

2625942

Registered provider: My Choice Children's Homes Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and run by a private organisation. It is registered to provide care for up to four children.

Four children were living at the home at the time of the inspection.

The manager was registered with Ofsted in March 2023.

Inspection dates: 8 and 9 May 2024

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: 25 April 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
25/04/2023	Full	Good
17/05/2022	Full	Good
16/03/2022	Interim	Improved effectiveness
17/08/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children make exceptional progress from their individual starting points. This is due to the unconditional love, acceptance and consistency of care provided by the dedicated staff.

Staff have a clear understanding of the children's backgrounds and needs. They get to know the children as individuals and support them extremely well. Staff promote children's life skills. This helps children to become more independent and builds their self-confidence.

Staff are committed to gaining children's views, wishes and feelings. They do this in a number of ways, including through children's meetings, individual planned conversations and everyday practice. The children choose what activities they want to do, both individually and as a group, and feel heard.

All of the children are engaged in full-time education. They are learning and are making good progress from each of their starting points. Staff are ambitious for children and support them to attend and do well in their education. Managers liaise closely with teaching staff. Staff from the home offer good support to children to keep them in school when they start to struggle.

Staff manage children's healthcare needs very well. Clearly documented guidance is in place to ensure that children's medication is administered safely. Staff maintain close liaison with external agencies and healthcare professionals. This ensures that children receive the best medical care and maintain good health.

Staff always promote positive endings when children leave the home. This has enabled one child to have a successful transition back into their family home. The child remains in regular contact with staff.

The manager ensures that any moves into the home are well planned. The views, needs and feelings of other children living in the home are taken into account. Staff and children sensitively welcome the new child. Consequently, children experience a successful move into the home and settle quickly.

Staff exhibit kindness and warmth towards the children and each other. This contributes towards the homely environment and supportive team culture. Children are treated with dignity and respect. They experience care and support that are sensitive and responsive to their identity and family history. This helps them to develop a positive self-view and build emotional resilience and a sense of their own identity.

Staff build open and trusting relationships with the children, who speak very highly of the care and support that they receive. Children feel that the staff genuinely care about them. One child said, 'It is the best home ever.'

Staff support and encourage children to spend time with their families safely. Staff work proactively and positively with parents. The children trust the staff and discuss their feelings with them. Staff sensitively support the children and help them to make informed decisions.

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

Children feel safe. Staff understand the risks and vulnerabilities that children face and respond to any concerns swiftly. They escalate any concerns to the appropriate professionals, including the police and other specialist services, to ensure that children receive high-quality care and support.

Staff are guided by comprehensive plans and risk assessments. These give a great insight into the needs and risks of each child and how these are to be managed to ensure the children's safety and well-being.

Incidents are well managed. Staff are trained to use de-escalation to avoid physical interventions. When physical intervention is used, it is reasonable and proportionate. Staff always use physical intervention as a last resort, and managers monitor incidents appropriately. Staff support children sensitively after any incident. They give the child the opportunity to reflect on the incident itself and how they were feeling at the time. Because of staff practice, there has been a significant reduction in the number of physical interventions used in the last year.

Strategies to help keep children safe are clearly set out in their individual support plans. These are reviewed frequently. Staff support children to identify their own behaviours and triggers and how staff can help them to feel safe. These strategies are outlined in detailed individual safety plans.

The manager ensures that staff recruitment practices are thorough and follow safer recruitment principles. This ensures that children are cared for by staff that are suitably experienced and vetted.

Management of health and safety issues, including fire, is effective. Any maintenance issues are quickly resolved to a high standard. Children live in a safe environment. Staff and children know how to keep themselves and others safe in an emergency.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The registered manager knows the children very well and is actively involved in their lives. He recognises the importance of working in partnership with health, education and social care professionals and therapists to meet children's needs and is a strong

advocate for children. Other professionals report good relationships with staff. They feel that staff communicate with them regularly, and they feel that the team supports children well.

All staff receive good-quality practice-related supervision and annual appraisals. Staff consistently say that they are very well supported by the manager and enjoy working in the home. Staff use team meetings as a reflective space. They invest in these, which encourages curiosity and problem-solving as a collective. The manager provides constructive and high-quality debriefs to staff following any incidents, and staff feel able to express their views. Consequently, staff morale is high.

The manager has a range of monitoring systems that identify strengths and areas for improvement effectively. The manager's monitoring enables a comprehensive oversight by the senior leadership team. Consequently, the leadership team is able to implement changes efficiently. The manager follows up, and discusses with staff, any issues identified with the quality of recording. However, on occasion, records still lack clarity and detail.

Managers and staff have high expectations for the team and are ambitious about children's futures. They speak passionately about providing a high quality of care and working with children to unlock their potential.

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

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to meet the Care Standards Act 2000, The Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards'. The registered person must comply within the given timescales.

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

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: 2625942

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 RH16 1XQ

Responsible individual: Dawn Ives

Registered manager: Luke Carr

Inspectors

Emma Haskell, Social Care Regulatory Inspector
Sonata Brisley, Social Care Regulatory Inspector

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