

SC023744

Registered provider: Ethelbert Specialist Homes Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home provides care and accommodation for up to three children with emotional and behavioural difficulties. It is privately owned and part of a larger company, which has a number of similar homes in the area. Children may attend one of the schools which are run by the company. Therapeutic services are also offered.

Inspection dates: 1 to 2 June 2017

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 **outstanding**

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

Date of last inspection: 16 February 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: Improved effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection

None

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because

- Young people's difficult behaviours decrease and their positive behaviours increase. They can see the positive difference that living at the home has made to their lives.
- Young people get on really well with staff and have fun with them doing lots of activities.
- Young people are well supported to move in and settle in quickly. Staff get to know young people quickly and make appropriate plans for their needs.
- Young people are helped to do well at school, making progress from their starting points. If education plans are not working, staff challenge this with the school to ensure that plans always assist a young person to continue to achieve.
- Staff help young people to develop their ability to keep themselves safe and staff follow relevant safeguarding procedures well.
- Staff are adept at helping young people to talk about the things which worry them and are finding difficult. Young people seek out staff advice and follow their guidance.
- An excellent registered manager leads the team well. She places young people at the heart of all they do and creates a good working environment, which helps to develop a strong team spirit. The staff team and young people are full of praise for the manager and how she supports them and monitors what happens in the home.

The children's home's areas for development

- Staff must ensure that they swiftly gain the right medical advice if someone is not well or has hurt themselves.
- Greater vigilance in the garden is required to ensure that this is consistently maintained as a safe area.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
16/02/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
01/11/2016	Full	Good
05/02/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
01/10/2015	Full	Good

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 the premises used for the purpose of the children's home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health. In particular, the registered person must ensure that the back garden is kept free of any avoidable hazards. (Regulation 12 (1)(d))	30/06/17
The registered person must ensure that they meet all aspects of the health and well-being standard. The health and well-being standard is that each child has access to such dental, medical, nursing, psychiatric and psychological advice, treatment and other services as the child may require. In particular, staff must ensure that they appropriately consult medical practitioners following any injury to a child. (Regulation 13 (2)(c))	30/06/17

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that children are listened to and enabled to report any allegations at the earliest opportunity. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 44, paragraph 9.17)
In particular the registered person should ensure that all new staff are trained as part of their early induction to the home in how to respond to any disclosures a child might make.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Young people progress well while living at the home. They understand and talk about the positive difference that staff have helped them to achieve.

Arrangements for young people who move in are well thought out and carefully implemented. This enables young people to make this transition well and helps build good relations for the future between the young person, their families and placing authorities. The staff's attention to detail, and well organised plans for supporting a young person to move in, were praised by one social worker as the best she had experienced.

There is a really homely, collaborative atmosphere at the home, which young people clearly enjoy. It was lovely to see a young person choosing to help a member of staff find something metal they had lost by using a metal detector around the premises. Young people seek out staff and want to be with them. Young people listen to staff and follow their guidance, yet feel able to push boundaries as any young person would.

Staff relations with young people are really positive. Staff clearly want the best for each young person. As a team, they recognise and support each other to give young people consistent messages about their expectations of young people's behaviour. This creates a nurturing environment, which greatly benefits young people.

Young people are involved in and influence how the home is run and develop a sense of belonging. They help make decisions about decor and ask for changes to their bedroom furniture if they wish. They have a lot of control over the activities they participate in, but are guided to develop regular patterns of taking part in physical activities, which help them to develop healthy living patterns and sleep well each night. They are also encouraged and supported to develop individual interests, such as army cadets and football, which enables them to widen their friendships. Photos of young people and their activities adorn all areas of the home.

Young people's health needs are catered for well. They attend regular appointments and are helped to understand why they are taking medication and now this is helping them to maintain good health. In one instance, staff could have more proactively sought medical guidance when it became clear that a young person's injuries may be more serious than first thought. Managers have reflected on this issue and are taking steps to ensure that this would not be the case in the future. Medication management is monitored effectively, so that any indication that additional staff training would be beneficial is identified and implemented quickly. This ensures that medication is administered appropriately.

Menus support young people to have a healthy and varied diet, and take account of personal choices. Young people engage with the therapeutic services on offer, and where more specialist services are required these are sought.

Education is well planned and supported. Young people's attendance at school is good and improves over time. Young people are proud of their educational achievements and have ambition for their futures. Where there are concerns that education plans are not supporting a young person sufficiently well, staff challenge this and check that improvements are made.

Young people increase their independence while living at the home. Staff support young people to develop skills in line with their age and abilities. Tasks are broken into small manageable steps that young people can achieve safely.

Contact between a young person and their family is managed and supported effectively. Plans support positive contact and take into account risk and any support needed to help young people enjoy contact with their families.

When young people leave the home, every effort is made to make this as positive an experience as possible, taking into account the particular circumstances of their situation.

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

Young people are protected well and supported to develop an ability to keep themselves safe. Staff vigilantly monitor for new safeguarding issues and ensure that they understand how these might affect the young people they look after.

