

1250194

Registered provider: My Choice Children's Homes Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and run by a private organisation. It provides care for up to 4 children who experience social and emotional difficulties. At the time of the inspection, 3 children were living in the home.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since August 2024.

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 May 2026

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
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The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: 23 April 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
23/04/2025	Full	Good
16/07/2024	Full	Good
26/09/2023	Full	Good
15/02/2023	Full	Good

Summary of findings

Children experience exceptional care in a warm and nurturing home where they feel safe, valued and able to express themselves. Staff know children very well and use highly attuned, therapeutic approaches that build trust, emotional security and meaningful progress. Safeguarding practice is robust, with strong multi-agency working, reflective oversight and consistently effective responses to risk. Children's health, education and independence skills are supported with patience, creativity and ambition. Inspirational leadership creates a stable, learning-focused culture in which staff feel valued and children's achievements are celebrated. As a result, children flourish and make sustained, positive progress across all areas of their lives.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

The home is immaculate, warm and homely, with a high standard of maintenance throughout. Several areas have been upgraded since the last inspection, including the snug being transformed into a well-equipped recording studio and the installation of a new downstairs bathroom. The overall upkeep of the home has improved, creating a welcoming and child-centred environment where children feel comfortable and safe.

Staff know the children exceptionally well and have a strong understanding of their backgrounds, needs and emotional triggers. Through these relationships, staff have learnt effective ways to support children when they show signs of distress. Children feel secure enough to share their feelings openly, as seen in one child's detailed and eloquent conversations with inspectors. Staff use important discussions to explore meaningful issues and strengthen relationships. Recording is highly child-focused, written directly to the child in warm, non-shaming language that supports future life-story work. Quarterly progress reports are exceptionally strong and celebrate every achievement, no matter how small.

Staff have an excellent understanding of the children's behaviours and emotional presentation, responding with patience, empathy and an unwavering belief in each child's potential. Their therapeutic approach enables them to accept each child fully and to provide high levels of nurture, helping children feel safe, understood and free from judgement. The home has a warm, family-like atmosphere where children can express their views, wishes and feelings openly, whether in group meetings or through the frequent one-to-one key-work sessions.

Children's health needs are managed extremely well. Clear documentation ensures they receive up-to-date care, and staff act promptly to register new children with health services. When children feel anxious about attending appointments, staff respond with empathy and persistence, helping them build confidence at their own pace. One child's recent attendance at a health appointment represents a significant step forward, and

staff remain hopeful and committed to supporting them to engage with therapeutic services when they are ready.

Children have individual incentive plans that staff review with them each day. Monthly targets are set to support progress across all areas of their lives, alongside a personal goal chosen by each child. Rather than using punitive consequences, children may lose daily incentives if targets are not met, which they find easier to understand. This therapeutic, structured approach helps children stay motivated, experience success and develop a sense of ownership over their progress.

Children are supported to develop independence skills at a pace that reflects their age, needs and emotional readiness. This approach is having a positive impact, with children showing growing interest in learning from one another and thinking about their own futures. For some children, this has, at times, felt overwhelming, but staff provide sensitive, consistent support to help them manage their feelings. Staff are relentless in building children's confidence, self-worth and belief in their ability to achieve positive outcomes.

All children are flourishing in their own ways and clearly view the home as their 'safe space'. All are engaging in education, and while attendance has been inconsistent at times, staff are creative and persistent in finding suitable learning opportunities for children. For some, educational progress is understandably slow, given their starting points, including prolonged periods out of school and significant anxiety about attending. Staff remain patient, supportive and focused on helping each child re-engage at a pace that feels safe and manageable for the child.

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

Children's safety is central to practice. Staff respond to children's distress with nurturing, therapeutic approaches; physical intervention is extremely rare and only ever used proportionately. Incident records are clear and reflective, and the manager's reviews provide strong oversight, identifying triggers and guiding staff on adapting their approach. Post-incident support is empathetic and helps children understand their feelings. The home's culture is one of continuous learning and improvement.

Children feel safe to raise concerns. Safeguarding procedures are followed consistently, with timely consultation with services such as the police and social care. Staff escalate concerns and advocate strongly for children's needs, including for their education, return-home interviews and family time.

Risk assessments are of high quality. Although children do go missing at times, staff remain persistent, caring and committed, contributing to significant progress for some children whose placements may have been thought unsustainable. Matching processes are sensitive and robust, reducing risks for children already living in the home. When one placement did not progress as hoped, the organisation acted swiftly to help to secure a more suitable home for the child.

Health and safety arrangements are effective. Children know how to keep themselves safe in an emergency and personalised evacuation plans are in place where needed. Decisions about door alarms are risk-led and regularly reviewed to ensure restrictions are only used when necessary.

Staff understand each child's vulnerabilities and respond swiftly to concerns, escalating to specialist services when required. Safety plans and individual strategies are detailed, regularly reviewed and help children understand their own triggers and what supports them to feel safe. Accidents and injuries are recorded promptly and acted upon without delay.

Online safety is an emerging priority. Strong relationships between children and staff enable open conversations, and recent training is intended to further strengthen staff and children's understanding of risks. Day-to-day keywork and group discussions ensure that online safety remains a consistent focus.

Professional feedback is highly positive, highlighting strong safeguarding practice and well-managed transitions. Staff provide consistent boundaries, celebrate achievements and help children build confidence and self-worth.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The registered manager has an unwavering passion for providing the best possible care, and this sets the tone for the whole service. Staff are proud of their contribution to children's progress and talk about them with genuine warmth and respect. This strong, values-led culture results in children receiving excellent care from a team who are deeply committed to helping them achieve positive outcomes.

Managers and staff work proactively with health, education, social care and therapeutic professionals to ensure children's needs are met in every area of their lives. When specialist support is required, it is sought without hesitation. Leaders promote a trauma-informed approach across all professional networks, ensuring children experience consistent, attuned care.

The registered manager is enthusiastic, reflective and has a clear understanding of the home's strengths and areas for development. The recent introduction of an experienced deputy manager has strengthened leadership capacity and has been welcomed by staff and children. Existing managers have provided stability during periods of staff change, preventing disruption to children's care and maintaining a strong, consistent culture.

Staff report feeling well supported by the manager and enjoy working in the home. They receive regular, reflective supervision, alongside team meetings and therapeutic input, all of which support their professional development and help them to feel valued. Leaders model an open, transparent and learning-focused culture, enabling staff to challenge practice appropriately and raise concerns confidently. This contributes to strong safeguarding practice and continuous improvement.

Staff ensure children have positive daily experiences. They provide structure, clear boundaries and meaningful time with children, showing interest in their hobbies and encouraging curiosity. Daily incentive charts are used well, with short-term, achievable targets that help children build confidence through success.

Leaders are inspirational, ambitious and deeply invested in children's lives. They have high expectations of staff and speak proudly of each child's achievements. One child spoke confidently and openly with inspectors — something made possible by the encouragement, empowerment and emotional safety created by the staff team.

No requirements or recommendations were made at this inspection.

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: 1250194

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: My Choice Children's Homes Limited

Registered provider address: Unit 3a Mill Green Business Estate, Mill Green Road, Haywards Heath, West Sussex RH16 1XQ

Responsible individual: Dawn Ives

Registered manager: Fiona McNealy

Inspectors

Emma Haskell, Social Care Regulatory Inspector

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