

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC387684
Inspector	Patrick Sullivan
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Esland South Limited
Registered person address	Unit 4, Ednaston Home Farm Brailsford ASHBOURNE Derbyshire DE6 3AY
Responsible individual	John Stamp
Registered manager	Antonio Ezekiel Palmer / POST VACANT
Date of last inspection	03/06/2014

Inspection date	15/07/2014
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Previous inspection	inadequate
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

This inspection	
Overall effectiveness	adequate
Outcomes for children and young people	adequate
Quality of care	adequate
Keeping children and young people safe	good
Leadership and management	adequate

Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	adequate
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At the last inspection, seven requirements and one recommendation were made. Since the inspection, considerable progress has been made and all of the requirements have been wholly or at least partially met. In particular, improvements have been made to the fabric of the home and it is now in reasonably good decorative order. Arrangements for the running of the home, including regular maintenance, repair and cleaning have been improved. Arrangements for the placing of young people in the home have also been improved and records have been brought up to date.

There is a new manager in place, although not registered at the time of this inspection. A revised and updated statement of purpose has been drafted and a development plan for the home has been produced. These are not yet finalised.

The home employs experienced staff who engage with the young people, are well trained and committed to the wellbeing of the young people. The key working arrangements remain a considerable strength.

Safeguarding within the home is judged to be good; although young people do go missing, staff develop strong and appropriate relationships with young people and are aware of trigger points. Arrangements are in place to find the young person as

quickly as possible and to alert police to any particular concerns regarding the young person.

Social workers comment that staff work well with young people who can be difficult to engage with and they create an atmosphere of understanding and calm competence which complex and troubled young people respond well to.

Overall, although there are some areas which still require improvement, the home has considerable strengths. One of which is the ability and skills staff to engage with hard to reach young people.

Following this inspection, one requirement under the Children's Homes Regulations 2001 was made. This is concerning placement planning. Three recommendations were also made, in line with National Minimum Standards for Children's Homes. These are in regard to procedures for managing complaints from young people, providing a suitable physical environment and in regard to planning activities.

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home is a residential home for six children and young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties. The home is operated by a private company and can offer planned, emergency and respite placements.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
03/06/2014	Full	inadequate
20/02/2014	Interim	good progress
24/05/2013	Full	good
10/09/2012	Interim	good progress

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

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 Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Reg.	Requirement	Due date
11 (2001)	ensure that the children's home is conducted so as to promote and make proper provision for the safeguarding and welfare of children accommodated there (Regulation 11(1)(a))	30/09/2014

Recommendations

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

- ensure children's views, wishes and feelings are acted upon, in the day to

day running of the home and important decisions or changes in the child's life, unless this is contrary to their interests (NMS 1.1)

- ensure children develop their emotional, intellectual, social, creative and physical skills through the accessible and stimulating environment created by the home. Children are supported to take part in school based and out of school activities. 7.2 Children pursue individual interests and hobbies. This includes taking part in a range of activities, including leisure activities and trips (NMS 7.1)
- ensure the home provides a comfortable and homely environment and is well maintained and decorated. Avoidable hazards are removed as is consistent with a domestic setting. Risk reduction does not lead to an institutional feel (NMS 10.3)

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for children and young people **adequate**

Staff at the home engage well with young people and encourage them to develop a positive view of themselves and establish a strong sense of personal identity.

Education is encouraged and the home offers a range of flexible arrangements to ensure that all young people are engaging with some form of education. Young people can attend local schools receive home tutoring or attend an educational provision provided by the homes parent organisation. This ensures that a wide range of educational needs can be catered for within the home.

All children and young people are supported to share their views, wishes and feelings by experienced staff and strong key working arrangements. There are also weekly house meetings that enable young people to make a positive contribution to the home and to have a voice in the way the home is run.

Children and young people benefit from good contact arrangements with family, friends and other people who are important to them. Contact is facilitated either within the home or in the community, with staff assisting young people with transport arrangements and communication with social workers. Contact arrangements are in line with the placing authorities care plans.

Young people are encouraged to acquire the skills necessary for independent life. They are expected to clean their own rooms, assist with shopping, cooking and laundry as well as learning to manage a budget.

