

SC008485

Choices Home For Children Limited

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is privately run and owned. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to six young people who may have emotional and behavioural difficulties.

There is no registered manager for the setting.

Inspection date: 18 December 2018

This monitoring visit

This home is subject to a restriction of accommodation notice and three compliance notices relating to regulation 12 (help and protection); regulation 13 (leadership and management); and regulation 14 (care planning). There are concerns regarding the protection of young people, weak leadership and management, and poor care planning. This monitoring inspection was completed to review the provider's attention to the regulation 12 compliance notice, and to check compliance with the restriction of accommodation notice.

The purpose of this monitoring visit was to evaluate the progress the home has made in addressing the concerns regarding young people's safety and welfare, and the actions taken by managers to meet the steps laid out in the regulation 12 compliance notice.

At this visit it was found that young people's risk assessments have been reviewed and updated in relation to known risks, and staff are implementing the actions laid out in those assessments. For example, staff ring some young people every hour when they are out of the home. On the whole, these young people are seen to respond to this level of monitoring and are adhering to the checks that staff are carrying out. As a result, staff have a better understanding of young people's whereabouts and who they are associating with.

Since the last inspection, staff and managers have liaised with relevant agencies, in

order to better understand the risks that may be posed to young people through their associations with adults outside the home. In this respect, risk assessments have been formulated and are updated with regular and timely information-sharing between the staff and other agencies.

However, analysis within risk assessments is minimal and opportunities to better protect young people are missed. In addition, some updated details of risk assessments are not fully congruent with other documents managing risk. For example, directions for staff regarding the timing of reporting young people as missing from the home vary. The attention to this detail is important for new staff working at the home who will rely on this information.

Managers do not always evaluate the quality of risk assessments to ensure that they are accurate, relevant and helpful to staff. For example, some young people are assessed as being 'very high risk' for certain behaviours, when their current behaviours do not reflect this level of concern.

Since the last inspection, incidents of missing from home have reduced in number and incidents of aggression and violence within the home have significantly reduced in number. Although some return home interviews have taken place, these were not carried out within current agreed care planning timescales.

Staff and managers have introduced structured days and healthier routines for young people. As a result, some young people who were not previously attending school, were rising late in the day and were absent from the home for long periods of time, are now engaged in education on a daily basis. Young people are more willing to engage in activities with staff.

Young people are slowly benefiting from staff spending a greater amount of focused time with them. For example, work has taken place with young people with regard to relationships, emotional health and self-harm. When young people have refused to engage with specialist agencies, such as the drug and alcohol team, staff have accessed appropriate resources to inform their conversations with young people.

Managers have provided staff with the opportunity to undertake safeguarding training and self-harm training. Further training is planned for the start of the new year to further develop the staff's skills and knowledge base.

The staff and managers have made progress in meeting the steps laid out in the regulation 12 compliance notice and as a result young people are better protected. Young people are slowly responding to these changes and are beginning to make some progress. Other areas of concern raised at the previous inspection have not been evaluated at this visit.

The home has complied with the restriction of accommodation notice, as no additional young people have been introduced to the home. However, given the

number of outstanding concerns and the need for managers to consolidate the work that has recently begun, the restriction of accommodation notice remains in place.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
13/11/2018	Full	Inadequate
05/09/2017	Full	Good
28/02/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
02/08/2016	Full	Outstanding

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 care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that children are admitted to the home only if their needs are within the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home's statement of purpose; that arrangements are in place to— manage and review the placement of each child in the home that each child's relevant plans are followed; that, subject to regulation 22 (contact and access to communications), contact between each child and the child's parents, relatives and friends, is promoted in accordance with the child's relevant plans; that the child's placing authority is contacted and a review of that child's relevant plans is requested, if— the registered person considers that the child is at risk of harm or has concerns that the care provided for the child is inadequate to meet the child's needs. (Regulation 14(1)(a)(b)(2)(a)(b)(i)(c)(d)(e)(i))	11/01/2019
*The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose; ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate; understand the impact that the quality of care provided in	11/01/2019

the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13(1)(a)(b)(2)(a)(b)(f)(h))	
The education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— help each child to achieve the child’s education and training targets, as recorded in the child’s relevant plans; help a child who is excluded from school, or who is of compulsory school age but not attending school, to access educational and training support throughout the period of exclusion or non-attendance and to return to school as soon as possible. (Regulation 8(1)(2)(a)(b)(i)(viii))	11/01/2019
The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— understand the children’s home’s overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; use this understanding to deliver care that meets children’s needs and support them to fulfil their potential; In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— understand and apply the home’s statement of purpose; ensure that staff— understand and apply the home’s statement of purpose; protect and promote each child’s welfare; provide personalised care that meets each child’s needs as recorded in the child’s relevant plans, taking into account of the child’s background; help each child to develop resilience and skills that prepare the child to return home, to live in a new placement or to live independently as an adult. (Regulation 6(1)(a)(b)(2)(a)(b)(i)(iv)(v)(vi))	11/01/2019
The health and well-being standard is that— the health and well-being needs of children are met; children receive advice, services and support in relation to their health and well-being; and children are helped to lead health lifestyles. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff help each child to—	11/01/2019

achieve the health and well-being outcomes that are recorded in the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 10(1)(a)(b)(c)(2)(a)(i))	
The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on— mutual respect and trust. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— meet each child's behavioural and emotional needs, as set out in the child's relevant plans; understand how children's previous experiences and present emotions can be communicated through behaviour and have the competence and skills to interpret these and develop positive relationships with children; understand and communicate to children that bullying is unacceptable, and have the skills to recognise incidents or indications of bullying and how to deal with them. (Regulation 11(1)(a) (2)(a)(i)(ix)(xii)(xiii))	11/01/2019
The registered provider must notify HMCI without delay of any incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40(4)(e))	11/01/2019
The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which— include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to a child; are kept up to date and are signed and dated by the author of each entry (Regulation 36(1)(a)(b))	11/01/2019
Schedule 4 sets out the other information that the registered person must keep in relation to a children's home. The registered person must maintain in the home the records in Schedule 4; and ensure that the records are kept up to date. (Regulation 37(1)(2)(a)(b))	11/01/2019
The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 applies to the home. The registered person must ensure that the requirements of that Order and any regulations made under it, are complied with in respect of the home. (Regulation 25(2)(b)) With particular reference to the home following the fire safety risk management measures within the home's fire safety risk assessment.	11/01/2019
The registered person must review the appropriateness 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	11/01/2019

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))	
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*These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

Recommendations

- The independent return interview should be carried out within 72 hours of the child returning to their home or care setting. ('Statutory guidance on children who run away or go missing from home or care', January 2014, page 14, paragraph 32)
- Staff should continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this visit was to monitor the action taken and the progress made by the children's home since the last Ofsted inspection.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC008485

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Choices Home For Children Limited

Registered provider address: c/o Afford Bond, 31 Wellington Road, Nantwich, Cheshire CW5 7ED

Responsible individual: Linda Heywood

Registered manager: post vacant

Inspectors

Pauline Yates, social care inspector

Paul Robinson, social care inspector

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