

# 1253008

Registered provider: Esland North Limited

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This children's home is owned and run by a private company. It provides care for up to two children with social and emotional difficulties. At the time of the inspection, there were two children living at the home.

The registered manager was approved in July 2022.

**Inspection date:** 7 March 2023

**Date of last inspection:** 17 October 2022

**Judgement at last inspection:** requires improvement to be good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Information about this inspection

At this inspection, the inspector evaluated:

- the care of children
- the safety of children
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers.

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children, using the social care common inspection framework. This assurance 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'.

## **Findings from the inspection**

We did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance inspection.

### **The care of children**

The children receive nurturing care from a consistent staff team. The staff know each child well and their individualised approach helps children to form trusting and secure relationships with staff. There is a happy and relaxed atmosphere in the house. One of the children said that staff were part of his family, and another said that staff are kind.

When children move on, or into the home, this is carefully planned so that it is a positive experience for all of the children. Children are given information about the home before they move in, which helps to reduce any anxieties or fears that they might have.

The manager ensures that children's educational needs are met. When a school was not meeting the needs of one of the children, the manager identified an alternative resource. This child is now enjoying their new school. Children are supported to develop their talents and to enjoy hobbies of their choice. This includes children developing their musical skills and visiting places that are of interest to them.

If children need additional emotional support, this is accessed for them from specialist services. The staff follow each child's support plan. This helps children to understand and manage their feelings.

Children's views are sought and promoted. They choose activities, meals and how they want their rooms to be decorated. Children say that they are listened to by staff.

The home is welcoming, and photographs of the children are displayed throughout. From the toys and belongings on view, it is very apparent that children live here, and this reinforces the family feel of the home. The manager engages with the children on their level. He was seen on the floor interacting with a child. Lots of fun and laughter was seen and heard.

There are some areas of the home that look tired and worn. The kitchen is to be refurbished. However, steps to improve the overall appearance of this area in the interim will help to bring this in line with the rest of the home.

### **The safety of children**

Staff know what the risks are for each of the children and the steps to take to mitigate these risks. Children are involved in writing their plans, which helps them to

understand how to keep themselves safe. They also know what action staff will take when concerns arise.

When new risks emerge, risk management plans are amended to ensure that staff are clear about how to respond. For example, when a child spoke of hurting themselves, steps were taken to ensure that the environment was safe alongside the child being supported to access clinical in-pat. The progress that the child has made means that this is no longer a current risk.

Children are provided with clear boundaries. Children say that the rules are 'fair' and that they help them to be safe. Sanctions are rarely used, and positive behaviour is recognised and rewarded.

There has been a reduction in children going missing from care. If children are away from home, staff take steps to locate them. When children are spending time with friends, staff make regular phone calls to ensure that they are safe.

The children are more settled and there has been a reduction in behavioural incidents. Children respond positively to the support that they receive. Children are rarely held; staff use their skills to de-escalate situations. Records of the use of restraint on children are detailed. The manager evaluates the staff's actions, and any learning is shared with staff so that practice can improve. Debriefs with children mean that they are supported to make positive changes and that their views are reflected in records.

Online safety work with children ensures they know how to keep safe when using a mobile phone and other devices. Age-appropriate restrictions are applied to the home's internet. However, these had not been applied to every device available to the children. This gap means that children could access games that are not appropriate for their age.

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

The manager has taken steps to address the shortfalls identified in the previous inspection and to respond to recommendations made by the independent person. The recording of behavioural incidents has improved in quality and the manager has systems to monitor the care that is provided for the children. This helps children to make progress.

The manager takes steps to support children when their plans do not reflect their views. This had a positive outcome for a child who was frustrated when their wish to move on was not being progressed.

Allegations are addressed promptly. These are shared with the local authority designated officer if concerns are raised about a member of staff. The lessons learned from incidents are used to improve staff practice, and work is done with children to restore relationships if needed.

Regular supervision and team meetings give staff further opportunities for learning. This is alongside consultation with the providers in-house clinician. Staff are positive about the support that they receive and how additional training has benefited their practice.

Staff enjoy their work, and this is reflected in the stability of the staff team. Children know who is looking after them, and this enables positive relationships to flourish.

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
17/10/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
13/01/2022	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
26/07/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good
18/02/2020	Full	Good

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

### **Recommendations**

- The registered person should ensure that areas of paint work which are showing signs of wear and tear are refreshed and that while waiting for the new kitchen, steps are taken to improve the appearance of the current one. ('Guide to the Children's Home Regulations, including the quality standards', paragraph 3.9, page 15.)
- The registered person should ensure that all electronic devices to which the children have access have age-appropriate restrictions applied. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', paragraph 9.9, page 43.)

## Children's home details

**Unique reference number:** 1253008

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

**Registered provider:** Esland North Limited

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

**Responsible individual:** Kerry Morley

**Registered manager:** David Fairclough

## Inspector

Laura Grundy, Social Care Inspector

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