Health needs are well met within the home, with each young person registered with a local GP and clear and effective arrangements made for the dispensing of medication. Staff have a good understanding of the requirements for good emotional and psychological health and liaise with health care workers appropriately.

Quality of care **adequate**

The home is in the process of refurbishment. The living areas are being redecorated and young people's bedrooms upgraded with new flooring, curtains and bedroom furniture, greatly improving the physical environment.

Young people enjoy sound relationships with supportive and experienced staff who set clear and appropriate boundaries. Staff also listen and engage with young people and build sound relationships which encourage positive interactions.

Weekly house meetings afford young people the opportunity to have some say in the way their home is run and to make suggestions for improvements. They are also encouraged to suggest activities they would like. However, this is an area in which the home could improve. The process by which these suggestions is taken up by the management of the home is unclear and the response to these suggestions has been weak in the past. Young people have suggested they would like some leisure equipment such as a basketball hoop or trampoline to be placed in the back garden, but the requests are not always dealt with in a timely manner and there is generally a lack of clarity as to how these requests can be pursued.

Young people also made suggestions in regard to group activities and planned outings. However, it is not clear if there is a planning process in place to ensure that these requests can also be responded to in a timely manner.

The new manager has revised recording systems and log books used for recording. However work is still needed to ensure systems are in place and being used appropriately to record sanctions, missing from care episodes, weekly health and safety checks and recording of staff supervision. The use of sanctions also requires updating as there has been reliance upon a system of financial reparation in the past rather than more positive reward based measures. Complaint procedures also need to be revised as currently there is no audit trail for the progress and actions taken in response to complaints by young people.

Keeping children and young people safe good

Safeguarding arrangements within the home are good. Young people feel safe and staff are vigilant and committed to ensuring the safety of all young people at the home. The home employs a sufficient level of experienced staff to meet the safeguarding needs of the young people currently placed at the home.

Staff recruitment and vetting is done centrally within the homes parent organisation and safe recruitment procedures are followed.

Social workers report that communication has greatly improved and they are kept informed of any changes in a timely manner. They report that the staff are competent, experienced and knowledgeable about safeguarding. They also noted that staff frequently go above and beyond expectations and are highly motivated to protect the young people in their care.

Risk assessments and care plans are in place for each young person and these clearly identify risks as well as protective factors and are reviewed regularly.

Young people do go missing at times but measures are in place to locate them as quickly as possible when this happens. Staff get to know the young people and

careful assessment is made to identify potential triggers.

The home has a new manager who is in the process of forming links with the local police and safeguarding board to ensure the home can receive advice and assistance when needed.

All staff are trained in the use of restraint, however this is used as a last resort and detailed records are kept with regard to each incident.

The environment is physically safe and the level of security is appropriate to the needs of the young people currently placed.

Leadership and management

adequate

The home has recently appointed a new manager who is working to establish links with the local police and safeguarding board as well as with the local community and the immediate neighbours.

Concerns arising from previous inspection have been resolved adequately. Maintenance and repair work are continuing and the new manager reports that the process will continue until the home is brought up to a good standard of decoration.

The new manager reports that arrangements are now in place to ensure that potential new placements are carefully assessed by both senior management and the home's registered manager, prior to admission in order to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the young people currently in the home.

The home has a recently updated statement of purpose which is clear, accessible and comprehensive. The new manager has also produced a development plan in line with the strengths and characteristics of the home which is realistic and achievable. Records are in the process of being updated and new processes put into place to improve recording of significant events as well as maintenance issues and health and safety checks. However, these were not yet fully operational at the time of inspection.

Regular Regulation 33 visits take place and there is evidence that young people are consulted on these visits.

Staff receive regular and appropriate training and are clear about their roles and responsibilities.

Young person's records are mostly clear, regularly updated, stored securely and contribute to an understanding of the child's life. Minutes of reviews and other meetings are also recorded on files.

What inspection judgements mean

Judgement	Description
Outstanding	A service of exceptional quality that significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Good	A service of high quality that exceeds minimum requirements.
Adequate	A service that only meets minimum requirements.
Inadequate	A service that does not meet minimum requirements.

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The 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 relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the framework of inspection for children's homes.