

# SC429748

Registered provider: The Ryes College Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This is one of three children's homes run by a private organisation that also operates a school. The children can attend the school located on the site of another children's home owned by the organisation. The home provides accommodation for up to four children who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

**Inspection dates:** 19 to 20 December 2017

**Overall experiences and progress of children and young people,** taking into account **good**

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

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

**Date of last inspection:** 23 February 2017

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** Sustained effectiveness

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** None

## Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because:

- The children have positive relationships with a staff team that knows and understands their individual needs.
- The staff understand the importance of contact with families, and support this well.
- The staff consistently set boundaries and challenge unwanted behaviours.
- The staff understand the importance of listening to and acting on children's wishes and feelings.
- The children said that they feel safe living at the home and can speak to staff if they are worried or upset.
- The staff recognise and celebrate children's achievements.
- The staff understand the importance of building children's positive memories of their time at the home so that they can take reminders with them when they leave.

The children's home's areas for development:

- The children do not receive return interviews from an independent person after they have been missing from home.
- The location risk assessment requires more detail in order to safeguard the children.
- Some of the sanctions given by staff are not linked to the behaviour displayed by the children.

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
23/02/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
15/08/2016	Full	Good
22/03/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
13/08/2015	Full	Good

## 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
The registered person must review the appropriateness and suitability of the location of the premises used for the purposes of the children's home at least once in each calendar year taking into account the requirement in regulation 12(2)(c) (the protection of children standard). When conducting the review, the registered person must consult, and take into account the views of, each relevant person. (Regulation 46(1)(2))	09/02/2018

### Recommendations

- When a child returns to the home after being missing from care or away from the home without permission, the responsible local authority must provide an opportunity for the child to have an independent return home interview. Homes should take account of information provided by such interviews when assessing risks and putting arrangements in place to protect each child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.30)
- Any sanctions used to address poor behaviour should be restorative in nature, to help children recognise the impact of their behaviour. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.38)

### Inspection judgements

#### Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The children make good progress while living at this home. A stable and motivated staff team understands the children's needs and recognises how important it is for them to progress. The staff work closely with the children, their social workers and other professionals to achieve this.

The staff understand the importance of setting achievable individual targets that are

meaningful and help the children to develop. The staff monitor these targets daily and change them in consultation with the child. The children can earn financial rewards, which they can save or spend at the end of the week. This incentive encourages the children to achieve their targets and helps them to build a positive identity.

Although the children are relatively new to the home, they have built good trusting relationships with the staff. This was observed during the inspection, during which mutual respect and a sense of fun were evident. The staff asked the children about their day when they returned from school and supported them in their daily routines. These relationships enable the children to maintain positive interactions with the adults who care for them.

The staff help the children to maintain contact with their families. A family support worker commented, 'Between myself and the manager, we have managed to get dad to see him over Christmas, which is important for him [the child].' A social worker commented, 'The staff are very good at communicating and liaising with parents.' This support enables the children to maintain positive relationships with their parents.

The staff understand the importance of education, and work closely with the organisation's school to support this. The headteacher said:

The open contact between home and school helps to keep a contained and caring environment, with the young people knowing that we are working together. Part of this partnership ensures that the young people feel safe and cared for.

This joint working encourages the children's engagement and achievement in education.

The staff identify and meet the children's health needs. All of the children are registered with the local doctor, dentist and optician. The staff support the children to attend all of their health appointments. The manager and staff engage other health professionals when needed.

The children benefit, when appropriate, from free time in the community. The staff help them to understand and manage risks to keep themselves safe. A child who has free time commented that the staff always ask him where he is going and when he will be back. He said that the staff have helped him to manage his free time. The staff are not risk averse; they want the children to have the same experiences as their peers.

The staff regularly review and update the children's individualised placement plans, which guide the staff effectively in working with the children in all aspects of their lives. The children have their own child-friendly plans that they complete with their key workers. The children sign these plans, along with their social workers and their parents. Shared care planning ensures that the children are fully involved and can contribute to decisions about their care.

The staff take photos of children throughout their time at the home and make them into a bound book for each child to take with them when they leave. This enables the

children to have positive memorabilia of their time at the home.

