

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 who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since June 2018.

Inspection dates: 8 to 9 January 2019

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 **good**

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

Date of last inspection: 23 October 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
23/10/2017	Full	Good
22/11/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
28/06/2016	Full	Good
01/03/2016	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 registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there. (Regulation 40(4)(c))	21/02/2019

Recommendations

- Children must be consulted regularly on their views about the home's care, to inform and support continued improvement in the quality of care provided. Due consideration should be given to the child's cognitive ability in the development and implementation of any consultation processes. Children should be able to see the results of their views being listened to and acted upon. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 23, paragraph 4.11)
In particular, ensure that children are able to see the results of their views being listened to and acted on.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children enjoy living at this home and benefit from a caring and supportive atmosphere where they can develop a sense of permanence and belonging. Staff know the children well and recognise the potential and strengths of each child. As a result, children feel that they matter and that their well-being is important to the staff, who care for them and about them.

Staff are sensitive and responsive to the individual needs of the children. Staff recognise the importance of responding to the children's developmental and emotional stage rather than chronological age. Consequently, the children are helped to develop at the right pace for them and build trusted and secure relationships with staff.

Staff show a genuine interest in the children's progress at school. Children are helped with their homework and reading is strongly encouraged. Staff recognise that achievement at school increases self-esteem and confidence. Children attend schools run by the organisation and there is excellent liaison between home and school. Success is celebrated and the close links with the schools ensure that the children receive consistent messages and positive reinforcement in support of their academic and social progress.

Staff support the children to take part in day-to-day decisions about their lives. Weekly children's meetings provide opportunities for them to express themselves around issues arising from living in a group. Individual key-work sessions help the children acquire alternative ways of thinking about difficult issues and act as a good forum for them to discuss their feelings. However, minutes seen from the house meetings and key-work records do not include follow-up actions to discussions. This means that children are not consistently able to see the results of their views being listened to and acted on.

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

Staff ensure that children are safe and protected from harm. All the children said that they feel safe at the home. There are clear, consistent and appropriate boundaries for the children. One child said, 'Staff deal with problems straight away.' Staff challenge bullying behaviours, and help and support are given to the children about how to treat others with respect.

The culture in the home ensures that children are comfortable to share their thoughts and feelings with staff. The children's needs and difficulties are responded to by staff with understanding and empathy. Staff balance the children's desire for independence with their need for care, support and protection. As a result, the children are helped to develop skills and strategies to manage their own conflicts and difficult feelings.

Detailed plans and risk assessments guide the staff to provide effective support that is specific to the needs of each child. The staff use physical intervention as a last resort to protect children and others from serious harm. There is good management oversight that ensures that each incident is scrutinised to ensure safe practice.

Staff ensure that children's health and well-being needs are well met. Children have detailed individual healthcare plans kept under regular review. Arrangements for managing medications are safe and effective. Staff work in partnership with external health services to promote children's well-being. Children who, in the past, have not been able to access therapeutic support are now willingly engaging in tailored therapeutic support provided by the organisation.

Children who are new to the home are welcomed sensitively with careful planning. Staff consider the needs and feelings of other children living in the home. One social worker commented on how well the staff managed a recent move to the home for a child. A transition plan was shared in advance of the move. This included tea visits and careful

matching of a key worker to help him settle. Staff actions help ensure positive endings for children, even when children leave with little notice.

Staff spoken with confirmed that they understand their responsibilities should they become aware of a safeguarding issue. Staff know who they could go to outside the organisation if they believed that necessary action was not being taken. Children understand how and why the staff act if they share concerns, and they feel protected by this. There has been one lapse in relation to safeguarding, which is otherwise strong. This was in relation to Ofsted not being notified of a serious allegation. However, all appropriate action was taken to safeguard the child, who was not put at risk by this.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is currently absent. Timely action has been taken by the area manager to step in for the interim period. Well thought out measures by leaders have minimised disruption to the children. This has been helped by a strong core team of long-standing staff.

Staff morale is good, with one staff member saying, 'The team is like a second family.' Staff reported that they feel well led and supported in their role. Good plans and measures are in place to combat staffing deficiencies. Staff receive regular supervision; this includes clinical supervision with a therapist. This gives the staff a safe space to reflect on their roles and deepens their understanding around the needs of the children. As a result, the staff perform their roles with greater insight and confidence.

There is a respectful culture within the home. Children experience care and help that is sensitive and responsive to their identity and family histories. Staff support the children to engage in faith-based activities and provide opportunities for children to celebrate and understand difference. This helps the children to develop a positive self-view and a sense of their own identity.

The manager and the leadership team are committed to maintaining high standards. They know the strengths and weaknesses of the home, addressing any shortfalls and improving outcomes for children. Plans have been agreed for a substantial refurbishment of the home, to create an extra living space for the children. This will be a positive addition to the home and further enhance the children's day-to-day living experience.

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 differences 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: SC023746

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: Timothy Davies

Inspector

Anne-Marie Davies, social care inspector

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