

Children's homes – Interim inspection

Inspection date	08/11/2016
Unique reference number	SC068803
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Ethelbert Specialist Homes Limited
Registered provider address	Cheesemans Farmhouse, Alland Grange Lane, Manston, Ramsgate CT12 5BZ

Responsible individual	Leslie Davenport
Registered manager	Natascha Field
Inspector	Helen Lee

Inspection date	08/11/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Good
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection This home was judged good at the full inspection. At this interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has declined in effectiveness. Since the last inspection, the registered manager has left the home. The new registered manager has been in post for seven months. She has a good level of knowledge and experience, and was previously the registered manager for a similar service. The home has met one of the two previous requirements set. Risk management practice is now consistent: young people's risk assessments are reviewed on a monthly basis, with clear revisions. As a result, the actions for staff to follow to minimise risk are updated to reflect current risk levels. The previous requirement regarding recruitment checks is remade. On one sampled file, the reasons why a member of staff had left previous employment with children was not requested or checked. The area manager began immediate action to remedy this. However, internal monitoring as well as the action planning in response to the previously made shortfall had not identified this missing information. The home has met one of the two previous recommendations made at the last inspection. Staffing levels are planned to ensure that they meet the needs of the young people and can respond flexibly to unexpected events or opportunities. Rotas and time sheets confirmed that the home is staffed appropriately. In the last two months staff from this home have worked in other of the organisations homes on only one occasion, without impacting on the staffing level here. The previous recommendation regarding staff's skills and knowledge is remade. Key working takes place with children and young people on a variety of topics. This includes supporting some young people who display sexualised behaviour. Staff members have yet to complete any relevant training in this specialised topic to inform the structured time with these young people, which risks an inconsistent or inappropriate approach to addressing these behaviours. All the young people living in the home at the last inspection remain in here. There are some positive and meaningful relationships between staff and young people. A social worker said of a young person, 'there have been remarkable changes. The clear boundaries make him contained – we are not seeing any of the previous	

behaviours ... He has a really great relationship with his key worker'. The independent reviewing officer added, 'He [young person] was relaxed, happy and seemed like a different boy to the one who first moved to this home.' The level of progress made by young people is reasonable. Some are in school and doing well, one receives home tuition and another was in college but is now awaiting a review of his educational plans. The placing authority agreed to look into this and the manager has been persistently pursuing this. However, no escalation of this has taken place. One social worker said of a child, 'it's such an amazing thing – he is vice-president at his school which is so incredible compared to where he came from'. One young person has started to revert back to previous patterns of behaviour, including going missing. His social worker recognises that he has gone from 'real progress to a real spike in negative behaviours'. Three of the four young people have, as a group, recently gone missing overnight. On one occasion police involvement was used to contain behaviour.

The manager has a development plan which has included bring stability to the staff team. Staff feel well supported by the manager. The manager parallel plans (i.e. prepares for alternatives) young people's transitions when they are becoming ready to leave the home. The manager, with the input of staff members, oversees and understands the young people's placement plans to ensure that they address their needs and experiences. All significant events are relayed to the necessary people so that the young people are kept safe.

Information about this children's home

This children's home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to four children and young people with emotional and behavioural needs. It is managed and run by a private organisation.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
17/02/2016	Full	Good
20/10/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
11/02/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
02/10/2014	Full	Good

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

Statutory Requirements

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person/s meets 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 with the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The registered person may only employ an individual to work at the children's home if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3) which includes that full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2 (Regulation 32(2)(a)(3)(d)).	28/12/2016

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the service should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- Challenge the placing authority to provide the input and services needed to meet a child's needs during their time in the home. Staff should act as champions for their children, expecting nothing less than a good parent would. The registered person should consider the use of an independent advocate if the child's needs are not being met. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards, page 12, paragraph 2.8).
- Ensure staff have the relevant skills and knowledge to be able to help children understand and, where necessary, work to change negative behaviours in key areas of health and well-being ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards, page 35, paragraph 7.18).

What the inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspection we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

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 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 who it is trying to help, protect and look after.

This inspection focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

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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