

SC030797

Registered provider: Ethelbert Specialist Homes Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

According to the home's statement of purpose, the service provides care and support for up to eight children experiencing complex needs resulting from their early life experiences. The current target age range of the children is seven to 13.

The manager registered with Ofsted in June 2016.

Inspection dates: 19 to 20 November 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: 4 September 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/09/2018	Full	Good
22/11/2017	Full	Good
10/11/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
29/06/2016	Full	Good

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 health and well-being standard is that— the health and well-being needs of children are met; children receive advice, services and support in relation to their health and well-being; and children are helped to lead healthy lifestyles. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure that staff help each child to— achieve the health and well-being outcomes that are recorded in the child's relevant plans; take part in activities, and attend any appointments, for the purpose of meeting the child's health and well-being needs; and understand and develop skills to promote the child's well-being. (Regulation 10 (1)(a)(b)(c)(2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)) Specifically, include clear and effective plans for staff to support children to address their chronic health conditions.	20/02/2020
The registered person must ensure that— within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes— details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(a)(v)) In particular, ensure that the records clearly show how and why the restraint became necessary.	20/02/2020

Recommendations

- Those with a leadership and/or management role should be visible and accessible to staff and able to deliver their leadership and/or management responsibilities. Any registered manager employed in the home should have sufficient capacity to ensure that the Quality Standards are met for each child in the home. ('Guide to

the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 52, paragraph 10.7)

- For children's homes to be nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of their children, they will, in most cases, be homely, domestic environments. Children's homes must comply with relevant health and safety legislations (alarms, food hygiene etc.); however, in doing so, homes should seek as far as possible to maintain a domestic rather than 'institutional' impression. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

With an emphasis on consistency, staff maintain routines and structure that enable the children to develop feelings of security and attachment. Staff carefully consider the children's needs and vulnerabilities before they move in. This also contributes to the way children settle and develop feelings of belonging.

Stability in their care enables the children to engage in their learning. and most make substantial progress. A number of children who were completely disengaged from formal learning have been sensitively supported back into full-time schooling and are enthusiastic about their progress. Close daily communication between home and school staff supports this progress.

Staff encourage children to explore and experience a wide range of interests and activities both inside and outside the home. A number participate regularly at sports clubs and organised activities where they have made friends and expanded their experience of the world, and are building positive memories. Staff are enthusiastic, creative and adventurous in their approach to activities for the children. The children engage in woodland and seaside activities where they learn new skills, discover new interests, have fun and develop feelings of competence and confidence.

The children's increased feelings of security and belonging enable them to engage in specialist support, and to restore and develop their family relationships. The staff display good knowledge of the adults who are important to the children, and are effective in facilitating these family relationships in a child-centred manner.

This large home is generally well maintained and tastefully decorated, with input from the children. The limited amounts of soft furnishings and finishing touches does, however, detract from a homely feel.

Some children have chronic health conditions that undermine their progress, particularly in their social development. Plans to manage and support the children in overcoming these conditions are, however, lacking in rigour and clarity.

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

The structured and boundaried home environment maintained by staff, coupled with their warmth and affection towards the children, helps the children to feel secure and cared-for. The children say that they feel safe and that, 'the staff are good at looking after us.'

Staff, who are patient and dedicated, help the children to understand and increase control of their strong feelings; they model and reinforce the children's socially helpful behaviours. This makes the children safer, helps them to develop socially in the community and increases their life opportunities.

On the rare occasions when a child goes missing, the staff response is urgent, comprehensive and sustained until the child is located and safeguarded. When children's behaviour becomes extreme and physical intervention becomes necessary, staff respond decisively and with care until the situation has been defused. However, the required recording of these incidents is insufficient, and lessons are not being adequately learned to prevent similar incidents from being repeated.

Staff know and understand the risks associated with each child, as well as the risks that the children may pose to each other. Staff are vigilant and proactive in managing and reducing these risks, and use effective plans to guide their practice.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The leadership of the home is strong, insightful and clear. Staff recognise and express their appreciation for the support they receive. Staff work together as a team and most are individually supported through regular supervision, as well as together as a team. The wider organisation has invested strongly in training, and staff are well supported in achieving their required qualifications within timescales.

However, the demands of this large home are high, and the pressures on staff are continuous. Currently, there are staff vacancies. Although managers are addressing these, operational demands have required the management of the home to be regularly involved in supporting staff in their care of the children, particularly in the past six months. This has led to the neglect of certain management responsibilities, particularly those relating to the monitoring of the service, staff development and staff cohesion.

The aspirations of leaders and managers are high for the home and those who live in it. They understand the strengths of the home as well as the areas of weakness, and express motivation to continue the process of improving standards of care and practice.

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:

John Pledger, social care inspector

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