The children attend weekly house meetings, during which the staff gather their wishes, views and feelings. The children are informed of plans for the home, such as new admissions. The manager responds to any requests from the children in writing, and the responses are read out at the following meeting. This shows the children that their ideas and views are valued and acted on by staff.

The children have regular key-work sessions that cover a wide variety of topics. The staff record any actions along with the outcome of these sessions. The children sign to say that they are fully involved and understand the session and any follow-up actions needed.

There have been two admissions and two discharges since the last full inspection. Clear transition plans show how each child is to be supported during their move into or out of the home.

The home has recently been redecorated, and the children have been involved with some of the painting. There are photos of the staff and the children around the home, which give it a personalised feel. The children have all had the opportunity to personalise their bedrooms. There is a well-maintained garden to the rear of the house. Living in a well-maintained environment helps the children to feel valued.

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

The children said that they feel safe living at the home because of the staff members' support. They can speak to the staff if they are worried or upset and the staff will listen and help them. The staff have a good understanding of safeguarding. They report any concerns to the designated officer or manager and follow the advice given.

The staff challenge unwanted behaviours and reinforce boundaries, taking into account the child's age and level of understanding. A family worker commented, 'I have seen a child be rude to staff and they [the staff] challenged this appropriately and spoke to him about his behaviour.' Incidents are recorded and discussed with the children. The staff support the children to look at ways of managing their behaviours.

The staff apply sanctions when required. The children have the opportunity to sign and comment on the records. However, these sanctions are not always proportionate and may not be meaningful to the child.

Comprehensive risk assessments are in place that outline the risks, concerns and strategies for keeping the children safe and support the staff to manage behaviours safely. Behaviour management plans are regularly reviewed and updated when needed. Consequently, staff have current and relevant information to help them to meet each child's individual needs.

Since the last inspection, there has been a decrease in the number of times that the

children have gone missing. The staff give the children the opportunity to say where they have been and check that they are OK. The staff follow up incidents during a key-work session. However, the children have not received return home interviews with an independent person. This means that opportunities to understand the reason for an incident are missed.

Since the last inspection, there has been a decrease in the number of incidents of restraint. When restraint has been necessary, the children have been debriefed by staff and had an opportunity to reflect on what happened. This means that children have understood the reason for the hold and have been able to discuss their thoughts and feelings with the staff.

The manager works closely with social workers and other professionals in the area to ensure that she is aware of trends and patterns locally that could have a negative impact on the children. The location risk assessment, however, does not identify all of the potential hazards in the area or have the relevant views of others recorded. This means that some risks to the children may not be fully considered.

The children know how to complain. There has been one complaint since the last full inspection, which was resolved within the required timescale.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good**

The registered manager has been in post since 2011. She holds a relevant level 5 diploma and has the relevant experience to manage the home. Professionals and the staff spoken to hold the manager in high regard. She has developed partnership working with local professionals in the area through monthly meetings. The manager uses these opportunities to gain information to support the children in different aspects of their lives and help them to progress.

There was one requirement and two recommendations raised at the last inspection, all of which have been met. All of the staff have regular supervision and appraisals. There is a child-friendly children's guide in place, and, although there have been no incidents of bullying since the last inspection, the staff talk to children in key-work sessions and house meetings about behaviour and respecting each other.

The manager has a clear vision for the home. She understands the strengths and areas for development. The home is working in line with the aims and objectives set out in the statement of purpose.

The manager monitors care practice effectively and uses the monthly reports from the independent person to support and drive improvement. The staff are aware of these reports and of how they are used to improve care practice.

The staff undertake face-to-face training, which they report to be of good quality. All of the staff are up to date with their training, and all staff hold a relevant level 3 qualification. This ensures that the children receive care from staff who are appropriately

qualified and skilled.

The manager is confident about raising issues with the relevant professionals if she feels that they are not acting in the best interest of the child. She is aware of each child's individual plan and challenges appropriately when a plan does not fully support the child.

## **Information about this inspection**

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and 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.

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:** SC429748

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** The Ryes College Limited

**Registered provider address:** Suite 2E, Skyview Business Centre, Churchfield Road, Sudbury, Suffolk CO10 2YA

**Responsible individual:** James Fischer

**Registered manager:** Vivienne Toms

## Inspector

Trish Palmer, social care inspector

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