

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	08/06/2015
Unique reference number	SC023743
Type of inspection	Full
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	Mr Leslie Davenport
Registered manager	Mr Kieron Jones
Inspector	Mrs Helen Lee

Inspection date	08/06/2015
Previous inspection judgement	N/A
Enforcement action since last inspection	There has been no enforcement action since the last inspection.
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.	
how well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
the impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good

SC023743

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- The children are settled and happy and are in stable placements. They feel safe and say that they feel that the staff care about them. They enjoy positive relationships with staff that enables them to reflect upon their history and identify ways in which they can move forward.
- Effective multi-agency working is a key factor in keeping children safe. The home works effectively with other agencies, such as private therapists and medical specialists. They are proactive in making contact with them to ensure children get the help they need.
- All staff have high but realistic aspirations and effectively support the children's education. The children are readily engaging with their education. They are making real progress in line with their starting points.
- Children make good progress across each area of their development. This includes improved attendance at school, improvements in behaviour and no episodes of going missing. As a result, they are safer and they are maturing with improved self-confidence.
- Social workers, parents and carers are pleased with the care and support offered to their children. One parent stated that 'He is really happy here the happiest I've seen him in a while. I'm so please that he is happy'. All parents spoken with were delighted with the school progress. One parent said 'My child is doing a lot better in school'.
- Staff said they feel very well supported by the Registered Manager. They feel they have a say in what happens in the home and the Registered Manager is open to their suggestions as to how to move the service forward. They said 'we work well together as a team'.

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
10: The health and well-being standard. (1) In order to meet the health and well-being standard the registered person must: (b) ensure that children receive advice, services and support in relation to their health and well-being.	30/09/2015

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the service should take account of the following recommendation(s):

Compile a workforce plan which can fulfil the workforce related requirements of Regulation 16, detailing in particular the process and agreed timescales for staff to receive any ongoing training and continuing professional development, such as training regarding Autism. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 53, paragraph 10.8)

Support staff to understand the importance of records in encouraging the child to reflect on and understand their history, in particular by including their progress within records. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 62, paragraph 14.5)

Produce a children's guide that must be age appropriate, in an accessible format and explained to each child to make sure they understand it. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 24, paragraph 4.21)

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home is registered to provide care for up to three young people and children with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

The home is owned and managed by a private company.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
18/03/2015	CH - Interim	Improved effectiveness
20/01/2015	CH - Full	Adequate
11/02/2014	CH - Interim	Satisfactory Progress

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	good
The staff build effective relationships with the children through being interested in their world that includes super heroes, the Minions and Minecraft adventures. This enables the children to develop secure bases from which to explore further their friendships with each other and the wider world. The children say that staff listen to them and always explain why some of the things 'we ask for may not be possible or need further discussion and thought'. For example, changing the use of rooms within the house. The children confirm that they know how to make a complaint. Transitioning children back to school is a particular strength of this home. All the children attend school because a clearly structured and planned programme of support from the home has been extremely effective. Staff celebrate educational achievements. They also reinforce the importance of schooling by arranging introductions and taster sessions for the children as part of the planning of them leaving the home. The children thus benefit from a less anxious change. The stability of the placements supports children's emotional well-being, which in turn places them in readiness to take on increasing responsibility for their own health and welfare. They learn about healthy eating, improved personal care and the importance of physical exercise. The children are able to choose healthy snacks and food options with a growing knowledge of the need for their 'five a day'. One child says 'the food here is really good, I chose the option tonight'. Private arrangements with therapists using for example, play and art techniques ensures that children's emotional health is proactively assessed and strengthened. Consequently, they are in good health. Children benefit from personalised care planning which considers their individual needs and the support needed to help them move forward in their lives. Staff are not always completing the home's placement plans to a consistently high standard. This results in there being a lack of clarity in some areas, for example, within the health and communication sections. However, this does not impact upon the care provided as staff have a very good understanding of each child's needs and are able to effectively demonstrate how children have access to the health professionals they need. A wide range of activities both in the home and within the community are provided	

for the children. However, at present, they have declined to join any clubs. One child enjoys skateboarding in particular and attends lessons in the sport, whilst others enjoy football, walks, and swimming. Staff actively encourage and promote physical activities.

