

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 complex social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, aged between 10 and 17 on arrival. The registered manager, who was suitably qualified, has recently moved to manage another home in the group. The current manager has applied to be the registered manager.

Inspection dates: 29 to 30 August 2018

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 30 May 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
30/05/2017	Full	Requires improvement to be good
31/01/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
17/05/2016	Full	Good
16/02/2016	Interim	Improved 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
In meeting the quality standards the registered person must, and must ensure that staff— if the registered person considers, or staff consider, a placing authority's or a relevant person's performance or response to be inadequate in relation to their role, challenge the placing authority or the relevant person to seek to ensure that each child's needs are met in accordance with the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 5 (c)) This is with reference to challenging education professionals to allow the home's staff, when necessary, to remain at school or college in order to prevent young people going missing.	28/09/2018
The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard requires the registered person to ensure that staff— 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. (Regulation 12(1)(a)(i)) In particular, ensure that when young people are at high risk of going missing in the community, risk assessments take account of the need to deploy staff of the same gender so that they can accompany them to public toilets if required.	28/09/2018

Recommendations

- Staff should seek to meet the child's basic needs in the way that a good parent would, recognising that many children in residential care have experienced environments where these needs have not been consistently met – doing so is an important aspect of demonstrating that the staff care for the child and value them as an individual. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.7)

This is with reference to improving the condition of the young people's shower to

make it look better maintained and more hygienic.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Young people trust committed staff and speak warmly of them. They say that they know that staff really care about them. One young person said, 'The staff are so nice. I love them. They have made me happy.' Young people have fun with enthusiastic and energetic staff, engaging in sports and activities like go-karting. Staff support young people's physical, emotional and social development.

The home is welcoming and comfortable, and the walls display the young people's artwork. Staff and young people often eat together, chatting and exchanging jokes. Young people say that the home feels like a family home. Careful matching has resulted in young people getting on well together and creating a friendly atmosphere in the home. Young people go to staff for hugs and say that they can talk to them about anything that they are worried about. Staff listen to young people and involve them in their plans and decisions about the home. An area for improvement is that the young people's shower is in need of some refurbishment so that it looks better cared for and is more hygienic.

Consistent care enables highly vulnerable young people to achieve stability and a sense of security. They can focus on their own needs, improve their self-esteem and make progress. All the young people regularly attend and engage in education, and staff are supporting two young people to move to college in the new term. Young people make significant progress in gaining independence skills, managing their emotions and behaviour better and improving family relationships. One young person is engaging in counselling for the first time.

Staff support young people's identity needs, including cultural diversity and family contact. Young people are keen to improve their health and they enthusiastically attend the gym, go swimming and eat healthily. Staff support them to attend medical appointments, the dentist and opticians.

Young people say that when they arrive, staff help them to feel at home. When they move on, caring staff ensure that they are well prepared and continue to support them. One young person, who has recently moved to independence, makes regular telephone calls to staff to update them on her progress. When she left, staff made a short video as she thanked them for all that they had done for her. She said that she had never felt so cared for and that she was leaving with qualifications and a positive mindset. She even thanked the staff's dogs and said that she knew that the team would continue to do good work for future young people.

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

Highly trained staff keep extremely vulnerable young people safe. Young people say that

they feel safe here, and professionals and family members echo this.

Young people with significant histories of going missing and child sexual exploitation demonstrate awareness of the risks and insight into the negative impact of these experiences. Staff engage young people effectively in creative and in-depth key work to help them learn how to keep themselves safe. This work includes topics such as going missing, drugs and substance misuse, child sexual exploitation and self-harm. There has been a significant reduction in young people going missing since the last inspection.

Staff's ability to keep young people safe is enhanced by the rural location and positive relationships in the home. The registered manager decides on staffing ratios in consultation with placing authorities. These levels are reviewed as the safeguarding needs of each young person change, enabling them to make progress towards independence.

When young people go missing, staff search for them and follow clear protocols to find them and return them safely to the home. They engage with families and in multi-agency work, sharing information and effective safeguarding practice.

The registered manager regularly reviews the detailed and relevant risk assessments, which provide staff with valuable strategies to help reduce risks. Staff read and sign updated risk assessments and behaviour management plans. Analytical impact assessments enable the service to match young people to ensure that staff can meet each of their safeguarding needs.

An area for improvement is to ensure that risk assessments consider the need for staff to be able to monitor young people at all times in the community. For example, one young person was able to go missing when male staff were unable to accompany her to female public toilets. On this occasion, the young person was missing for a short period of time and there was no negative impact on her well-being.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

There has been significant improvement in the leadership and management of the home since the last inspection. The registered manager and staff positively addressed the previous requirements made at the last inspection. This has resulted in a stable staff team, better access to education for young people and improved case recording. The registered manager recently left the home, and the new manager, who has worked at this home for over two years, has applied to be the registered manager.

The dedicated staff demonstrate a clear understanding of the child-focused ethos of the home, and their practice reflects this. The manager and staff are knowledgeable about the background and care needs of each young person and are aspirational for them.

The new manager has a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development of her team and has plans in place to drive up standards further. Staff value regular supervision and team meetings where the manager listens to them and they can

confidently express their views and ideas. They feel strongly supported by the manager and by each other.

Staff undertake a wide range of relevant training which supports their practice and enables them to understand and meet the needs of young people. Staff are up to date with training. Communication between team members is good. Handovers are child focused and detailed and provide each staff member with clear guidance for the work that they are to undertake with young people. Key work is frequent and is focused on the plans for the young people and additional needs as they arise. Case files and records are clear and detailed, and the manager challenges placing authorities when they fail to provide essential information about young people.

Multi-agency working is good, and professionals and family members speak very positively about the service that the staff team provides. The manager and staff advocate on behalf of young people to ensure that young people's voices are heard.

One area for improvement is for the manager to always challenge other services when they are not meeting the needs of young people. In May, one young person went missing during the school day. The headteacher at the school had insisted that it was not necessary for staff from the home to remain on site during the school day, even though the young person was at very high risk of going missing and child sexual exploitation. The registered manager did not sufficiently challenge the school about this. In the absence of staff waiting at school with the young person, she went missing for a considerable period of time. After she returned the registered manager once again placed staff at the school during the day to keep her safe.

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 Ltd, Suite 1, Riverside Business Centre, Foundry Lane, Milford, Belper, Derbyshire DE56 0RN

Responsible individual: Lyndsey Sim

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Louise Whittle, social care inspector

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