

SC023743

Registered provider: Ethelbert Specialist Homes Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home offers accommodation for up to three children who have complex needs resulting from their early life experiences. This private provider has several homes in the area and also operates a school. There is an education option for the children to attend that school.

The manager registered with Ofsted in August 2022.

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 March 2023

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: 19 May 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
19/05/2021	Full	Good
29/01/2020	Full	Good
22/08/2018	Full	Good
10/01/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children can build trust with the adults around them. The staff team is small, and they know the children really well. This helps children receive consistent care and build close relationships.

Children are involved in making decisions about the home. They hold meetings to discuss how to decorate the home and what furniture would look nice. Children pick the foods they like to eat. This gives children the opportunity to have their say in the day-to-day running of the home.

All children attend school or college. The home has good links with the schools within the organisation. One child has just returned to mainstream education. There is good communication with school staff who are complimentary about the support the home offers. This helps children to make progress.

Children are helped to build skills that are suited to their ages. A personal adviser for one child was complimentary about the life skills the child has developed at the home. They are confident that the child has been well prepared to live independently.

Arrangements for children moving in and out of the home are carefully considered and planned. Detailed assessments are completed before children move into the home. These are further reviewed after children move in to see if there are further areas of support to consider. This planning and assessment ensure that staff can meet the child's needs and that children can successfully live together.

Key-work sessions are focused and individual to each child. Children have opportunities to talk about things that are important to them, and staff talk about helpful topics. This helps children have individual time to express their wishes and feelings.

Consequences used to address children's behaviour do not always link to the behaviour and could be viewed as punitive. This means that, on occasion, not all consequences are fair or proportionate. This can impede on opportunities for children to link their actions to the consequences and learn from incidents.

Two upstairs bathrooms require decoration. This will provide children with a more comfortable and welcoming space.

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

Children's needs are well considered by staff. Clear connections are made from the initial placement meeting that inform risk assessments and identify goals for

children. This thorough planning ensures that children's needs are met, and they have opportunities to make progress.

A creative anti-bullying strategy helps children to learn about bullying. A member of staff has become an ambassador for bullying and completed advanced training. Children engage in meetings and have created their own bullying display in the dining room. This helps protect children from all forms of bullying and gives them tools to address it.

Staff promote positive behaviour by using incentives. Children have daily routines and targets. For example, after dinner, the children helped tidy up and spoke to the inspector about their individual tasks. Having these routines help children to have a sense of purpose and belonging.

Recruitment files are efficiently managed. There is a structure in place to ensure all required checks are completed and recorded. This ensures that children are protected from unsuitable people being in the home.

Safeguarding investigations have been managed effectively and promptly by the management team who liaise with relevant agencies when required. This helps protect children from harm.

There have been a low number of restraints. However, the language and methods used by staff do not always align with the training they have received or the behaviour management policy. This means management oversight of restraint practice has not fully ensured that children are always held in a safe way with agreed techniques that can be objectively reviewed.

There have been occasions when some fire checks have not been completed. The registered manager is aware of this and has a system in place to ensure that these checks do not get missed again.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is a motivated and dedicated manager who is committed to making the home the best it can be. He knows the strengths and weaknesses of the home and has plans to develop the team and the service.

The registered manager creates a culture that is nurturing and warm. This is evident in his interaction with children, how he talks about children and through feedback from other professionals. This promotes an environment where children feel safe and cared for.

Staff speak highly of the registered manager. Staff induction is well thought out and there is a good training offer. Staff supervision sessions are regular, and staff say they are useful. These components help to create a skilled staff team that is well supported in their role. This enables it to provide high-quality care for children.

The home has good relationships with the neighbours. The registered manager also has links within the local community and reaches out to find clubs and activities the children can enjoy. Children currently attend youth clubs, football and parkour. This provides children with enriching experiences and helps them to feel part of their local community.

The registered manager has enhanced the internal and external monitoring and reviewing systems and continues to build on these. Leaders and managers reflect on situations that have challenged them and try to learn from them. This helps to create improvement in the home and in the care children receive.

Children are unable to access two rooms in the home. These are both situated upstairs and are subject to refurbishment. Currently, there are no risk management plans in place to reflect why this arrangement is necessary, what the potential risks are and how the situation will be reviewed.

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 registered person must prepare and implement a policy ("the behaviour management policy") which sets out— the measures of control, discipline and restraint which may be used in relation to children in the home. The registered person must keep the behaviour management policy under review and, where appropriate, revise it. (Regulation 35 (1)(b) (2)) In particular, staff should use the techniques and language that relate to the training they have received.	1 May 2023
After consultation with the fire and rescue authority, the registered person must— take adequate precautions against the risk of fire, including the provision of suitable fire equipment in the children's home. (Regulation 25 (a)) In particular, the weekly fire check arrangements are to be kept up to date to ensure that they are effectively monitored and reviewed.	3 April 2023

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that all areas of the home meet the needs of children and are nurturing and homely. In particular, the bathrooms upstairs need refurbishment. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should ensure that just as in a family home, children should be able to access all shared areas of their home unless there are specific reasons why this would not meet a child's needs. Limits on privacy and access may only be put in place to safeguard each child in the home and any decisions to limit a child's access to any area of the home for safety reasons should be informed by a rigorous assessment of that individual child's needs, be properly

recorded and be kept under regular review. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.10)

- The registered person should ensure that any consequences used to address poor behaviour should be restorative in nature. In particular, they should link to the behaviour and not be punitive in approach. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.38)

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: SC023743

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Ethelbert Specialist Homes Limited

Registered provider address: 17 Leigh Road, Ramsgate, Kent CT12 5EU

Responsible individual: Leslie Davenport

Registered manager: Toby Mercer

Inspector

Mary Costello, Social Care Inspector

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