

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	31/01/2017
Unique reference number	SC068803
Type of inspection	Full
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	Ruth Coler

Inspection date	31/01/2017
Previous inspection judgement	Declined in 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:

- Young people are supported by caring staff who listen to their views and act on them. Their individual and collective needs are met well.
- Young people enjoy a range of activities which support them to develop personal interests and enjoy time together.
- Independence and contact with families and friends are promoted successfully and in accordance with young people's ages and any restrictions placed on their care.
- Staff safeguard young people well. They act on concerns and work in collaboration with other agencies effectively.
- Regularly reviewed risk assessments are employed by staff to minimise and eliminate risks relating to young people.
- Young people's good behaviour is promoted and very few incidents of young people going missing and physical intervention occur. Sanctions given are minimal.
- The staff team works well together and is positive about the support provided by managers.
- The home's statement of purpose reflects the aims of the service. Revised copies of the statement are not always submitted to Ofsted within 28 days of any amendment being completed.
- Plans and records do not always provide sufficient detail and evaluation of how staff help a young person progress.

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 within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
14. The care planning standard is that children— (a) receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and (b) have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home. (2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— (a) that children are admitted to the home only if their needs are within the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home's statement of purpose; (b) that arrangements are in place to— (i) ensure the effective induction of each child into the home; (ii) manage and review the placement of each child in the home; and (iii) plan for, and help, each child to prepare to leave the home or to move into adult care in a way that is consistent with arrangements agreed with the child's placing authority; (c) that each child's relevant plans are followed; (d) that, subject to regulation 22 (contact and access to communications), contact between each child and the child's parents, relatives and friends is promoted in accordance with the child's relevant plans; (e) that the child's placing authority is contacted, and a review of that child's relevant plans is requested, if— (i) the registered person considers that the child is at risk of harm or has concerns that the care provided for the child is inadequate to meet the child's needs; (ii) the child is, or has been, persistently absent from the home without permission; or (iii) the child requests a review of the child's relevant plans; and (f) that staff help each child to access and contribute to the records kept by the registered person in relation to the child. In particular the registered person must ensure that children's plans and records are up to date and accurately reflect young	18/04/2017

people's progress.	
16. The registered person must notify HMCI of any revisions to the statement of purpose and send HMCI a copy pf the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16(3)(b))	18/04/2017

Recommendations

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

- The registered person should ensure that all notifications of serious events are notified within 24 hours to the appropriate people. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 63, paragraph 14.13)
- The registered person should consider whether the agreed plan for managing any incidents of young people going missing fully reflects the level of risk this may pose to the young person and others.('Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.32).

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 who have emotional and/or behavioural needs. It is managed and run by a private organisation.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
08/11/2016	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
17/02/2016	Full	Good
20/10/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
11/02/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
Young people are cared for by staff who know them well. All young people say that their care is good and that they like living here. When a young person moves in, the planning and support that staff provide helps them to settle quickly and make positive relationships with staff. Some young people are thriving and progressing well in all areas of their development. The staff team advocates strongly for, and positively challenges any barriers to, receiving services which young people need to progress. Staff ensure that young people consider how their past affects them so that they can build a better future. Young people's education is valued and attendance promoted. Staff develop interim plans to support young people while decisions are made about their education, such as creating a timetable when a young person is not in school. This assists young people to continue to learn even where they are not in formal education. Independence is promoted effectively, taking account of each young person's age and circumstances. Young people are helped to understand reasons why any restrictions are placed on their independence. Meals provide a nutritious and balanced diet, and young people are encouraged to exercise regularly. Staff have a good understanding of how to manage and administer medication effectively. They identify specialist provision when necessary and the company provides a range of therapeutic services depending on young people's needs. Young people make their views known and are encouraged to do so. Young people's meetings are frequently held and participation is good. Young people are engaged in deciding which applicants are offered staff posts, as well as more regular issues such as changes to decor and menus, and improvements to the premises. Daily discussions with staff encourage young people to reflect on how they behave and to learn from their mistakes. Staff successfully support young people to develop their personal interests and try new activities. There is a wide range of activities on offer during the week and young people talked positively about all of the things they were doing after school and at weekends. Contact with families is supported and organised well. From the time a young person comes to live here, detailed plans are drawn up to help staff know what	

contact has been agreed and what to do to maintain this appropriately.

The decision that a young person should leave the home is made for the right reasons and takes account of the young person's needs as well as those of others living here.

