

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	28 June 2016
Unique reference number	SC023746
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Ethelbert Specialist Homes Limited
Registered provider address	Ethelbert Specialist Homes, Cheesemans Farmhouse, Alland Grange Lane, Manston, Ramsgate CT12 5BZ

Responsible individual	Leslie Davenport
Registered manager	Martin Jones
Inspector	Helen Lee

Inspection date	28 June 2016
Previous inspection judgement	Sustained effectiveness
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.	
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good

SC023746

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Staff have built effective and robust relationships with the young people. These are evident from the young people's perspectives, their investment in the home and their progress.
- Staff have been successful at supporting young people through exam periods, and ensuring that revision material is available and being used. Staff have also supported a young person to apply for and gain a place for a vocational college course as well as an apprenticeship.
- Staff have been able to encourage young people to take responsibility for their health and to understand through informed choices how to keep healthy. Significant improvements have been made, including medication reduction, which has benefited one young person. Young people frequently enjoy meals that they help staff to prepare, such as curries, ensuring that meal times are communal and homely.
- Staff have completed recent pathway planning training, which has improved their recording of young people's progress and achievements. Folders now include visual information, including photos, for young people to refer to and take pride in. Young people are given support and encouragement to plan, budget and cook their own meals as well as to help shop for the home's food.
- Staff use their effective relationships with the young people to keep discussions about safety permanently open with the young people. Young people were able to explain what preventative and reactive strategies are available to them in potentially unsafe situations, for example, how to contact the home if they are in danger.
- Staff use their knowledge and understanding of positive and proactive behaviour support to enable the young people to manage their anxieties and frustrations. This approach has been successful in helping young people to acknowledge and respect the home's rules and has discontinued the need for restraints and sanctions. This, in turn, has built better and more effective relationships in the home.

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that must be taken so that the registered persons 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 persons must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
10: The health and well-being standard In order to meet the health and well-being standard, the registered person must in particular provide policies and guidance on mental health and self-harm to ensure (2)(a)(ii) that staff understand the child's health and well-being needs and the options that are available in relation to the child's health and well-being.	20 October 2016
The registered person must review the appropriateness and suitability of the location of the premises used for the purposes of the children's home at least once in each calendar year, taking into account the requirement in regulation 12(2)(c) (the protection of children standard). (Regulation 46(1))	7 October 2016
12: The protection of children standard In order to meet the protection of children standard, the registered person must develop robust risk assessments with clear strategies regarding, in particular, e-safety to ensure (2)(a)(i) 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.	7 October 2016

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further, the service should take account of the following recommendations:

- Staff should be familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective, and clear recording. Staff should record information on individual children in a non-stigmatising way

that distinguishes between fact, opinion and third-party information. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

- Children should be encouraged by staff to see the home's records as 'living documents', supporting them to view and contribute to the record in a way that reflects their voices on a regular basis, in particular, by ensuring that the home has enough computers for staff use. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 58, paragraph 11.19)

Full report

Information about this children's home

This children's home provides care for up to three children with emotional and behavioural needs. It is run by a private organisation.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
1 March 2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
14 September 2015	Full	Good
17 March 2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness
6 January 2015	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
Young people are happy that staff spend time with them and are genuinely interested in their well-being, likes and dislikes. A key strength of the home is that young people develop effective and secure relationships with staff. Staff involve themselves closely with the young people and show appropriate levels of affection and concern for them. The home uses humour to communicate with the young people effectively. As one social worker commented, 'He has settled very well and the staff have helped him to adjust to the home. He has made positive relationships with both the peers and staff within the home.' Young people express that this is a home where staff do not give up on them. A young person said, 'As I told you last time, this is the only home I trust and I am happy to live in.' The young people's meeting, which all of them attend, occurs weekly. Staff use these successfully to inform the food and activity choices as well as decisions about how the home is run. Young people confirm that they are aware of formal channels for complaint. However, they have not used them because they feel that they have daily opportunities to 'sound out' and 'sort things' that are important to them. Staff have been successful at supporting young people through exam periods, and ensuring that revision material is available and being used. Staff have also supported a young person to apply for and gain a place for a vocational college course as well as an apprenticeship. Awards and certificates are cherished by staff, and tutors are engaged for young people when required. Young people especially enjoy having the beach nearby and they make full use of this with friends from the area. Positive friendships are well supported by the staff, and young people appreciate this. Young people's health has flourished at the home with appointments being made by the young people themselves when appropriate as well as self-medication when needed. Young people are able to explain the principles of healthy living and eating and enjoy a family meal with staff in the evenings. Staff complete comprehensive and personalised placement plans to ensure consistent practice. As one staff member stated, 'Each and every small step and small success is seized and built on.' Staff have completed recent pathway planning training, which has improved their recording of young people's progress and achievements. Folders now include visual information, including photos, for young people to refer to and take pride in. Young people are given support and encouragement linked to rewards, to take responsibility for keeping their own rooms clean and changing their bed linen, so	

