

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 home provides care and support for up to eight children with complex needs resulting from their early life experiences. The age range of the children for whom care is offered is seven to 13.

The manager of the home was registered with Ofsted in April 2016.

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, Ofsted suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

Ofsted last visited this setting on 18 February 2021 to carry out a monitoring visit. The report is published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection dates: 28 to 29 July 2021

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: 19 November 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: Good

Enforcement action since last inspection: None

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
19/11/2019	Full	Good
04/09/2018	Full	Good
22/11/2017	Full	Good
10/11/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

A strong response to the pandemic by leaders and staff has increased mutual respect and trust between staff and the children. Staff have worked closely together and made personal sacrifices to maintain stability and continuity of care for the children through a period of disruption, change and restriction. The needs of the children have remained the top priority and they say that the pandemic has shown them that the staff really care about them. They report feeling safe and protected from harm.

The children display a sense of attachment and belonging to the home. They speak with warmth and affection about the staff and about the things that staff do with and for them. The staff provide them with a wide range of fun and adventurous activities and make good use of the many and varied amenities in the locality. This helps the children to build positive memories and enjoy their childhoods.

Staff are thoughtful and caring about how they introduce new children to the home. They plan and prepare how this will be best done for each child and, if possible, will visit them before they move. The effect of this is that when children move in, they feel welcome and quickly begin to settle. Equal care is taken when children move out, and they visit their new homes before they move. As a result, children have positive endings and are well prepared for their next steps.

Feelings of stability and security have helped most of the children to remain engaged in their education despite the disruption and change during the pandemic. Attendance and progress have been good and the children express aspirations for the future. This increases their opportunities for later life.

Staff regard children's connection with their families as a priority. They have taken all necessary steps during the pandemic to ensure that the children spend meaningful time with family members. The children recognise and express their appreciation about this. Some children have experienced increased family visits since moving into the home. Maintaining these meaningful connections reduces anxieties, helps the children to feel settled and contributes to their identity development.

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

The risks and vulnerabilities associated with each child are understood and clearly described. Clear plans are effective in guiding staff to keep the children safe.

The wide range of fun and adventurous activities available to the children, together with good staff planning and supervision, allow the children to take risks appropriate to their understanding. They learn to recognise hazards and threats and how to respond to these and keep themselves safe. When they make mistakes, staff help them to reflect and learn from these.

The combination of stability, stimulating activities, feelings of belonging and attentive staff make incidents of children going missing rare and there have been none during this inspection period. Plans are, however, in place to guide staff responses in the event of this happening.

The assessment currently in place that describes the suitability of aspects of the home's locality is, however, lacking in detail. It is inadequate for guiding staff and children to understand the locality, make best use of facilities and amenities and be alerted to risks and hazards. This requires revision.

Supported by a stable and consistent staff team, most children make significant progress in developing positive social behaviours and learning how to improve their interpersonal relationship skills. Staff have, however, also developed a tolerance for behaviours in some children that are likely to decrease their life chances as they grow older. The plans in place to guide staff in responding to these behaviours are reactive and do not provide staff with strategies to help the children to reduce or extinguish the behaviours. Some staff are insufficiently skilled to understand and respond to these behaviours more effectively and to support the children to make the necessary changes.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The strong, experienced and positive manager, a competent deputy and a committed and cohesive staff team have together succeeded in overcoming significant challenges during the pandemic, to provide stability and consistency for the children. The children have clearly benefited from these sustained efforts.

During this period, staff communication and supervision have improved. All staff spoken to highlight the support they feel from colleagues and managers, and the overall team-working ethic in the home. Staff also display a strong commitment to the children and enthusiasm for their role in the home.

Professionals speak highly of the staff and the quality of care that they provide for the children. For the children who have recently moved on, placing authorities express great appreciation for the care and commitment shown by staff and for the progress that the children have made.

The further development and improvement of the service and a vision for the future have not been a priority during the pandemic. These now require attention.

The home's statement of purpose does not reflect the current practice in the home or the age range of the children who are accommodated. There are also several inaccuracies. The stated ethos and approach to care is insufficient to induct staff and guide their practice.

Within the home, there are aspects of the physical environment that have been neglected and work needs to be done to show the children that they, and the home they live in, are valued.

The home's leaders understand the improvements that are required and show the determination and capacity required to bring these about.

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 positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on— mutual respect and trust; an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and positive responses to other children and adults. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— meet each child's behavioural and emotional needs, as set out in the child's relevant plans; help each child to develop socially aware behaviour; encourage each child to take responsibility for the child's behaviour, in accordance with the child's age and understanding; help each child to develop and practise skills to resolve conflicts positively and without harm to anyone; communicate to each child expectations about the child's behaviour and ensure that the child understands those expectations in accordance with the child's age and understanding; help each child to understand, in a way that is appropriate according to the child's age and understanding, personal, sexual and social relationships, and how those relationships can be supportive or harmful; strive to gain each child's respect and trust;	28 October 2021

understand how children's previous experiences and present emotions can be communicated through behaviour and have the competence and skills to interpret these and develop positive relationships with children; are provided with supervision and support to enable them to understand and manage their own feelings and responses to the behaviour and emotions of children, and to help children to do the same; de-escalate confrontations with or between children, or potentially violent behaviour by children. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(viii)(ix)(x)(xi))	
The registered person must— keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16 (3)(a)(b))	28 October 2021
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). When conducting the review, the registered person must consult, and take into account the views of, each relevant person. (Regulation 46 (1) (2))	28 October 2021

Recommendations

- The registered person should have a workforce plan which can fulfil the workforce-related requirements of regulation 16, schedule 1 (paragraphs 19 and 20). The plan should include the experience and qualifications of staff currently working within the staffing structure and any further training required for those staff, to enable the delivery of the home's statement of purpose. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.8)

- The registered person should ensure that the domestic environment reflects the staff's care and value for the children. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraphs 3.7 and 3.9)

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: SC030797

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: Sidney Coffin

Inspector

John Pledger, Social Care Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2021