

SC023737

Registered provider: Ethelbert Specialist Homes Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home provides care and accommodation for up to three children with social and emotional difficulties. Historically, the home has focused on providing care for girls.

The registered manager is currently on maternity leave and there has been no registered manager in place since 1 September 2021.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, Ofsted suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. Ofsted returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021.

Ofsted last visited this setting on 14 October 2020 to carry out a monitoring visit. The report is published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection dates: 14 and 15 February 2022

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 **requires improvement to be good**

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

Date of last inspection: 31 January 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
31/01/2019	Full	Good
07/02/2018	Full	Good
19/01/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
30/08/2016	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The mutual trust and respect that exists between the children and the staff is a feature of this home. The staff team provides a high level of consistency in the care of the children, with clear structure and boundaries. They show warmth and affection for the children. These factors combine to provide the children with a sense of security and well-being. The children say that they feel safe and cared for. One child said, 'This is my home, and this is my family.'

The children settle in this positive environment and their need to test boundaries reduces. Their ability for self-control increases and they become more able to focus on the normal challenges of adolescence, like developing a clear identity and a positive sense of self.

The children's care is highly individualised, and their wide diversity is embraced and celebrated. The children show attachment to and tolerance for each other and, despite their significant differences, can happily join in shared activities. The stability and security that they experience gives them confidence to also engage in independent activities outside the home, such as police and army cadets, and youth clubs. The children have a rich experience of life and a positive care experience.

All the children are positively engaged with education services and are making the expected progress. The staff liaise closely with the children's different schools and actively support their learning. Although their daily care plans are clear, plans to prepare the children for their futures are lacking in rigour, focus and urgency. This is also the case for plans to help the children to overcome longstanding health conditions.

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

The settled home provides the children with feelings of safety and well-being. This is reflected in the substantial reduction in disruptive events since the last inspection. There have been no instances of children going missing for more than 18 months.

The risks and vulnerabilities associated with each child are clearly identified. The plans to guide staff to manage and reduce these, where possible, are current and clear. Staff are vigilant and knowledgeable in supporting the children's safe use of the internet. They are swift and thorough in responding to any incidents of self-harm, and to revising the relevant plans to keep the children safe. These positive practices help the children to keep safe and feel protected.

The home is maintained to a good standard and has the atmosphere of a normal family home. Health and safety checks are carried out at the planned frequencies, and fire safety practice meets the required standards. Staff know the locality well and allow the children to be involved in community activities and to exercise levels

of independence appropriate to their understanding and abilities. This enables them to learn how to keep themselves safe and build confidence.

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

The manager regularly monitors the completion of key tasks, including the regular health and safety checks. However, the monitoring falls short in exploring effectively the factors that might affect the quality of care being provided and using such information to inform the manager's quality of care reviews. This results in missed opportunities for improvement.

The children are being provided with stability and a sense of security and belonging, but there is currently insufficient planning and drive for the children to achieve important milestones and goals relevant to their journey to independence. There is also no joined-up approach to helping a child to overcome a potentially life-affecting condition. This limits the progress that the children can make.

There is a suitably experienced manager in place, and he has submitted a registration application to Ofsted. He displays a strong commitment to the children and to improving the standards of their care. Staff express confidence in his leadership. This positive leadership contributes to the stability and sense of purpose of the staff team.

A small but complete staff team works closely together to provide consistent care for the children and provides them with appropriate levels of supervision. The staff are supported through regular team meetings and individual as well as group supervision. These factors contribute to a stable staff team who provide consistency and a sense of security to the children.

Recruitment practice is maintained to a high standard, with staff and children contributing to the selection process. All required vetting procedures are completed. A new member of staff expressed appreciation for a thorough induction process. The completion of mandatory training is closely monitored and staff have ready access to further relevant training. These positive practices help to ensure that staff are suitable and competent to provide good-quality care for the children.

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 health and well-being standard is that— the health and well-being needs of children are met; children receive advice, services and support in relation to their health and well-being. (Regulation 10 (1)(a)(b)) In particular, that children are helped effectively to overcome potentially life-affecting conditions.	17 May 2022
The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)) In particular, that plans are clearly focused on goals that are relevant to the children's journeys towards independence.	17 May 2022

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that the quality of care review (regulation 45) focuses on the specific circumstances of the home at that time. Using their professional judgement, they will decide on what factors to focus on. They will also consider what information or data recorded in the home will form part of the evidence base for their analysis and conclusions. The written report will focus on where and how the quality of care can be improved and/or good standards maintained, and the actions required in the next 6 months to achieve this. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.4)

Information about this inspection

The inspector has 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: SC023737

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Ethelbert Specialist Homes Limited

Registered provider address: Ethelbert Specialist Homes Limited, 17 Leigh Road, Ramsgate, Kent CT12 5EU

Responsible individual: Leslie Davenport

Registered manager: Alisia Whiteman

Inspector

John Pledger, Social Care Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2022