Positive behaviour is promoted, recognised and rewarded. Young people are given daily feedback about their behaviour and points awarded result in additional pocket money. Sanctions are rarely used, young people are seldom restrained and they almost never go missing. Staff use one-to-one time with young people well to assist young people to reflect on their behaviour. They are helped to develop better strategies to manage their behaviour and to consider the consequences of their actions. Records of one-to-one sessions are well written and help both young people and adults to gain insight into how young people's behaviour improves, or understand why their behaviour may have deteriorated.

Risk assessments are clear and easy to follow. Good risk prevention strategies help young people to be independent as well as to keep themselves safe. For example, a recent project on being on the beach has enabled staff to teach young people how to keep themselves safe on a beach. A similar project is being undertaken to improve young people's understanding of how to act if fire breaks out in the home.

There have been no child protection concerns at the home and any welfare concerns are shared appropriately with relevant agencies. Staff gave good examples of how they would manage safeguarding concerns, and it is clear that safeguarding guidance is provided to staff at induction. One new member of staff said what they would need to consider if a young person makes a disclosure, another was less clear. This means that very new staff may not always be able to fully support a young person if a safeguarding concern is disclosed.

Effective recruitment processes are in place, which minimise the risk of young people being cared for by unsuitable individuals.

The internal premises are well maintained and monitored appropriately. When damage to the property occurs, or something is broken, repairs are completed as quickly as possible. Recent discussions with the fire authority raised no issues of concern about the home's fire risk assessment or procedures. The garden is not well maintained and needed some work to make it safe during the inspection. This was an issue also identified at the previous inspection.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

An appropriately qualified and experienced registered manager leads and manages this home extremely well, ensuring that the services provided reflect the home's statement of purpose. Staff talk extremely warmly and positively about her support, guidance and knowledge of young people, and how this has helped to build and develop a strong team spirit where staff feel valued and appreciated. This positive working culture has supported the staff team to develop a strong team spirit and positive attitude. They feel able to both rely on and challenge each other in order to ensure that young people's needs are met and are confident that their concerns and views are appreciated and considered. It was good to hear, for instance, that the manager checks with new staff what they are seeing and thinking during the time when they commence work at the home. A fresh pair of eyes helps the manager to consider things in different ways.

The staff team members are properly qualified and experienced or are working towards their qualifications. Three new staff started recently, which means that there is a full staff team. It is positive to note that when recruiting new staff, thought was given to what particular attributes would be beneficial to the team. Special attention was paid to ensuring a balance of male and female carers.

There is a considered and detailed induction programme, which provides staff with important training in relation to overall topics of care, as well as training which specifically relates to the young people who live at the home. Staff confirmed their attendance and enjoyment of the courses provided. They could see how the courses had helped them to work more effectively, such as learning de-escalation skills to use when young people are angry or distressed and are showing signs of becoming aggressive.

There is also a full and detailed ongoing training programme, which meets the needs of staff. The programme offers differing levels of training, which are in line with staff's experience, previous work histories and roles and responsibilities. This programme is updated when any young person moves in and reviewed when young people's needs change. For example, training on autistic spectrum disorders is being sought for all staff after this was identified as a need. This ensures that staff practice is developed to meet all young people's needs and monitored to ensure that it continues to do so. Staff also attend regular team meetings and clinical supervision sessions with the home's therapist. Staff confirmed that the sessions with the therapist are helpful. These meetings support

them to reflect on how to work together and deal with difficult situations. Some staff also reported how well they considered senior more experienced staff helped them with on-the-job training by suggesting ways of working with young people. This shows that training is not only linked to courses but supported in the home's environment, in order to increase staff competency and confidence in their roles.

Supervision and appraisals occur in line with the organisation's policies and procedures. The content of supervision is appropriate, and covers a wide range of topics which both the manager and supervisee wish to discuss. It identifies what a person does well and areas for development. It also provides a list of agreed actions with set timescales for completion. This has enabled staff to complete qualifications, and to know and have an ongoing discussion about their needs. Records for all supervisions were not available. However, handwritten notes were ready for the manager to type on her return. Staff all confirmed that supervision occurs in accordance with the staffing policy and were complimentary about how these sessions supported their development, understanding and confidence.

Young people's files are detailed and orderly. Important aspects of care are recorded promptly on a young person's arrival and records provide an accurate picture of a young person's care, support and progress.

The manager has developed good systems for reviewing and monitoring the services provided, which are used to produce clear development plans for the home. However, weak monthly reports from the independent visitor do not always identify shortfalls or provide detailed analysis of information to show how they have come to their conclusions. This lack of detail weakens the impact the reports have on supporting leaders and managers to make continuous improvement.

Partnership working with other agencies is an extremely positive aspect of this service. Social workers say that staff work well with them and support the aims of the young people's placement. Information-sharing is good and helps the team around the young person to assess, monitor and support progress effectively. Staff record things appropriately and tell them about any concerns, and they attend reviews and contribute well.

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 difference 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 who 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: SC023744

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Ethelbert Specialist Homes Limited

Registered provider address: Ethelbert Specialist Homes, Cheesemans Farmhouse,
Alland Grange Lane, Manston, Ramsgate CT12 5BZ

Responsible individual: Leslie Davenport

Registered manager: Donna Gallagher

Inspector

Ruth Coler, social care inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence>, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: <http://www.gov.uk/ofsted>

© Crown copyright 2017