

SC023744

Registered provider: Ethelbert Specialist Homes Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is run by a private company and provides care for up to three children who experience social and emotional difficulties.

At the time of this inspection, three children were living in the home.

The manager registered with Ofsted on 31 January 2024.

Inspection dates: 3 and 4 December 2024

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: 8 August 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
08/08/2023	Full	Good
22/08/2022	Full	Good
07/09/2021	Full	Good
10/03/2020	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are happy, well cared for and like living in the home. They are making positive progress in all areas.

Staff are positive role models for children. A consistent team has supported the development of positive relationships. Staff know children well and can recognise when they may need additional support. Children can identify trusted adults to talk to and share any worries with.

Children are listened to. They are supported to share their views on things that are important to them. When they ask for changes, they are updated and kept informed of progress that is being made. Their views have been sought on changes in the home that impact them most, which has included discussions around door alarms, menus and the home's decor.

Children have fun and develop skills, hobbies and interests. They enjoy a range of positive daily experiences in and out of the home. They are encouraged to take part in community-based groups to develop relationships in the wider community.

Arrangements for children moving into and out of the home are managed well. Although some children have left in unplanned circumstances, when this has happened, managers have taken extra care to communicate with the children, their families and carers. Well-informed assessments guide care planning for children moving into the home. Children receive the support they need to settle.

Children are supported to maintain lifelong connections and to identify people who are important to them. Staff find ways of children maintaining contact with significant people in their lives, including parents, siblings, previous carers and other children they have lived with.

Children make good progress in education. Staff work closely with schools to support children to have positive experiences of education. When it is identified that children have a talent or interest in a subject, staff work with their school to develop their skills further. Children are supported to develop and consolidate their learning outside school. All children are attending full time and making good progress in all areas.

Generally, the home is well furnished and bright. Children are involved in choosing how to decorate their personal spaces. There are some areas of the home where increased attention to cleanliness and hygiene is needed. Children need additional support to keep their bedrooms clean.

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

Safer recruitment practices are effective. Staff working in the home are checked and vetted to assess that they are suitable to work with children.

Staff are aware of the support children need to keep safe. Each child has a range of risk management and support plans in place to guide staff intervention. Educational and informed one-to-one sessions and children's meetings are used to explore areas of vulnerability with children. These sessions help them to understand risks and how to keep themselves and others safe.

Physical restraint is rarely used. When it has been used, it has been a proportionate response to keep children and staff safe. Children and staff are supported to talk through incidents after they happen. Managers are proactive in considering practice to reduce the use of restraint in the home. As a result of this, restraint has only been used once since the last inspection.

Systems in place for monitoring children are only used when necessary. Managers, children and staff have all been involved in reviewing the use of door alarms in the home. Deactivation of alarms has helped the children feel safer and more at ease in their home environment.

Staff work closely with external professionals when new risks emerge for children. Staff are prompt in escalating their concerns when children are at risk outside of the home. Managers are central to safeguarding discussions for children and escalate appropriately when they do not receive the expected response to immediate risks.

When children go missing, staff respond swiftly to locate them and support their return. Children are supported to talk to independent people about their episodes of going missing. However, return home interviews have not been arranged, which impacts staff's ability to capture and consider new information when reviewing risk management plans.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

There is an ambitious, caring and child-focused registered manager leading the home. Leaders and managers have high aspirations for children living in the home and are committed to ensuring children receive a high standard of individualised care.

Managers take pride in the home and the trusting relationships they have built with children and staff. They recognise and celebrate children's progress and triumphs and provide clear direction to develop strategies that help children to achieve. Managers work alongside staff, guiding children through difficult times and celebrating their achievements.

There is a reflective and open learning culture in the home. Staff receive a mixture of mandatory and specialist training that is relevant to their role and the children's needs. New staff members benefit from a comprehensive induction package that helps them to

settle into their role and learn new skills. Appraisals form part of the continuing professional development framework and inform opportunities for future learning.

Supervision is frequent and effective. This supports staff to reflect on their practice and the evolving needs of children. Team meetings are used to support staff to collectively consider the impact of their work. Staff feel valued and able to access support whenever it is needed.

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the home is a nurturing and supportive environment that meets children's needs. In most cases, children's homes should be homely, domestic environments. This specifically relates to ensuring that the home, its furnishings and resources are maintained to an acceptable state of cleanliness. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should ensure that when a child returns to the home after being missing from care or away from the home without permission, the responsible local authority must provide an opportunity for the child to have an independent return home interview. Homes should take account of information provided by such interviews when assessing risks and putting arrangements in place to protect each child. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.30)

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: SC023744

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Ethelbert Specialist Homes Limited

Registered provider address: Ethelbert Specialist Homes Limited, 17 Leigh Road, Ramsgate, Kent CT12 5EU

Responsible individual: Leslie Davenport

Registered manager: Gareth Hopper

Inspector

Georgia Carty, Social Care Inspector

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