

SC068803

Registered provider: Ethelbert Specialist Homes Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home offers care for children who have mild to moderate learning difficulties and complex emotional needs. It is one of several homes run by a private organisation that also operates a separately registered school that children may attend.

The manager registered with Ofsted in January 2019.

Inspection dates: 18 to 19 February 2020

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
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The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: 5 March 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
05/03/2019	Full	Good
01/11/2017	Full	Good
31/01/2017	Full	Good
08/11/2016	Interim	Declined in effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

The children settle and feel secure in the warm, accepting and stable environment provided by adults who care about them and are consistent, nurturing and reliable. The children learn to trust and respect the adults who look after them and develop feelings of belonging and attachment. This experience provides them with a firm foundation that enables them to engage in their education and build aspirations for the future.

Staff carefully support children, some of whom were previously unable to cope in the classroom environment, to re-engage in full-time education. Some successfully join mainstream education and others develop vocational direction through work experience and offers of apprenticeships. The adults and children celebrate their achievements.

The stability that the children experience also provides them with confidence to venture out and explore their interests and abilities and expand their understanding and experience of the world. They become emboldened to explore and reflect on difficulties from the past that might be holding them back.

Staff actively support the children to build the skills that enable them to become increasingly self-sufficient and to take responsibility for their own good health and well-being and to overcome chronic conditions. They make steady and meaningful progress in these areas.

Ambitious plans become achievable because of the mutual trust and respect between the children and adults, and the progress that the children make in their social and emotional development. The children enjoyed a highly successful summer house holiday abroad; the first for this organisation. This is a reflection of the commitment of staff and managers to ensure that the children have good experiences and make positive memories.

The adults are deeply committed to making sure that the children get the best from the time they spend with their families. They do this in close cooperation with placing authorities and with children's families, with great care and sensitivity. The staff freely make and manage long-distance visit arrangements to ensure that the children benefit from these experiences. This helps the children to feel trusting of adults, more settled in the home and connected with their families.

The overall experience of the children is highly positive and makes them feel valued and secure, and their progress is exceptional.

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

The children say that they feel safe and secure in the home and they show trust and confidence in the adults who care for them. The adults attune closely to the moods and feelings of the children and know them well. This helps the adults to anticipate when the children's vulnerabilities may place them at risk, and to take appropriate action to keep them safe.

The adults support the children to understand and express strong feelings in non-harmful ways. They teach children about hazards and risks in the home, community, and in their online activities, and support them to take developmentally appropriate risks. The children become more confident, safer and more able to keep themselves safe.

Incidents when the children are at risk of harm are rare. The adults are, however, skilled and knowledgeable in dealing with these potential risks quickly, and they know and follow the correct procedures.

A positive safeguarding culture is actively supported through strongly child-focused staff meetings and is embedded in individual supervision sessions. The standard of safer recruitment is exemplary, and staff keep the home environment safe from known as well as unexpected hazards through a high standard of health and safety practice, including fire safety.

The children's sense of belonging and attachment, and the positive relationships they enjoy with the adults, contributes significantly to their safety, protection and sense of security.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The manager demonstrates commanding leadership of the home through a wide range of effective management practice. He inspires a dedicated staff team to deliver a high standard of care and has succeeded in embedding strong practice in key areas, such as supporting best possible educational attainment, key working, engendering positive family relationships and staff supervision.

Staffing levels are good and the staff team maintains good continuity of care of the children when there is unforeseen staff absence. Rota planning is thorough and careful, and the manager makes strong efforts to ensure that staff remain fresh and focused on their duties. No use is made of agency staff or of staff who are not permanently assigned to the home.

Standards of recording are high and reflect the staff's close attention to detail and clear thinking about plans and targets for the children. Leaders and managers are acutely aware of the progress each child makes and speak authoritatively about their achievements. There is an established culture in which the children and staff

regard planned key working as a normal and necessary activity and the children engage with this.

Placing authorities speak highly of the standard of care their children receive and the progress they make. One local authority social worker was unable to say where the home could improve further and was particularly positive about the high standards of communication and joint working between the home and all agencies. The manager is not, however, making best possible use of the regulation 45 review to understand better the strengths of the home and to target areas for improvement effectively.

Staff supervision has become accepted and appreciated as a normal, regular, and an essential part of practice. In general, this is of high quality, well recorded and contributes significantly to the ongoing stability of the home and focus on the children who live there.

The strong leadership of the home, the confident, committed and cohesive staff team and the high standards of practice contribute significantly to the warm and settled environment in which the children are flourishing.

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

Recommendation

- The registered person is responsible for deciding what each (regulation 45) review should focus on, based on the specific circumstances of the home at that particular time and any areas of high risk to the children that the home is designed to care for, such as missing or exploitation. They will also consider what information or data recorded in the home will form part of the evidence base for their analysis and conclusions. There is no expectation that the registered person will review the home against every part of the Quality Standards every six months – registered persons should use their professional judgement to decide which factors to focus on. The review should enable the registered person to identify areas of strength and possible weakness in the home's care, which will be captured in the written report. The report should clearly identify any actions required for the next 6 months of delivery within the home and how those actions will be addressed. The whole review process and the resulting report should be used as a tool for continuous improvement in the home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.4)

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: SC068803

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: Lloyd Starley

Inspector:

John Pledger, Social Care Inspector

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