The children's living environment is homely with the home decorated with younger children in mind. They like their bedrooms, which they are encouraged to personalise according to their tastes. They are given support and encouragement to take responsibility for keeping their own room clean, changing their bed linen, so they learn useful skills as well as maintaining a reasonable environment.

Staff maintain good communication with parents and carers of the children. This makes the children happy. One parent said they feel they are fully involved in the care the children receive as staff keep in regular contact with them. This means families enjoy quality time when they are together and are able to maintain positive relationships.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
Staff demonstrate that they have a secure understanding of the individual risks associated with each child and the action they are taking to reduce this. Staff ensure children understand e-safety. For example, children are very aware of the need to keep personal information private when using the internet and the dangers of direct contact with people who they have met online. Staff are skilled at providing clear boundaries for children. Children say house rules are fair and consistently applied. Staff are quick to respond to the use of inappropriate language such as swearing to ensure that the children are getting a consistent message. The staff use humour effectively to diffuse situations. They also demonstrate and promote sharing which enables children to learn how to negotiate. The children choose their own behavioural targets and engage through a reward system with them. As a result, the use of physical interventions is minimal. A social worker commented that 'their child's behaviours had improved significantly, because this is a very successful placement. Whereby the child doesn't need to be restrained which previously was a daily occurrence – this demonstrates that staff can meet his needs.' The children are increasing in maturity. They are more able to manage conflicts and consider how their behaviour and the behaviour of others impacts upon them.	

Staff give safeguarding the highest priority. The Registered Manager and staff work well with the local safeguarding authority and there are clear reporting procedures in place should an allegation be made about a member of staff. Staff know what to do and take swift action where there are concerns about a child's safety or well-being. They have completed child protection and child sexual exploitation and this has enhanced their practice.

Children do not go missing from this home. This constitutes a complete reduction in concerns for children previously at risk of going missing on a regular basis.

Secure recruitment procedures ensure all staff are fully vetted prior to commencing working at the home. This enhances the children's safety. Visitors to the home are required to sign in and out of the home and are supervised well during their visit.

The home's environment is kept safe and secure for children, for example, by health and safety checks of the premises, by the locality assessment and encouraging children to take part in fire drills.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
A professional and committed Registered Manager leads the home. He is suitably qualified and is now completing his Level 5 Diploma in leadership and management. Staff say they are very well supported and that the Registered Manager is always available to them. One states that 'you want to do the best you can for him because you know it's going to be the right decisions for the children and because he will check to see that you done what he has asked you to do'. Over the past year there has been a focus on caring for younger children. Registered Manager keeps the statement of purpose under review in light of these changes and the necessary practice shift to younger children's needs and activities. He has consulted with the children regarding their welcome guide to the home but is yet to make the necessary changes to the guide to reflect the children's views such as information on local football clubs. Staff feel valued and supported. They receive effective regular supervision. Exacting targets are set within staff development plans; as a result, staff are highly motivated to develop their skills and knowledge. Monitoring by an independent person for the home is robust and has identified areas for improvement which have been actioned by the Registered Manager.	

Staff have effective relationships with parents and carers who have regular opportunities to visit the home and understand the services it offers. This level of communication ensures continuity of care for the children and allows parents to feel confident in this home. Social workers commented on the good communication benefitting their children. These relationships have helped to improve outcomes for children.

What the inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and children are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

An **outstanding** children's home provides highly effective services that contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and children who need help and protection and care. Their progress exceeds expectations and is sustained over time.

A **good** children's home provides effective services that help, protect and care for children and children and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

In a children's home that **requires improvement**, there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. The welfare of looked after children is safeguarded and promoted. Minimum requirements are in place, however, the children's home is not yet delivering good protection, help and care for children and children.

A children's home that is **inadequate** is providing services where there are widespread or serious failures that create or leave children and children being harmed or at risk of harm or result in children looked after not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

Information about this inspection

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

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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