

SC433430

Registered provider: Esland North Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a private company. The home provides care for a maximum of four children who have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. The manager has been in post since October 2020 and is currently undertaking the required qualification.

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

Inspection dates: 1 to 2 September 2021

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	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 13 August 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
13/08/2019	Full	Outstanding
01/05/2018	Full	Good
31/05/2017	Full	Good
25/05/2016	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children develop positive and trusting relationships with staff. These relationships flourish because of the consistency of care and dedication to the children from the staff. Children feel safe and secure and achieve good progress in many areas of their lives. Children said that they can talk to staff about their worries. This gives children a strong sense of being valued.

Children are supported to keep in contact with family, friends and others who are important to them. Staff promote and fully support children to maintain these crucial relationships. One parent said: 'The home has been amazing; they have offered to meet us halfway for activities with our child. She has had such an enriched time here and they [staff] support her to make progress.'

Staff help children to understand the importance of education and employment. One child has recently completed her exams and was supported to find a job. The staff support children to develop independence skills and help children to believe in themselves. This helps children to develop their confidence and self-esteem.

A real strength of the staff and manager is helping new children to join the home and others to move on when the time is right. One family said: 'Staff are open to suggestions from us. They want to work with us and are just lovely.' A child, who recently moved in, described how the manager and staff worked to ensure the transition to the home was smooth.

The home environment reflects the very nurturing care that staff provide to children. The home is warm and inviting. Children are encouraged and supported to decorate their rooms as they wish. However, one child did not have enough storage for all her clothing. The manager identified this and put plans in place to rectify this quickly.

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

Staff work in accordance with the correct procedures when children go missing from care. The staff are proactive in working alongside other professionals to locate children quickly. Children are offered interviews with external professionals. These explore where the child has been and potential risks they have been exposed to. This ensures valuable lessons can be learnt. Incidents involving children going missing have significantly decreased. This is because children receive good and safe care from staff, and this helps keep them safe.

Staff understand each child's individual risks and vulnerabilities. In-depth and accurate risk assessments and behaviour support plans are finished completed and understood by staff. These documents are subject to review and amendment in line with the changing risks to children. Staff are robust in their safeguarding practice and place the welfare and safety of children first.

The manager has completed a thorough location risk-assessment. She has worked closely with partner agencies, such as the local police and local authority, to gain their views in the development of this assessment. This ensures a comprehensive understanding of risks in the local area. This enables staff to manage any external risks to children effectively.

Staff have a good understanding of children's needs. There is consistent advice to support children to reduce and manage negative behaviours. Staff ensure that there are structured routines, good communication and clear behavioural boundaries. This has resulted in a reduction in the number of incidents. Staff use de-escalation and calming techniques effectively. As a result, the use of physical intervention has reduced significantly, especially for one child. This indicates very good progress.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is experienced and registered with Ofsted. She has made significant changes in the home following her appointment. There is a clear vision shared by staff and leaders, which is ambitious with improving outcomes for children as the main objective.

The manager is highly ambitious for children. She understands the children's potential. The manager and her team advocate strongly for children, to secure the right resources to help them fulfil that potential. For example, the manager and staff worked well with a local authority to enable a child to remain at the home while she waited for a university place. This means the child benefited from a smooth transition and the support of staff during her move to university.

The home has been through a process of change. This has had an impact on the managers ability to ensure rigorous oversight. The manager is developing, with senior staff, different approaches to ensure that the monitoring and oversight are strengthened.

The manager has not routinely scrutinised sanctions records. For example, when sanctions are given to children in response to poor behaviour, they are not restorative. This does not help children to learn from their mistakes or make amends.

Staff are highly motivated and enjoy their jobs. As a result, the turnover of staff has been minimal. One member of staff said: 'It is like a real family home; I love it here.' This positivity creates a warm, happy atmosphere that benefits children and staff alike.

Staff receive regular professional supervision. However, supervision records do not demonstrate reflective practice and are brief. This is a missed opportunity to support the staff to develop their care practice through reflection and provide more detailed recording.

Leaders have not made suitable arrangements to ensure that all staff have access to the relevant level 3 qualification for staff. Two staff members have had several assessors and are now out of time for completion. As a result, staff are not yet equipped with the knowledge and skills they require to carry out their role effectively. The provider understands this shortfall and has taken action to put this right.

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure any sanction used to address poor behaviour is restorative in nature, to help children recognise the impact of their behaviour on themselves, other children, the staff caring for them and the wider community. This is in relation to sanctions being punitive and not supporting the child to learn and develop their behaviour responses. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.38)
- The registered person should ensure that the content and/or outcomes of supervision sessions are kept. This is in relation to ensuring that the written records of supervision provide staff with feedback on practice and provide thorough records of topics discussed. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.4)
- The registered person should ensure children should be provided with appropriate furniture, such as a lockable cabinet or drawers to securely store personal items, including any personal information. This is in relation to children requiring additional storage for clothing and personal belongings. ('Guide to Children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 16, paragraph 3.19)
- The registered person should ensure all staff in a care role, including external and agency staff, have the qualification in regulation 32(4) within the relevant timescale listed in regulation 32(5). This is in relation to staff not completing the qualification within the relevant timescales. ('Guide to Children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.12)

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: SC433430

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Esland North Limited

Registered provider address: Esland Ltd, Suite 1, Riverside Business Centre,
Foundry Lane, Milford, Belper DE56 0RN

Responsible individual: Mark Ullah

Registered manager: Lydia Harris

Inspector

Zoey Lee, Social Care Inspector

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