

SC030797

Registered provider: Ethelbert Specialist Homes Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The service provides care and support to young children who have experienced significant placement failure. Its aims are to support children to stabilise sufficiently for them to be cared for by their families or foster carers. The registered manager has been in post since 2016.

Inspection dates: 4 to 5 September 2018

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: 22 November 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
22/11/2017	Full	Good
10/11/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
29/06/2016	Full	Good
29/03/2016	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 quality and purpose of care standard 6 (2) The standard requires the registered person to— (c) ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to— (i) meet the needs of each child; and (ii) enable each child to participate in the daily life of the home. (Regulation 6(2)(c)) In particular, ensure that all bathrooms and toilets are fitted and maintained to a good standard.	31/10/2018
The care planning standard 14 (1) The care planning standard is that children— (b) have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home. (Regulation 14(1)(b)) In particular, ensure that a detailed record of the assessment of the impact of each admission on the existing group is created and retained.	31/10/2018
The registered person must ensure that all employees have their performance and fitness to perform in their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (4)(c))	31/10/2018

Recommendations

- Staff should be familiar with the home's policies on record keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

In particular, ensure that reward charts reflect what is written in daily logs.

- Children's homes must comply with relevant health and safety legislation. ('Guide

to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

In particular, ensure that health and safety checks appropriately identify all issues.

- The registered person must have systems in place so that all staff, including the manager, receive supervision which allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children assigned to their care ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)

In particular, use supervision to assess staff competence and knowledge more widely.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children make good progress in this home. The staff sensitively plan how they will be ready to meet children's needs when they move in. However, impact assessments completed to decide if the staff can meet a child's needs have insufficient detail. The assessments do not thoroughly address the impact the admission may have on children who already live in the home. This detracts from the accountability of managers when considering if the staff can meet a child's needs.

Good health is promoted well. The staff encourage children to take part in physical activities and to eat well. If a child agrees, therapy is arranged using the company's services. The staff ensure that children attend medical appointments and assist them to develop better health, through clearer assessment of their health needs. Medication management has improved, and oversight of medication now works well.

All children attend school regularly and are achieving. They have been prepared for the new school year well. The staff tirelessly support children to remain in school. This has resulted in one child remaining in the same school he has attended for some time, and his ability to manage his behaviour in school has improved.

Children are helped to develop self-care skills, and regularly take part in decisions about their care. The children showed appropriate care of a visitor to their home. They were polite and helpful during the inspection, made her cups of tea and prepared her lunch. A new child-friendly form helps the children and staff to consider what they want in all aspects of their lives, and what actions to prioritise.

There are a wide range of activities which staff arrange to get children involved in the community and in the home. The support to help children to build relationships outside the home and develop personal interests functions well and results in children both trying new activities and continuing to enjoy those which they already like.

Contact arrangements are promoted and supported effectively. Staff work flexibly with families and professionals to establish the best contact arrangements for each child. Managers carefully review the arrangements to ensure that the staff have the right knowledge and abilities to supervise children's contact with their families.

The environment is well presented in many areas. Children feel at home here. They like the decor and help to personalise their own space as well as influencing the decor for the communal areas. Bathrooms and toilets are not as homely or well kept as the rest of the house. One bathroom needed the seal around the bath to be replaced, and another had chips to the bath surface.

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

The staff understand how to keep children safe. They manage the group well and they have good knowledge of safeguarding.

Children's behaviour is managed well. Rewards are clear and written in a child-friendly fashion. Children and professionals said that they like the way that this system works. Care is not always taken to ensure that detail in daily logs reflects what is in the reward charts each day.

There are few sanctions given, and only when there are serious concerns about a child's behaviour. It is more likely that children will be asked to try and change their behaviour, and then be rewarded for doing this.

Only one instance of a child going missing has occurred since the last inspection. Restraints are managed well, and the manager monitors effectively why restraints might increase, and reflects on whether the staff could manage children's behaviours differently. There is only one record on file about bullying since 2016. This was dealt with appropriately and resulted in no further issues.

Health and safety matters are generally well managed, but some issues, such as checking that door mechanisms and fire door seals work appropriately, need to be checked more carefully.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager has an excellent understanding of children's needs. He is an excellent role model and guides and supports the staff well. He understands the strengths and weaknesses of the service well and plans effectively to improve the quality of care. He is a committed and experienced practitioner whose point of view is valued by other professionals. One social worker said that the manager's concerns about children are always the focal point for the issues he raises.

Staff induction is extremely clear and comprehensive, and gives new members of staff clarity about what the organisation expects of them and who is mentoring them during their first three months of work.

Supervision is regular and well organised; it covers an appropriate range of topics and will address any issues that staff are struggling with. Staff appreciate the time given to these sessions, and the guidance provided. Supervision sessions are not used to check staff's competency about areas of practice such as their knowledge of safeguarding. This is a missed opportunity to regularly check that staff have the necessary level of knowledge, and the skills, that they need.

Staff appraisals have not occurred for over a year. This inhibits manager's ability to meaningfully complete a workforce development plan that suitably covers all relevant issues.

Well-organised and appropriate staff disciplinary procedures are used effectively to investigate and manage any poor performance.

Professionals are extremely positive about how the staff work with them. The staff provide very well-written reports that assist professionals to both understand a child's progress and make good decisions about the child's future.

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: SC030797

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: Sidney Coffin

Inspector

Ruth Coler, social care inspector

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