The premises provides a variety of areas for young people. These are homely and welcoming. Young people personalise their bedrooms and help decide on colour schemes for communal rooms. The upstairs shower room was in need of redecoration. Managers made immediate plans to have the shower room refurbished so that it reflects the same quality of decor in the other bathroom.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
Young people are protected by staff who have a clear understanding of how to safeguard young people and act on concerns appropriately. A social worker said that staff work well with her agency to protect the young person she supports. Good behaviour is promoted by staff who engage well with young people and spend time with them. The monthly goals set for each young person to improve their behaviours are not always written in age-appropriate language, which did not encourage one young person to fully engage in meeting these goals. This was rectified during the inspection. More age-appropriate goals were agreed with the young person. Very few sanctions are given and the number of restraints has reduced. Young people confirm that they know what will happen if staff restrain them, and think this only occurs if they might harm themselves or others. Last year the number of restraints increased for one young person. This resulted in staff reviewing these incidents in order to consider what lessons could be learned. Staff said it had been helpful to reflect on what occurred and to consider if and how they might manage things differently if faced with similar situations. The number of times that young people go missing from the home has reduced. If young people do go missing, staff follow the missing person procedures well. Staff work hard to prevent young people from going missing. Staff build up effective networks of friends and family to help them find young people and provide information which will help the police search. Protocols about when to call the police if a young person goes missing were clear, but, given the risk of potential harm for one young person, the lack of an immediate referral to the police if his whereabouts become unknown may be insufficient to protect him.	

Risk assessments support staff to promote young people's safety. These assessments are developed from when a young person moves in and are regularly reviewed as a young person's needs change.

Staff are recruited effectively. A comprehensive assessment of their suitability is completed, which includes young people and staff's views of the person's ability to meet the rigours of their role. Staff who are promoted within the organisation are reassessed to ensure that they have the necessary skills, knowledge and aptitude for any new role.

Records show that the home maintains regular health and safety checks which are monitored during visits by the independent visitor. The managers are quick to deal with issues of concern which arise. For example, on the first day of inspection the laundry room was found to have no smoke detector. This was immediately dealt with. By the second day, a smoke detector had been fitted and the fire plan updated. Therefore, no action is required.

Notifications are sent to the appropriate agencies when concerns arise. The poor timeliness of some submissions is unacceptable and should improve. In one instance, a notification took 10 days to be sent to Ofsted.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
An appropriately qualified and experienced manager leads and manages the staff team well. She is a motivated practitioner who reflects on how her management skills develop services which prioritise young people's needs. Her current plans include working with staff to improve the quality of key-working sessions and the records that staff keep of the care given, and monitoring how well the aims of the young people's care plans are met. Staff value the support that managers provide. During a recent difficult period, staff considered that managers' support had held the team together. One member of staff said that the team had 'creaked' during this period but had not broken. Another newer member of staff said that while this had not been an easy time, it had shown the strength of the team working together, and had confirmed for her that this was a job she wanted to do. The statement of purpose reflects the aims of the service. It is being updated to better balance the individuality of this home with the overall aims of the organisation. Updated versions of the statement of purpose have not been forwarded to Ofsted when changes are made. This is necessary to ensure that the	

regulator has an up-to-date view on the services being provided.

The independent visitor's reports acknowledge the strengths of the services and areas for improvement. The manager particularly appreciated the discussions with the independent visitor, which helped her to plan and develop the service further.

This is a stable staff team that enjoys working together. Several staff have worked for the company for some time. Permanent staff or, staff from other children's homes within the organisation cover shifts. This provides young people with care and support from staff who know them well and who understand the ethos, purpose and day-to-day running of the home.

Inductions, supervisions and appraisals are well organised. Supervision records indicate that managers challenge staff to improve and reflect on their practice.

The work force plan is well organised and provides a clear record of all training. The training plan meets the young people's needs and reflects staff roles, responsibilities and stages of development. Six of the nine members of staff have gained the level three diploma for residential childcare. Two members of staff are completing the Children's Workforce Development Council's induction standards, and one is about to commence the level three diploma. Staff are positive about the training they received and show its effectiveness through their knowledge and interactions with young people.

Staff develop clear working relationships with other agencies. One social worker commented positively on staff communication skills and persistence in bringing a young person's needs to her attention. This example shows how the team prioritises young people's needs and advocates for them to be met in a timely manner.

Young people's plans and records contain inconsistent levels of detail of how young people's needs are being met. Daily notes provide an overview of a young person's day but do not evidence how the young person has progressed against the aims of their care plan. There are missed opportunities to record conversations which have taken place regarding difficult issues for young people. Dates and names of people present are not always recorded, and the language used does not always demonstrate the professionalism shown in staff practice. These deficits do not enable records to help young people to understand the progress they make. Equally, they do not support staff to appropriately reflect on which strategies make the most difference to a particular young person.

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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