

Children's homes - interim inspection

Inspection date	25/11/2015
Unique reference number	SC023741
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Ethelbert Specialist Homes Limited
Registered person address	Ethelbert Specialist Homes, Cheesemans Farmhouse, Alland Grange Lane, Manston, RAMSGATE, CT12 5BZ

Responsible individual	Leslie Davenport
Registered manager	Kevin Flynn
Inspector	Anna Williams

Inspection date	25/11/2015
Previous inspection judgement	Requires improvement
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection. This home was judged Requires improvement at the full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has sustained effectiveness. At the previous inspection, seven regulatory breaches were identified. Six of these have been addressed. There were also three good practice recommendations set which have been met. Following this inspection, one new regulatory requirement is set in relation to monitoring systems. Observations show that relationships between the children are positive. They are helpful and encouraging of each other. Most of the children spoken to were positive about living in the home. They enjoy the activities on offer such as football and making craft items. Children choose their own clothes with appropriate adult support. This allows them to develop their own identity. Children continue to make progress educationally. Their attendance is generally good and they complete their homework. This supports their learning and academic development. Contact continues to be well-promoted for all the children. It is suitably facilitated and supervised by staff as required. Children continue to learn basic life skills such as cooking and cleaning appropriate to their age. They engage well in a variety of activities such as bowling, sports and walks within the local area. Social workers are kept up-to-date with children's progress and contact via monthly progress reports. The home is now working in accordance with the statement of purpose. This is in terms of staffing levels and ensuring that staff members follow behaviour management techniques. Although progress has been made, the accommodation does not yet present to a good standard throughout. The main bathroom has been redecorated and is improved. One bedroom has been repainted in colours chosen by the child. There are ongoing maintenance works currently taking place. These include painting and repairing recent damage. A new bathroom is planned, along with a re-design of the basement area. Behaviour management practice within the home is improved. There have been six physical restraints since the previous inspection. Physical interventions take place in line with regulations and social workers are now consistently informed.	

Children's individual behaviour management plans and risk assessments are regularly reviewed in light of incidents taking place. One restraint involved the Registered Manager. He was debriefed by his line manager. This new system means that a manager is no longer evaluating their own practice. Staff members who undertake restraints have relevant training. However, on four occasions children were still debriefed by staff members who were directly involved in the restraint. This does not afford children opportunity to discuss the incident with an adult who was not present at the time.

Risk assessments are now in place which consider the higher levels risks involved in some activities, such as a trip to London, or go-karting. There has also been the introduction of 'impact risk assessments' which consider each child's personal circumstances for the month ahead and identify possible risks linked to these. Lone working risk assessments are now in place if a member of staff undertakes a sleep in shift alone, although this practice has now ceased. This demonstrates an improved understanding of risk management.

Placing authorities have been contacted about providing advocacy services for children. For one child, there is an advocate in place. They were contacted after the child was involved in a restraint. This did provide the child opportunity to discuss this serious incident with an adult outside of the home.

Shifts are no longer led by staff members who have not completed their probation or had an induction to the home in which they are working. Children are now cared for by staff who are familiar with the home and relevant procedures.

Since the previous inspection, the organisation have undertaken a review of external monitoring systems. This review remains ongoing. A new format for reports is being trialled with a focus on robust oversight in line with the revised children's homes regulations. It is too early to evaluate the impact of this new process. A new workforce plan outlines the staff structure and contains an evaluation of staff members' skills and training needs. This supports the manager in their workforce planning in order to meet the statement of purpose.

Internal monitoring systems are not wholly effective at ensuring all documentation is completed in full and action taken as required. Two incidents recorded were not reviewed by a manager or senior, so relevant follow up work and discussions with children have not taken place. Other records are complete and records cross reference accordingly. Although revised, the new development plan's aims are generic and do not have timescales for completion. It is unclear how this plan will support development and improvements within the home.

The Registered Manager has recently resigned and left with limited notice given. Suitable interim management arrangements are in place while recruitment takes place.

Information about this children's home

This children's home provides care and accommodation for up to three children with emotional and behavioural needs. It is managed and run by a private organisation.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/08/2015	Full	Requires improvement
26/02/2015	Full	Good
25/09/2014	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
19/02/2014	Interim	Satisfactory progress

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Statutory Requirements

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person/s meets 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 with the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
13: The leadership and management standard In order to meet the leadership and management standard, the registered person must (2)(h) use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home.	25/01/2016
The registered person must within 5 days of the use of the measure, add to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35(3)(c))	25/01/2016

What the inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspection we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people living in the children's home. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference adults make to the lives of children and young people. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with children, young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care given to children and young people. Wherever possible, they talked to children, 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 who it is trying to help, protect and look after.

This inspection focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service 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*.

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