

1253008

Registered provider: Esland North Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and managed by a private provider. It is registered to provide care for up to two children who may have social and emotional difficulties. There are two children currently living in the home.

The manager registered with Ofsted in July 2022 and is suitably qualified.

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 October 2022

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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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: 13 January 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
13/01/2022	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
26/07/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good
18/02/2020	Full	Good
31/10/2018	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

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

Staff consult with children regularly around a variety of topics. Children voice what activities they would like to try, what meals they would like and how they would like their home decorated. This promotes children feeling listened to and contributes to their well-being.

Staff have built strong relationships with the children. Staff are committed to meeting the children's individual needs and have the skills to do so. Children learn how to prepare simple meals and how to budget. These skills are preparing children to live independently.

Staff support children to build positive and safe relationships with people who are important to them. Children enjoy spending time with their families. This helps children to maintain their sense of identity and provides them with support networks when they move to independence.

Staff reinforce healthy lifestyle choices and encourage physical activity and healthy diets. However, children's health is likely to be negatively affected by their increased smoking and vaping. Direct key-work sessions reinforce this message and help children to understand the risks involved.

Children engage in their education. One child is attending classroom-based education and is making progress. The other child has a tutor in the home. The manager engaged with relevant professionals, including the virtual school, and advocated for a tutor to come to the home to support the child's education.

The matching of children has not always been effective. One child had to leave the home in an unplanned move, adding to their placement breakdowns and continued disruption in their life.

The manager completed a detailed impact assessment for a child who has recently moved into the home. Although the assessment did not identify any known negative impact on the child already living in the home, when the new child moved in the dynamics changed and the children began to go missing together. Strategies and interventions in safety plans to support staff to manage the children's behaviours have not been effective. The plans do not include the effectiveness of the measures. The lack of scrutiny is not helping the staff to reduce risk. Staff have been unable to break this cycle of behaviour and risk-taking behaviours have increased.

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

Staff are trained to support children to understand online safety and the risks associated with child sexual exploitation. This reinforces to children that staff care about them.

Children's individual behaviour support plans include the range of risks they face and the strategies that staff use to support them. This allows staff to understand children's behaviours and how to support children when a risk has been identified. One child has been supported to manage their feelings and develop strategies to prevent them from self-harming. As a result, the child has new ways to manage their feelings and this risk has now reduced.

There has been an increase in incidents of children going missing from home. One child, who previously did not go missing, is now frequently missing from home. This is because the children's behaviours are having a negative impact on one another. Children's safety plans are detailed and tell staff what actions to take when children go missing from home. However, staff are not following these protocols. One child's safety plan includes instructions to report the child as missing when they have not been seen for 30 minutes. However, on several occasions, staff have delayed reporting the child as missing, for more than two hours. This delays the safe return of children to their home and leaves children at potential risk of harm. In addition, return home interviews are not always followed up. This prevents children from sharing their reasons for going missing and prevents the provider from taking action to address the concerns.

Door alarms on children's bedroom doors alert staff to their movements. However, the rationale for this restriction and surveillance is not explored in relation to children's needs and risks and is not present in their care plans. The placing authorities are unaware that this restrictive practice takes place.

Staff use physical intervention as a last resort. However, children and staff are not always debriefed following a physical intervention. This prevents staff from being able to reflect on the incidents and consider alternative approaches. Children are not given opportunities to explore alternative ways to express their feelings and to prevent unwanted behaviours from reoccurring.

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

There is a new manager in post since the last inspection. The new manager has been instrumental in instilling confidence and motivating the staff. Staff speak positively about the manager's enthusiasm and dedication and share his ethos.

Regular team meetings take place and are well attended. These provide an opportunity for staff to discuss the children's progress and concerns and share information. Staff receive regular, reflective supervision. The management team provides staff with a wide range of training. This increases the staff's knowledge and skills.

Recruitment practice ensures that new staff are appointed only after safer-recruitment checks. Staff complete an induction and have regular probationary reviews to identify their progress and development. This ensures that staff have the skills and experience needed to work with children.

Children learn about the consequences of their behaviours through rewards and incentives. The records made by staff provide clarity when children are rewarded. However, there is no process to scrutinise the effectiveness of any consequences that are imposed on children as a result of their unwanted behaviour. The lack of evaluation by the manager does not address whether the consequence is fair and proportionate or whether children learn from this.

Gaps in the manager's monitoring of the home mean that concerns identified in this inspection have been overlooked. The manager has not made use of the external monitoring visits from the independent person to address the shortfalls. This does not help to improve the quality of care so that children can make good progress.

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>are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(vii))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that staff follow the protocol for reporting children as missing, as detailed in children's safety plans.</p>	18 November 2022
<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>use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(h))</p>	18 November 2022
<p>The care planning standard is that children—</p>	18 November 2022

<p>receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and</p> <p>have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that arrangements are in place to—</p> <p>plan for, and help, each child to prepare to leave the home or to move into adult care in a way that is consistent with arrangements agreed with the child's placing authority. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(iii))</p>	
<p>The registered person may only use devices for the monitoring or surveillance of children if—</p> <p>the child's placing authority consents in writing to the monitoring or surveillance;</p> <p>so far as reasonably practicable in the light of the child's age and understanding, the child is informed in advance of the intention to do the monitoring or surveillance; and</p> <p>the monitoring or surveillance is no more intrusive than necessary, having regard to the child's need for privacy. (Regulation 24 (1)(b)(c)(d))</p>	<p>18 November 2022</p>
<p>The registered person must prepare and implement a policy ("the behaviour management policy") which sets out—</p> <p>how appropriate behaviour is to be promoted in the children's home; and</p> <p>the measures of control, discipline and restraint which may be used in relation to children in the home.</p> <p>The registered person must ensure that—</p> <p>within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")—</p> <p>has spoken to the user about the measure; and</p> <p>has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and</p>	<p>18 November 2022</p>

<p>within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (1)(a)(b) (3)(b)(i)(ii)(c))</p>	
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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: 1253008

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Esland North Limited

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

Responsible individual: Kerry Morley

Registered manager: David Fairclough

Inspector

Aasia Hussain, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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