that they learn useful skills and maintain a reasonable environment.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
Staff use their effective relationships with the young people to keep discussions about safety permanently open with the young people. Young people were able to explain what preventative and reactive strategies are available to them in potentially unsafe situations, for example, how to contact the home if they are in danger. The home has gone through a period during which there was a slight increase in incidents relating to safety outside of the home. These were used as lessons to learn from and improvements to be made, for example, the provision of house phones for all the young people to take when going out. However, the location risk assessment does not assess the location's risks, or identify clear strategies to ensure that the home can work with its partnership agencies in strategic prevention of risk. Staff have a clear understanding of the issues surrounding child sexual exploitation. They are aware how this can affect boys as well as girls, and talk openly with the young people about how to keep themselves safe. Young people were able to identify grooming behaviours and one young person stated that their keyworker, 'keeps me safe by giving advice. All the staff do, and I try to keep out of trouble. They teach me how to. I now know how to stay safe online.' Bespoke training for the manager regarding e-safety is due to take place, as the current risk assessments are not sufficiently up to date. Young people all report having more than one staff member whom they trust to talk to or to advocate for their best interests. Staff carry out a good number of key-working sessions with the young people. Staff undertake these frequently and record them. One young person enthused that his keyworker, 'looks out for me, does my paperwork and helps me a lot. He makes time for me all the time. I know all the other staff. They are really nice. The manager is great and also makes time for me.' All young people are involved in reading and having their comments added to the records. Due to the manager and staff sharing one computer, this is sometimes delayed. Staff have implemented reward charts, which young people have all actively participated in. Young people are pleased with their accomplishments being on display on the charts and enjoy planning what the reward will mean for them. The	

staff have a good understanding of the young people's needs. They can recognise when the young people are in distress and upset. Staff provide early interventions and reduce challenging behaviours. There have not been any restraints or sanctions used by the home since the last inspection visit. This has improved the relationships between staff and young people. Young people understand and respect the boundaries of the home. One social worker stated, 'There has been a decrease in his behaviours since starting at the placement and having more firm boundaries put in place.'

All staff appointments are subject to safer recruitment guidelines, ensuring that appropriate measures are taken to appoint appropriately qualified and suitable staff. The manager involves young people in staff recruitment, which reinforces their sense of responsibility and ownership of their home.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
The registered manager has been registered with Ofsted for two years. Staff recognise that he leads the team calmly and that his strength is in being approachable and working on shift, role modelling practices. One staff member commented that the manager is 'inspirational as a leader. One of the best managers I've ever had and I've had a few. He is reasonable in his style and brings that out of me as well. His style is encouraging and he always gives guidance in a positive and constructive way.' Independent monitoring takes place at the required intervals. The registered manager uses the recommended actions from the independent visits to review systems in order to make improvements in the quality of care provided. He then completes comprehensive monitoring of the home, which tells the story of the young people and their progress. The registered manager is able to demonstrate the difference that living at the home has made to the young people. He calls meetings with placing authority social workers if young people are not making progress or if there is an incident that could impede the progress that the young person is making. The manager carefully considers admissions to the home to ensure that the young people's needs can be fully met and that they are compatible with the existing group. Transition planning, both for new residents and young people leaving the home, is well managed to promote stability in the home and to ensure that young people experience positive placement moves. The manager provides all young people new to the home with a children's guide. This is clear and generally informative. However, the young people have asked for it to be more visual and	

exciting.

Staff receive regular supervision with a strong focus on ensuring that they are appropriately skilled and informed, to meet the specific needs of the young people in the home. Staff appreciate the training afforded to them and can link aspects to the lives of the current young people. One member of staff commented, 'The trainer talked specifically about the issues faced and that they had reassured themselves that staff were doing the correct thing.'

There is now a clear statement of purpose that is easy for staff to implement. They understand the statement of purpose and the home is managed in line with its stated aims and objectives. The manager has improved the document by individualising it, so that prospective parents or social workers can now make an informed choice regarding placing a young person at the home. He is currently reviewing this further so that it is more visual and appealing, by including photos of the local area.

The self-harm policy is not sufficient or robust. It does not enable staff to clarify the risk, link with signs of suicide, or demonstrate effective working-together practices with other agencies, such as health.

What the inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against 'Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection'.

An **outstanding** children's home provides highly effective services that contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help and protection and care. Their progress exceeds expectations and is sustained over time.

A **good** children's home provides effective services that help, protect and care for children and young people and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

In a children's home that **requires improvement**, there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. The welfare of children looked after is safeguarded and promoted. Minimum requirements are in place. However, the children's home is not yet delivering good protection, help and care for children and young people.

A children's home that is **inadequate** is providing services where there are widespread or serious failures that create or leave children and young people being harmed or at risk of harm or that result in children looked after not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people living in the children's home. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference that adults make to the lives of children and young people. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with children, young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care given to children and young people. Wherever possible, they talked to children, 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.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service 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'.

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