

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 operates a school, being an education option for children in residence.

The manager registered with Ofsted in September 2016.

Inspection dates: 29 to 30 January 2020

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 22 August 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
22/08/2018	Full	Good
10/01/2018	Full	Good
17/01/2017	Full	Good
26/04/2016	Interim	Declined in effectiveness

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 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; within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")— - has spoken to the user about the measure; and - has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(b)(i)(ii)(c)(iv)) In particular, the registered person must be satisfied that there is sufficient detail provided to show that the measure was both necessary and proportionate.	01/04/2020

Recommendations

- As outlined in 10.1, the registered person should plan staffing levels to ensure that they meet the needs of children and can respond flexibly to unexpected events or opportunities. Staffing structures should promote continuity of care from the child's perspective. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 54, paragraph 10.15)

Specifically, staffing levels should be sustainable and ensure that staff do not work excessive hours and enable the registered person to consistently meet his management and leadership responsibilities.

- The registered person is responsible for deciding what each (regulation 45) review should focus on, based on the specific circumstances of the home at that particular time and any areas of high risk to the children that the home is designed to care for, such as missing or exploitation. They will also consider what information or data recorded in the home will form part of the evidence base for their analysis and conclusions. There is no expectation that the registered person will review the home against every part of the Quality Standards every six months – registered persons should use their professional judgement to decide which factors to focus on. The review should enable the registered person to identify areas of strength and possible weakness in the home's care, which will be captured in the written report. The report should clearly identify any actions required for the next 6 months of delivery within the home and how those actions will be addressed. The whole review process and the resulting report should be used as a tool for continuous improvement in the home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.4)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The children develop strong feelings of belonging and attachment to the home and to the adults who care for them. Emotional and behavioural difficulties subside, and children become settled; their ability to trust and build positive relationships grows and they feel increasingly safe and secure. Children say that staff listen to them and care about them.

The children engage fully in their learning because they feel settled and secure. They make noteworthy academic progress and develop aspirations for the future. This happens largely due to carers affirming the children's abilities and talents, wanting the best for them and expecting them to achieve. Staff also maintain close contact with teachers.

The high standard of care that the adults provide stimulates the children to explore and develop their interests and special abilities. Staff and peers celebrate the children's extra-curricular and academic progress and achievements.

The care and nurturing of the children are highly personalised, and their individual differences are celebrated. Staff talk about the children with care, understanding and affection. The positive relationships and stability in the home provide the children with the emotional safety to revisit past difficulties that may contribute to current challenges to their progress and well-being.

Staff pay close attention to the health needs of the children and access specialist care for them when necessary. The home environment has a family feel and the children speak with satisfaction and enthusiasm about their shared mealtimes together with staff.

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

The children express confidence in the adults to keep them safe. They say that they feel secure in the home and are well-looked after. One child said, 'We don't have to worry about anything.'

The plans that guide staff to keep the children safe are relevant and current and reflect careful consideration of the vulnerabilities of each child.

Without being overprotective, staff are vigilant in the supervision of the children and help them to build confidence and resilience by allowing them to take risks appropriate to their abilities and understanding. No children have gone missing during this inspection period.

The settled atmosphere of the home and the positive relationships forged between staff and the children mean that there is only the occasional need for physical interventions by staff. Records show that these actions are almost always necessary and proportionate. Some records are, however, insufficiently detailed and the manager's review of these is lacking in rigour. This reduces the capacity of staff and managers to learn lessons about how similar situations can be managed in the future without the need for physical intervention.

The staff know and follow the procedures designed to keep the children safe and work closely with their external partners when necessary. The home is well maintained and regular checks keep the children safe from identified hazards. Safe recruitment practice is strong, and staff maintain good knowledge of the amenities and potential hazards of the home's locality.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

A dedicated and experienced manager leads a small staff team by example. He is firmly focused on the progress and well-being of the children, for whom he is highly aspirational. In general, the staff and the children meet the high expectations and standards he sets.

Staffing levels have been at a minimum for most of this inspection period. The small staff team has, however, been able to maintain continuity of care for the children and has ensured a stable and settled home environment. This has been made possible by all

staff consistently working extra hours and being supported through regular supervision and staff meetings. The manager's extensive involvement in the daily running of the home has, however, reduced his capacity to undertake some of his leadership responsibilities, in particular the routine monitoring of the quality of care being provided and how this can be improved.

The quality and suitability of staff is good and the selection, induction and probation of the two most recent recruits have been careful and considered. The children say that they like the newest staff and that 'they really fit in'.

The effects on the children of changes in the staff team are amplified by its small size, and the sudden recent absence of one member of staff has unsettled the children. Plans are, however, underway for staff numbers to be increased soon. It is envisaged that this will result in some relief for existing staff and allow for the further development of the home.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and 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 whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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: Ashley Smith

Inspector

John Pledger, social care inspector

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