multi-agency meetings to share her concerns about young people's welfare. This joined-up working provides an additional oversight of risk and creates plans to keep children safe.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

Managers recently admitted a young person into the home despite a sustained period of instability. This young person later went missing with her peers and was arrested due to her challenging behaviour in the home. Furthermore, other admissions during this inspection period have resulted in challenging incidents in the home. This is due to a range of factors, including poor relationship dynamics between young people and their failure to settle and invest in the home. This period of instability and challenge has resulted in some young people feeling increasingly anxious and unsettled. The registered manager and leaders have reflected on the appropriateness of recent admissions to the home and the impact on young people. They are not planning to admit any new young people for the foreseeable future as they seek to embed a period of stability and calm.

Overall, the quality of case records is good. However, some records of significant incidents, including self-harm, lack information and are not specific about the actions staff take to de-escalate young people's behaviours.

The staff team is adequately resourced and provides young people with a high level of support and supervision. Staff work well together and offer each other practical and emotional support during periods of challenge. Staff know young people well and genuinely care about them. A member of staff told the inspector, 'We are like a big family. We support each other well. We are a strong team.'

Young people's plans are individualised and clearly identify their needs. The registered manager and staff regularly review and update a range of internal plans, which include behaviour management strategies and risk assessments. They work proactively with a range of agencies. This proactive approach ensures that young people receive care in line with local authority plans.

Specialist training equips staff with the skills and knowledge to meet children's needs. Staff also take part in debriefs after challenging incidents to identify strengths and areas to develop. Regular staff supervision sessions focus on young people's progress and staff development.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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: SC005067

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Esland North Limited

Registered provider address: Esland Limited, Suite 1, Riverside Business Centre, Foundry Lane, Milford, Belper, Derbyshire DE56 0RN

Responsible individual: Lyndsey Sim

Registered manager: Lydia Harris

Inspector

Gareth Leckey: social care inspector

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