

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 social, emotional and mental health needs. 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.

The manager was registered with Ofsted on 5 March 2012.

Inspection dates: 8 to 9 January 2019

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: 1 June 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
01/06/2017	Full	Good
16/02/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
01/11/2016	Full	Good
05/02/2016	Interim	Sustained 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 protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure that staff assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child. (Regulation 12(1), (2)(a)(i))	28/02/2019
The registered person must keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it. (Regulation 16(3)(a))	28/02/2019
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40(4)(b))	28/02/2019

Recommendations

- A child's bedroom should not generally be entered without their permission, though it may be necessary to establish routines to allow for rooms to be cleaned regularly. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 16, paragraph 3.20)
- Records of restraint must be kept and should enable the registered person and staff to review the use of control, discipline and restraint to identify effective practice and respond promptly where any issues or trends of concern emerge. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 49, paragraph 9.59)

In particular, records should provide clear details of the events which resulted in the need for restraint.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The home is warm and welcoming, and has modern decor and furnishings. There is an ongoing development plan for maintaining the environment. The children's preferences are clearly reflected in the decor and furnishings in their own bedrooms. Children enjoy a good range of activities, which they take part in together as well as pursuing their individual hobbies. Staff are consistent in supporting and encouraging children's participation. Importantly this enables the children to be able to spend time with peers outside of the home. It also helps in the development of each child's individual sense of self.

Children feel able to talk to staff about any worries that they may have. Staff develop positive relationships with them, and this enables the children to seek the support of staff. Children know how to complain. Since the last inspection there has been one formal complaint, made by a child, which was appropriately addressed. Regular children's meetings also encourage children to share their views or concerns.

Staff have a good understanding of each child's needs. This is developed through good use of regular time for each child with their individual key worker. The staff team advocates well for each child to ensure that they are able to access the specialist services that they need. This is effective, due to the positive working relationships that the team has developed with fellow professionals. Children attend the organisation's schools, and staff work collaboratively with education staff to support the children's learning.

The children's emotional and psychological needs are supported effectively. There is a good understanding, within the staff team, of how children communicate their feelings through their behaviour. The home provides therapy for the children. When a child struggles to engage with this, the home is supported by specialist mental health services. This ensures that all children receive the support that they need to promote their psychological well-being. Staff understand the importance of children's family relationships in supporting their emotional well-being. The home provides a specific room in which children can spend time together with family members, if appropriate.

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

Staff have a good understanding of the identified risks for each child. This is based on thorough assessments of risk, which include strategies to minimise each risk. Children are supported by the staff team to understand what their individual risks are. Through this approach, staff have supported children to contribute to plans to keep them safe. Staff are able to identify when new risks emerge as a result of the children's developmental changes. However, there have been occasions when the individual risk assessments have not been updated to reflect these or the new strategies.

On the one occasion when there was a safeguarding concern regarding staff practice,

this was appropriately addressed due to staff understanding the whistleblowing policy and putting it into practice immediately. Senior leadership ensured a robust response which involved taking disciplinary action. The local authority designated officer was informed, along with the Disclosure and Barring Service. The child was emphatically and effectively supported by both the registered manager and the staff team. This communicated clearly to them that they were valued and were safeguarded.

Safer recruitment practice is adhered to for new staff joining the team. They are provided with safeguarding training as part of their induction programme. This training is renewed for existing staff, which ensures that they remain up to date with new safeguarding practice. Together with specific therapeutic training, staff are provided with a holistic understanding of how to support and safeguard the children in their care.

Staff responded effectively when a child went missing from the home. The home works well with all relevant agencies. Working with the child's social worker, police and health professionals, the staff team ensures that appropriate support is in place to address any concerns at an early stage. By addressing emerging risks before they develop further, this ensures that the child is safeguarded. The team ensures that all safeguarding concerns are reported appropriately to children's services. However, on two occasions when it was relevant it did not notify Ofsted.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager has a thorough understanding of the children's individual needs. The staff are provided with clear leadership from the registered manager. She is committed and child centred when making decisions about the management of the home. This is role modelled through her own practice and interactions with the children. When needed, if the decisions made are not in the best interests of the child the registered manager will challenge fellow professionals.

Staff feel supported in their roles, and this impacts positively on the children's experiences of living in the home. New staff are provided with an effective induction and training programme. This helps them to develop the skills and knowledge to undertake their role. On a small number of occasions, the records of restraints did not provide sufficient information on what happened leading up to the incident.

Staff are provided with guidance on the home's expectations in supporting children to keep their bedrooms clean. However, the inspection identified an issue of cleanliness in one bedroom. This highlighted some inconsistency in practice within the staff team. The registered manager ensured that this was addressed during the inspection.

The requirements and recommendations of the last inspection have been fully met by the registered manager. She has a realistic understanding of the home's strengths and areas for development. This is important, given the changes in staff since the last inspection. The leadership provided to the staff team throughout this period has ensured that these changes have had a minimal impact on the consistency of care provided to children. The statement of purpose for the home has been updated to reflect the

changes. However, it does not fully reflect current practice within 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 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 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: SC023744

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: Donna Gallagher

Inspector

Maria Lonergan, social care inspector

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