

SC023741

Registered provider: Ethelbert Specialist Homes Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately-owned children's home is registered to provide care and accommodation for a maximum of three children who have emotional and behavioural difficulties. Three boys currently live in the home.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since January 2017.

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

Inspection dates: 5 to 6 May 2021

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
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The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: 25 April 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
25/04/2019	Full	Outstanding
08/05/2018	Full	Outstanding
16/05/2017	Full	Good
21/06/2016	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

A well-led, well-organised and dedicated staff team has provided the children with stability and a sense of permanence throughout the changing and uncertain course of the pandemic. This has made the children feel safe and secure. They remain engaged in their learning, and continue making progress across all areas. The children say that they like their home and that the staff are kind to them.

The children speak about the staff with affection. Children express appreciation for the efforts staff make to keep them safe and to help them cope with the restrictions and changes imposed by the pandemic. Staff go to remarkable lengths to enrich the children's experience of home life. This includes regular special meals and providing the children with various personalised, hand-made items. All birthday and other calendar events are celebrated with items made in the home, together with the children.

The staff have systems in place for each child that routinely anticipate upcoming events and situations that are likely to present additional strain and challenge. Staff carefully plan how they can best support the children through these times. This helps to maintain stability for the children and ensures that they have the necessary additional support when they most need it.

The staff speak about the children with great knowledge, insight and affection. Staff are highly attuned to the children's needs and vulnerabilities and make exceptional efforts to regularly engage with them as individuals. This thoughtful practice helps the children to understand their own thoughts, feelings and behaviours. Consequently, the children develop positive relationships and improve their social skills. These regular, meaningful interactions between the staff and the children also add further layers to the mutual trust and respect that exist between them.

The staff have sustained their efforts during the pandemic to ensure that the children have maintained the best possible contact with their families. When

restrictions have lessened, the staff have taken full advantage of any opportunities to increase this highly valued time.

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

The stable and consistent home environment, together with the warmth and confidence of the staff, makes the children feel secure. Children say that they feel safe and that the staff protect them.

Staff have a clear and detailed understanding of the risks and vulnerabilities associated with each child. The plans to guide staff to manage and reduce these risks are effective. Staff make determined efforts to involve the children in making and understanding these plans. This makes plans more meaningful and helps to make the children safer.

On the rare occasions when a child goes missing, well-prepared plans and protocols are triggered, and staff respond with urgency. Efforts to locate the child are combined with those of key agencies and are sustained until the child is found and made safe.

When staff have needed to use restrictive measures to prevent a child from causing serious harm, these incidents have been revisited with the child when things have calmed. The child then has been helped to explore other ways of responding to de-escalate situations and to prevent the need for restrictive measures.

The staff are highly thoughtful and effective in their day-to-day planning for the children. This proactive approach contributes to the children's feelings of safety and well-being, and it reduces the impulse to go missing.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The strong, clear and effective leadership of a well-supported and highly dedicated staff team has been the cornerstone of success in providing the children with stability and feelings of security during this difficult and challenging inspection period. This has also been the source of the children's sustained progress.

The high levels of organisation and administration free the staff to focus their efforts on the children. Staff's expectations of what the children can achieve are high but also realistic. Staff show an excellent understanding of the children's progress over time.

Communication within the staff team is good and high standards of staff supervision practice have been maintained throughout this inspection period. Equally, the standard of annual staff appraisals completed is impressive. These include meaningful contributions by the children.

Leaders and staff maintain strong and effective relationships with key external agencies and are readily able to get any specialist services or responses that the children need. Placing social workers speak highly of the quality of care provided and the standards of communication maintained by the staff.

During a period when the recruitment of new staff has been particularly difficult, two have been successfully recruited. High standards of safer recruitment have been maintained and thorough methods used to assess their suitability for the role.

Leaders and staff are never satisfied with the quality of the care that they provide or with the progress that the children make. They are always thinking about how they can raise standards and improve the outcomes for the children. No requirements or recommendations are made from this inspection.

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: SC023741

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: Michael Atkins

Inspector:

John Pledger, Social Care Inspector

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