

SC489516

Registered provider: Esland North Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a private organisation. It provides care for up to 2 children who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in January 2023.

At the time of the inspection, 2 children were living at the home, and their views were sought.

Inspection dates: 3 and 4 March 2026

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 25 February 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
25/02/2025	Full	Good
05/03/2024	Full	Good
10/01/2023	Full	Good
22/06/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

At the time of the inspection, both children have been living at the home for 2 years. Since the last inspection, there have been no children move in or out of the home.

Staff know the children well and build trusting relationships with them. One child told the inspector that he feels happy and safe living in the home and gets on well with staff. Observations of children showed them to be relaxed, confident and clearly comfortable in the company of staff. Interactions observed were warm, playful and supportive, demonstrating the care that staff provide to children.

Children's health needs are well met. They attend routine health appointments, and staff ensure that gaps in previous healthcare are addressed. For example, one child had never visited a dentist before moving to the home; staff have now supported him to attend and to improve his personal hygiene. Both children access regular therapeutic support, which helps them to understand their experiences and develop emotional resilience.

Staff complete regular and targeted key-work discussions with children. One child has also completed targeted work with a nurse to strengthen her understanding of healthy relationships, sexual health and the issue of consent.

Children benefit from consistent support with their education. Both children have suitable school placements, and staff work closely with education professionals to overcome barriers to attendance and engagement. Schools are impressed with the staff's commitment and the positive impact this has had on the children's progress. When one child experienced a period of instability, staff worked effectively with professionals to help him re-engage.

Staff encourage children to express their wishes and make choices about their care. When one child asked staff to take part in a rugby game with her team, staff embraced the opportunity. A child is having her long-term care options reviewed in line with her wishes. Children's views are valued.

Children enjoy a wide range of activities that promote their interests, confidence and social development. One child is the captain of her rugby team and enjoys taking responsibility for her loaned pony. Another child enjoys football and recently attended a football camp. Children also enjoy concerts, pantomimes and day trips.

Where appropriate, children are encouraged to maintain friendships and family relationships. Children enjoy socialising with peers, including a range of activities and sleepovers. Children spend time with people who are important to them and are developing important social skills.

There has been one complaint. Although the issue was historical, the manager ensured that it was revisited when the child raised it again. The child discussed some of the complaint with the inspector. The manager spent time with the child to explore the concerns fully, and the social worker was satisfied with how the complaint was managed. This demonstrates a reflective and child-centred approach to complaints.

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

Staff have safeguarding training. Staff meetings are purposeful and used to explore safeguarding scenarios and wider contextual risks. Staff demonstrate a clear understanding of how to keep children safe. Social workers express confidence in safeguarding practice.

There have been 3 missing-from-home incidents for one child. These were managed well. Staff followed the child appropriately and adhered to missing-from-home protocols, ensuring prompt and safe returns each time.

There has been one physical intervention since the last inspection. This was proportionate and necessary. The staff and child involved were spoken to without delay, allowing the opportunity to reflect.

The manager promotes strong multi-agency working. Staff and children have taken part in a joint training event with the police about issues of criminality and child sexual and criminal exploitation, strengthening awareness and preventative practice.

Behaviour support plans are clear and consistently implemented. Staff focus on reinforcing positive behaviour and rarely use consequences. As a result, children's behaviour is managed well and unwanted behaviours are reducing.

There has been one allegation of harm since the last inspection. The manager responded promptly and effectively. The child was kept safe and appropriate mediation took place between the member of staff and the child to repair this relationship.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The manager is an experienced and knowledgeable leader who holds a level 5 qualification. She has high expectations of staff and models exemplary practice. Staff describe her as 'fantastic', 'supportive' and 'always there for the children and staff'. Her commitment to both children and staff is unwavering. Staff feel valued, respected and empowered.

Staff speak with pride about their work, describing it as 'special' and 'family orientated'. Staff support each other exceptionally well, creating a culture of collaboration and consistency that children need. Staff are motivated to deliver excellent care.

The manager has created a resilient and skilled staff team. Staff either hold, or are working towards, level 4 or 5 residential care qualifications. They benefit from

high-quality training, including regular clinical input that deepens their understanding of trauma, attachment and therapeutic models of care. As a result, staff confidently apply trauma-informed practice. This ensures that children receive care that is thoughtful, nurturing and responsive to their individual needs.

The manager is a tenacious advocate for children. She challenges external agencies with professionalism. She ensures that children's needs are met and drives improvements in education, care planning and access to specialist support. One child was not accessing an education place and did not have a statutory education, health and care plan. The manager's input and consultation with the clinical team has secured and strengthened an education plan. The child is now attending an appropriate school and benefiting from stronger peer relationships and increased confidence. A virtual school professional said, 'The manager holds professionals accountable, like any good parent would, and has played a crucial role in ensuring the plan reflects the child's needs.'

Professionals speak extremely highly of the staff and manager. They describe staff as providing exceptional care to children. One professional said, 'This home is head and shoulders above other care homes.'

Monthly independent reports are of good quality. Reports include feedback from children and staff. The reports include appropriate actions and support continuous improvement. However, despite the manager's efforts to support the independent person, external feedback is limited.

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

Recommendation

- The manager should ensure that the independent person collates and includes regular external feedback within the report. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.5)

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: SC489516

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Esland North Limited

Registered provider address: Suites 1 & 5 Riverside Business Centre, Foundry Lane, Belper, Derbyshire DE56 0RN

Responsible individual: Chelsea Lightfoot

Registered manager: Natalie Grimes

Inspector

Amy Miles, Social Care Inspector

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