

SC023746

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 owned and run by a private organisation. It provides care and accommodation for up to three children with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

The manager of the home was registered with Ofsted in April 2021.

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

We last visited this setting on 9 February 2021 to carry out a monitoring visit. The report is published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection dates: 2 to 3 June 2021

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
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The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: 10 December 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10/12/2019	Full	Good
08/01/2019	Full	Good
23/10/2017	Full	Good
22/11/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children experience high-quality care which makes them feel valued and secure. Their life chances are improved because of the exceptional progress they make.

Interactions between children and staff are warm and nurturing. During the inspection, children were enjoying their new garden equipment. Staff played alongside the children and there was much laughter. Staff were observed to be attentive to children's needs, and children responded positively.

Managers and staff are committed to making sure that children get the best from the time they spend with their families. One child is being introduced to an extended family member. This important step is being managed with care and sensitivity. The child proudly showed the inspector the photograph they were given of the family member before speaking to them for the first time. This thoughtful planning supported the child to overcome barriers to communication.

Activities promote children's social and emotional development. One child was taken to a skate park during the inspection. A staff member explained that they deliberately go to a place which is local to the child's school so they can meet up with their friends. This reflects the commitment of staff and managers to ensure that children living in this home have the same experiences as other children.

Staff are adept at helping children manage change. Because of the progress they have made at the home, one child is soon to begin introductions to a foster family. The manager recognises the challenges they will face and has worked closely with the placing authority to create a plan to give the child the support they will need. This approach creates the best opportunity for the move to go smoothly.

Staff support children to engage in education, and achievements are celebrated. One child, who is unable to cope in the classroom environment, has been carefully encouraged by staff to engage in education. The manager is actively seeking apprenticeship opportunities as an alternative. The child's independent reviewing officer commented, 'I can't think of anything else they could be doing, and I can always think of something.' Staff recognise that success relies on the child managing a healthy routine and enjoying activities both inside and outside the home in the first instance. This sensitive, well-planned approach increases the chance of success.

The inclusive and respectful culture enables children who have had traumatic early life experiences to understand the importance of meaningful, trusting relationships.

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

Children's safety and well-being is a priority. Staff are clear about their responsibilities and know how to respond to safeguarding concerns. Children spoken to during the inspection were able to name people, both inside the home and in the wider organisation, who they would speak to if they were worried. Children feel safe because they know they will be listened to and appropriate action will be taken.

Children have thorough and detailed risk assessments which clearly describe how to keep them safe. They are updated regularly, both when an incident has occurred and when something has gone well. Consequently, the records demonstrate a positive lived experience for children and reflect the excellent progress that children are making.

Children are involved in the risk assessment of hazards which exist in the home environment. This approach teaches children how to keep themselves safe. Empowering children to have a view about how risks are managed in their home contributes to their protection and sense of security.

Due to the positive relationships enjoyed between children and staff, the use of physical intervention is rare. When restraints do occur, the registered manager carries out a thorough review with the children and staff involved. Learning is shared with the child's social worker, which demonstrates transparency and effective joint working.

Incidents where children are at risk from harm are rare. The one incident which has occurred in recent months was dealt with quickly by staff. The incident was managed in line with the organisation's procedures, but it was not reported to the local authority multi-agency safeguarding team. This was a missed opportunity for independent scrutiny. However, there is evidence of learning from the incident to reduce the risk of it happening again, and the manager has taken steps to promote the safety of the children involved.

Placing authorities speak highly of the work carried out to help children become increasingly safe. One child has engaged in an extensive programme of research-informed key-work sessions to support them to learn about healthy relationships. The social worker for the child commented that, 'Staff are always proactive in thinking about the child's best interests.' The key-work sessions have been carefully planned and sensitively delivered. They have addressed specific vulnerabilities which exist for this child.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

A registered manager has been appointed since the last full inspection. He is aware of the home's strengths and areas for development. He has focused development plans on addressing shortfalls which existed before his appointment.

Children and staff speak very positively about the impact the new manager has had on the home. Changes in practice, such as more robust shift planning, have resulted in clearer expectations of staff, and they are providing an improved standard of care.

The manager is committed to ensuring that children's views are integral to all decisions. Staff have witnessed the impact this has had on their relationships with children and recognise the culture of positivity which has been created.

Staff access good-quality training provided by the organisation and they receive regular, meaningful supervision sessions. The registered manager creates additional, relevant development opportunities in team meetings. Promoting learning contributes to an ethos of continuous improvement.

The registered manager is fully involved in the children's lives. He is very clear about the progress they are making and has high aspirations for what they can achieve. He works closely with other professionals and takes effective action if plans need to change. Children are flourishing as a result.

The strong leadership of the home and the quality of care create an environment where staff are proud to work and which children are proud to live in.

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

Recommendation

- The registered person should seek to involve the local authority and other relevant persons whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.4)

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: SC023746

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Ethelbert Specialist Homes Limited

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

Responsible individual: Leslie Davenport

Registered manager: Michael Hickson

Inspector

Helen Simmons, Social Care Inspector

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