

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 that has other children's homes in the locally area, and their own schools that the children can attend. This home provides care for up to three children with emotional and social difficulties.

The manager was registered with Ofsted in June 2024.

Inspection dates: 4 and 5 June 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: 11 October 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/10/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
20/07/2023	Full	Inadequate
27/03/2023	Full	Good
02/06/2021	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are well cared for by a small and nurturing staff team. Children have excellent relationships with the staff and like the predictability of the small number of staff who look after them. Children are equally thoughtful about the staff, which has led to all of them taking part in a charity run for a health-related cause.

Children's views are central to how the home is run. Their voice runs throughout their plans, and they were actively involved in the move from another home in the organisation into this one. Children's complaints are taken seriously and responded to promptly, with changes made where possible.

Children are all engaged in education. Strong links with school and college staff mean that staff know how children are progressing, and can provide support and guidance should they be struggling to attend or engage while in school. Children are particularly well supported through their exams, with staff recognising how stressful this time can be. Children undertaking their GCSE exams were warmly welcomed back after an exam and helped to prepare for their next one.

Children engage in a wide range of socially and emotionally stimulating activities, such as cadets, basketball and seeing their friends in the community. Staff support children and work closely with club leaders to ensure that they are successfully integrated into their new hobby. Children are helped to maintain friendships from school or clubs, and those who are in relationships are guided on appropriate relationships and sexual health.

Children learn age-appropriate independent skills, varying from bringing their washing to the laundry room, to catching the train independently and budgeting and cooking their own meals. Children feel confident in their skills, which helps them to feel ready to move on and live independently when they are old enough to do so.

Children's health and well-being needs are well met through good links with the organisation's therapists and external medical professionals. Children are taught about the importance of healthy lifestyles, and all meals in the home are cooked from fresh ingredients.

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

Children are confident in their home and approach staff with any worries or concerns. The staff know each child well and understand their worries or vulnerabilities. They do all they can to keep the children safe and are confident in the process to follow should they be concerned for a child's safety or welfare.

Staff understand that children are expressing emotions when they are displaying behaviours of distress. They seek to help the child and understand what is troubling

them. Staff are thoughtful and change what they can, such as the layout of the children's bedrooms, if this is causing them worry or stress linked to past experiences and/or traumas. Children know they can trust staff and that they will keep them safe.

Physical intervention is rarely used. One-to-one discussions with the children after an incident or physical intervention are not stored consistently, leading to some being difficult to locate. This has not had an impact on the children.

Children do not go missing from the home, but staff know how they would respond should this happen. Additionally, instances of self-injury or drug and alcohol use are rare, but staff are trained in how to support such instances and where to seek additional guidance from should this become an issue. Staff are attuned to children's behaviours and know the signs of grooming and exploitation. Children know how to be safe online and understand why their devices may be checked.

The house is in good condition, and has improved since the last inspection in October 2023. Some areas still require attention, but this is cosmetic and minimal. The children were fully involved in choosing the décor for the home, as part of the well-thought-through transition plan from the former home to this one. This ensured a smooth transition for the children, who knew what to expect of their new home. The garden area is now a more private, and safer space, due to a new fence and gate separating the front garden from the back.

Safer recruitment practice is followed to protect children from being cared for by unsuitable people.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The three children who live in this home moved from another home within the organisation, along with the manager and staff team, in January 2024. The move was meticulously planned to cause minimum disruption to the children. The manager and staff worked tirelessly to ensure that the move was successful. This is demonstrated through how settled the children are.

The manager is held in high regard by the staff. They are well supported and have regular supervision and the training they require to meet the children's needs. Team meetings and child-centred review meetings provide a space for reflection and sharing of best practice.

There is strong joint working and links with partner agencies. The manager confidently advocates for the children and escalates concerns with partner agencies when they believe children are not receiving the best service or support.

The manager is constantly seeking to improve the service and the outcomes for children. He makes good use of the reports completed by the independent visitor and welcomes the scrutiny and support from senior leaders visiting the home. The development plan is constantly being updated, and he has high aspirations for the children in their care.

There is a lack of communication between the senior leaders within the wider organisation, which has led to a requirement regarding institutionalised waterproof mattresses for all the children. This had already been raised as a requirement in other homes in the organisation earlier in the year.

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, The 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 leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose; (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that mattresses are suitable for the individual needs of children.	26 July 2024

Recommendation

- The responsible person should ensure that records after an incident or physical intervention that show that children have had the opportunity to reflect and share their views are stored in consistent locations. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 49, paragraph 9.60)

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

Responsible individual: Leslie Davenport

Registered manager: Toby Mercer

Inspector

Jennie Christopher, Social Care Inspector

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