

# 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 run by a private company. The home provides care and accommodation for a maximum of four children and young people with social, emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

The manager has been in post since October 2020 and is currently undertaking the required qualification.

### Inspection dates: 12 and 13 April 2022

**Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account** **requires improvement to be good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **requires improvement to be good**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **requires improvement to be good**

The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

**Date of last inspection:** 1 September 2021

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement |
|-----------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 01/09/2021      | Full            | Good                 |
| 13/08/2019      | Full            | Outstanding          |
| 01/05/2018      | Full            | Good                 |
| 31/05/2017      | Full            | Good                 |

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good**

Since the home was last inspected, there have been considerable changes in the staff team, with high staff turnover. There has also been an increase in disruptive incidents in the home. Weaknesses in behaviour management and safeguarding practice mean that children have not had consistently good experiences or made good progress. However, the home has recently started to become a more stable environment again.

Staff are strong advocates for children. For example, the manager has worked closely with local authority virtual schools, headteachers and social workers to ensure that children receive their full education entitlement and that children's views are considered in decision-making. When children do not attend school, the home ensures that home tutors and educational activities are provided.

Children are sensitively supported to maintain relationships with people who are important to them. Staff ensure, where appropriate, that parents are consulted whenever care plans are reviewed. The views of parents are taken into account in decision-making. One parent said, 'They ask our thoughts and include us in decisions that are made. This means so much to us and ensures we are all working together.'

Children are confident and comfortable to talk to staff about sensitive or personal issues. As a result, staff are able to give appropriate guidance to children on a range of topics, including self-harm, internet safety and relationships. Staff help children to develop their own strategies to overcome problems and difficulties. A child said, 'Staff have helped me to learn how to talk about my feelings.'

The manager and staff ensure that children's health needs are met. When children have anxieties about attending health appointments, staff reassure them. This has enabled children to access important services. Children are provided with healthy home-cooked meals. However, children's access to unhealthy snacks is not always monitored, which can result in children having an unhealthy diet overall.

Staff help children to learn important independence skills in preparation for adulthood. Children assist with age-appropriate chores, such as washing dishes, doing laundry, going food shopping and preparing meals.

### **How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good**

Night-time protocols, in place to keep children safe, have not been followed consistently by staff. As a result, a child was able to leave their bedroom during the

night undetected by staff. Although no harm came to the child, ineffective monitoring systems have the potential to increase children's vulnerabilities.

On one occasion, staff and managers failed to recognise that a child had made an allegation. As a result, prompt action was not taken. However, the organisation's auditing systems did identify the concern, which was then acted on. Following this issue, staff have been provided with additional guidance to ensure that they fully understand allegation management processes.

Children know how to make a complaint. Managers make sure that all complaints are thoroughly investigated. The investigation process and the outcome of the complaint were fully explained to each child. This transparent and informative approach means that children have confidence in the complaints process.

The manager ensures that appropriate action is taken when any concerns are identified about staff practice or conduct. Performance management systems are effective in addressing any shortfalls in practice. When appropriate, information is shared with safeguarding agencies in an open and transparent manner.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good**

Shortfalls in management monitoring mean that potentially serious issues are not identified quickly enough. Managers have, appropriately, focused on supporting staff and children through an unsettled period in the home. However, they have not been thorough enough in reviewing and evaluating incidents. As a result, safeguarding errors have occurred.

Despite these shortfalls, the manager and deputy have considerable strengths. Their energy and motivation has meant that the home has continued to function and care for children with complex needs during a period of high staff turnover. Managers have a clear understanding of the actions that are required to improve the home.

Staff confirm that the manager is very supportive. She operates an open-door policy, ensuring that staff can always access guidance and advice. One staff member said, 'I couldn't wish for a better manager, she is so supportive. The children are at the centre of all that she does and, as a team, she really values us.'

All staff, including bank staff, are provided with regular formal supervision. This means that staff have regular opportunities to reflect on their practice. Supervision is also used well to provide staff with guidance on children's particular needs and to review care strategies.

Staff training is of a good standard. The manager identifies and commissions bespoke training for staff that relates to the specific needs of children. This ensures that staff are confident and knowledgeable.

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

### Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to meet 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(s) must comply within the given timescales.

| Requirement                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Due date    |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| <p>The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child;</p> <p>help each child to understand how to keep safe;</p> <p>have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm;</p> <p>understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person;</p> <p>take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and</p> <p>are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies</p> <p>that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm.</p> <p>(Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(v)(vi)(vii)(b))</p> <p>This specifically relates to staff following night-time risk management plans and to the managing and reporting of allegations.</p> | 20 May 2022 |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                    |
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| <p>The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that—</p> <p>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and</p> <p>promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate;</p> <p>ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child;</p> <p>ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child;</p> <p>ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child.</p> <p>use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(d)(e)(h))</p> <p>This specifically relates to managers embedding monitoring systems in the home to improve the quality of care provided.</p> | <p>20 May 2022</p> |
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## Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that each child's day-to-day health and well-being needs are met. This is in relation to children having large quantities of unhealthy snacks. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 33, paragraph 7.3)

## 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 & 5, Riverside Business Centre, Foundry Lane, Milford, Belper DE56 0RN

**Responsible individual:** Melanie Dougill

**Registered manager:** Lydia Harris

## Inspector

Zoey Lee, Social Care Inspector

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