

SC023739

Registered provider: Ethelbert Specialist Homes Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is privately operated and provides care for up to three children who experience social and emotional difficulties. In line with the home's statement of purpose, it is currently being used exclusively for boys.

At the time of the inspection, three children were living in the home.

The manager registered with Ofsted in October 2024.

Inspection dates: 29 and 30 October 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: 13 September 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
13/09/2023	Full	Good
22/06/2023	Full	Inadequate
28/02/2023	Full	Good
16/03/2022	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are happy, well cared for and like living in the home. They receive a high standard of individualised care, and progress and achievements can be seen in all areas.

A knowledgeable and caring staff team provides a warm, nurturing and structured environment. The home is bright, welcoming and well furnished. Children are encouraged to make the home their own. Each child's personal space is comfortable and reflects their interests.

Children are well listened to. They have opportunities to talk about their ideas for the home and activities they would like to try. Children know how to make complaints and can identify a trusted adult who they can share any worries with. Staff actively listen and respond to children. This means that children feel heard by the staff supporting them.

Children enjoy a range of activities. They are supported to explore their hobbies and interests. Children said that they have fun at the home and enjoy the activities on offer. Children benefit from positive daily experiences. These experiences help them to explore their identity, socialise and develop healthy lifestyles.

Children's attendance and progress at school are good. Staff understand the support children need to engage in education. Carefully planned transitions into school ensure that experiences of education are positive. Some children who were not attending education are now attending full time. One child has received an award for their educational achievements.

Children's moves into the home are well planned. Managers help children to settle and overcome the personal challenges they experience. Some children have needed to move out of the home at short notice. Managers have reflected on lessons learned and have made improvements to the planning processes.

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

Staff understand their responsibilities in keeping children safe and are acutely aware of emerging risks. Staff are skilled in understanding children's emotional well-being and recognise changes in their behaviours. Children engage in one-to-one work to navigate difficult emotions. These sessions are reflective and help children and staff to share any worries. Concerns are escalated promptly and appropriately to managers. One child told the inspectors, 'Staff keep me safe.'

Staff recognise the importance of children experiencing age-appropriate risks. Children take risks appropriate to their age and level of understanding. For example, one child has learned to travel by bus to school independently. This approach helps children to gain independence skills in a safe way.

Managers are proactive in considering new strategies when responding to children's behaviour. This has resulted in a reduction in physical interventions for one child. Physical interventions are used only when there is no alternative. When they are used, they are proportionate and for the least amount of time necessary. Children are provided with the opportunity to talk and reflect following incidents.

There are inconsistencies in the recording of interventions. Some records lack the required details. Consequently, managers are unable to consider all factors surrounding the use of restraint.

There is clear guidance in place for staff to respond to identified risks. Managers regularly review plans. Guidance outlines the immediate actions staff should take to keep children safe. However, plans do not always guide staff on what actions to take to reduce the risk of future harm. As a result, there are some gaps in supporting children to develop the knowledge and skills to keep themselves safe.

There are systems in place to meet children's health needs. Plans include consultation with professionals. However, on two occasions, staff have been unable to obtain medication from the prescriber for a child. The registered manager did not identify or escalate this as a safeguarding concern. Up-to-date advice was not sought from a medical practitioner and the impact on the child was not considered.

Safer recruitment strategies are robust, well managed and documented. Staff recruited to work in the home are safe to do so.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Leaders and managers are united, clear and realistic about the home's strengths and shortfalls. Managers have reflected openly on the challenges and achievements experienced in the last year. They demonstrate a commitment to improving the home and ensuring that children receive the best care. Managers take pride in the home and the trusting relationships they have built with the children. Managers have a good understanding of the progress children have made and celebrate their achievements.

There has been a significant turnover in staff. In addition, there has been a change of registered manager since the last inspection in September 2023. Leaders and managers have taken measures to ensure the careful management of any changes. As a result, children have continued to receive consistent care, and staff feel supported by leaders and managers.

Effective supervision takes place frequently. Supervision is helpful and supports staff to reflect on the children's changing needs. Managers have increased the support available to staff during periods of change and challenge. Additional group supervision and reflective sessions have been held.

Leaders and managers encourage a culture of reflection, learning and development. Staff receive a high standard of training. There is a good induction package for new

staff. All mandatory training is complete and up to date. Managers have sourced specialised courses to improve staff's knowledge in line with the needs of the children in the home.

Managers have established good relationships with professionals and keep them updated. Professionals say that they feel informed. Managers request information from social workers when they identify a gap in support or care planning. There have been occasions when information has not been received and managers have failed to follow up and challenge when required. This has impacted on some children's access to family time and life-story work.

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
In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff— seek to involve each child's placing authority effectively in the child's care, in accordance with the child's relevant plans; seek to secure the input and services required to meet each child's needs; 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 (a)(b)(c)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that all relevant plans are received from the child's placing authority. These plans must ensure that input is received to support children to explore their life story and to have time with their family and friends.	2 January 2025
The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) 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; help each child to understand how to keep safe;	2 January 2025

that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(b))

In particular, the registered person must ensure that guidance supports staff to reduce the risk of future harm. In addition, plans should ensure that children are supported to develop the knowledge and skills to keep themselves safe.

The registered person must ensure that there is additional oversight of day-to-day care arrangements so that children's medical and health needs are consistently met without delay.

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

12 December 2024

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: SC023739

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: Anthony Ostrowski

Inspectors

Georgia Carty, Social Care Inspector
Shirin White, Social Care Inspector

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