

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	17/02/2016
Unique reference number	SC068803
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Ethelbert Specialist Homes Limited
Registered person address	Ethelbert Specialist Homes, Cheesemans Farmhouse, Alland Grange Lane, Manston, Ramsgate CT12 5BZ

Responsible individual	Leslie Davenport
Registered manager	Sidney Coffin
Inspector	Anna Williams

Inspection date	17/02/2016
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

SC068803

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Children and young people feel safe and are positive about the care they receive.
- Effective management oversight ensures that children and young people sustain good outcomes.
- Safeguarding arrangements are good. Staff demonstrate a sound awareness of child protection policies and procedures.
- Children and young people engage in a wide range of purposeful activities. No child or young person has been reported missing since the previous inspection.
- Positive feedback from external professionals about the quality of care has been received. They are kept updated about children's and young people's progress and achievements.
- One recruitment file sampled did not meet regulatory requirements. This was immediately addressed by the registered manager.
- Risk management practice is not consistent. Review processes do not always identify revised actions for staff to follow if there are changes in presenting behaviours.
- Strategies to manage staff shortages across the wider organisation had a negative impact on one shift within this home.
- Key-working systems are strong, although staff supporting some young people who display sexualised behaviour do not have specific training in this topic.

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 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 must comply with the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
12: The protection of children standard In order to meet the protection of children standard, the registered person must ensure 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 (Regulation 12(2)(a)(i)).	09/05/2016
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)).	09/05/2016

Recommendations

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

- Ensure staffing levels are planned to ensure that they meet the needs of children and can respond flexibly to unexpected events or opportunities ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 54, paragraph 10.15).
- 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).

Full report

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
20 October 2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
11 February 2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
2 October 2014	Full	Good
13 February 2014	Interim	Good progress

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
Children and young people are positive about living in this home. Observations show that warm and appropriate relationships exist between children and young people and staff members. A young person commented, 'it's quite good here. I like playing in the big garden. Staff are strict with rules, but I understand why.' Regular children's and young people's meetings take place. Children and young people influence daily routines and how their home is decorated. For example, new wash bags have been purchased for each child and young person and they have chosen new pictures for the walls. Daily chores offer good opportunities to learn life skills. These include laundry, clearing the table and cleaning. Events such as a 'Come Dine with Me' competition effectively encourage children and young people to be creative with cooking and baking. Access to the pantry is now only rarely restricted, and are in reasonable response to specific incidents. This open access helps all the children and young people to learn how to make good food choices. Children and young people have unsupervised time in the community as appropriate to their age and personal circumstances. They often spend time at local clubs, or with friends shopping. Education outcomes are good. Children and young people have full attendance rates and make progress academically. Some young people successfully undertake work placements with the support of staff members. Children and young people experience a good range of activities. Some are members of local football clubs. Through these, they keep fit, make friends and commit to regular training. Cycling, boxing and trampoline clubs are also popular. Placement plans are extremely personalised and up to date. Involvement of the children and young people in their own planning is strong. They add their views and comments to plans and reports. The health needs of children and young people are identified and fully met. Attendance at routine health appointments is good. Emotional well-being is promoted through access to therapeutic support. This has positively affected some children's and young people's behaviour, leading to a reduction in restraints and incidents. Contact arrangements are appropriately facilitated. Some children and young people live a long way from their family and friends. They are sensitively prepared for meeting or receiving correspondence from those important to them. Some children and young people have successfully spent time with family members after significant time apart.	

Children and young people live in good-quality accommodation. They like their bedrooms and highly personalise them. The extensive grounds are well maintained and provides space to play ball games, have barbeques and relax. A previous recommendation to review the use of external window bars has been suitably addressed. A new internal restrictor has been successfully trialled. The planned removal of the remaining metal bars will enhance the look of the home.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
Children and young people feel safe. They freely identify adults whom they would speak to if they were worried. The registered manager demonstrates a good awareness of safeguarding procedures. Staff training in safeguarding matters is up to date. Information relating to the safety and welfare of children and young people is appropriately shared with placing social workers. Children and young people engage in focused individualised workshops and complete worksheets on internet safety. This successfully helps them to learn how to keep themselves safe online. No children or young people have been reported missing and no child protection referrals have been made since the previous inspection. Good health and safety routines mean that the physical safety of children and young people in the home is assured. Vetting checks on new staff members are generally vigorous. In one file sampled, the reasons why a member of staff had left previous employment with vulnerable adults was not detailed. The registered manager took immediate action and the shortfall was remedied during the inspection. However, internal monitoring had not identified this missing information. Children and young people share their views on potential staff members during supervised observations. This suitably includes children and young people in the recruitment process. Four physical interventions have taken place since the previous inspection. Children and young people receive suitable debriefs. Records now show how staff members are supported to reflect on each restraint. This demonstrates professional learning from every intervention in order to reduce its future use. Sanctions used are reasonable. Children and young people add their views to records. A young person commented, 'staff treat us fairly.' Risk management practice is not consistent; although reviewed on a monthly basis, children's and young people's risk assessments are not always robustly revised. As a result, in some documents the actions for staff to follow to minimise risk are not updated to reflect current risks.	

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
The manager has been employed by this organisation since 2010, becoming registered manager of this home in 2014. He has an extensive background in public service including policing. He holds the level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management for Residential Childcare. The statement of purpose suitably describes the care given. Children and young people receive individualised care and live in a friendly, nurturing and safe environment. Personalised children's guides to the home provide a welcoming summary of key information for new children and young people moving in. Feedback from placing social workers and an independent reviewing officer is good. Comments included: 'this children's home has a very positive approach. I can tell that [child] matters here. There is a nice feel to the home, and [child] has good relationships with the staff.' There have been no complaints since the previous inspection. Staff members speak positively about working in this home. Both new and more experienced staff members feel well supported by the registered manager. Supervision takes place monthly and is recorded. Within these sessions, staff members receive clear feedback on their work. This assists them in improving their approach to childcare. Some staff members also raise relevant professional practice matters relating to colleagues. This open culture enables staff members to learn from each other and to strive for improvement. Staffing levels appropriately meet the needs of children and young people on a day-to-day basis. On one occasion, a shortage of staff members across the wider organisation meant that a staff member from this home was moved to another. This action left a shift with fewer staff than planned, and a serious incident occurred. A recommendation is set for the organisation to explore different ways of responding to staff shortages to avoid a similar occurrence. Training opportunities for staff are wide ranging. Courses completed since the last full inspection include those covering mental health, fire safety and valuing diversity. Key working takes place with children and young people on a variety of topics. This includes supporting some young people who display sexualised behaviour. Team members have not completed any relevant training in this specialised topic to inform this structured time with these young people, this risks an inconsistent or inappropriate approach to addressing these behaviours. Effective internal management monitoring systems exist, such as weekly checklists.	

In addition, regular oversight by the registered manager takes place and offers a close scrutiny of children's and young people's achievements and case records to ensure that good progress is sustained.

External monitoring visits take place in line with regulatory requirements. They involve children and young people and identify action points. A development plan, which identifies areas of further growth and improvement in the home, is in place. Previous requirements and recommendation have been fully met or appropriately addressed.

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 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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