

# SC008485

**Choices Home For Children Limited**

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## **Information about this children's home**

This home is privately owned and run. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for six children who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

There is an interim manager at the home. The manager is not yet registered with Ofsted.

**Inspection date:** 24 November 2020

## **This monitoring visit**

This monitoring visit took place on site.

Ofsted received information that indicated that the home may be in breach of regulations relating to the protection of children.

No serious or widespread safeguarding concerns were identified at this monitoring visit. The majority of staff have a good understanding of risk. Safeguarding concerns are, for the most part, responded to appropriately. Staff have a good insight into the needs of young people. They use this knowledge to provide child-centred responses to incidents that arise in the home.

The home is not currently operating at full capacity. This decision has been made taking into consideration the needs of the young people already living in the home. As a result, staff have more time to spend with young people and build positive relationships.

The ratio of staff to young people is appropriate to the level of identified need. Where risks have increased, there is evidence of increased staffing in response. Although supervision levels are, on the whole, good, in one incident a young person was able to leave the home at night without staff being aware of this. As a result, he was placed in a potentially vulnerable situation in the community.

Risk assessments are regularly updated and are of a reasonable quality. It is not always clear which staff have read updated assessments. As a result, there is a risk that important information to support staff to care for young people safely has not be shared across the whole staff team.

Staff are not always proactive in their response to young people going missing. In some instances, there has been an overreliance on attempts to make contact with young people via telephone calls rather than staff actively searching for them in the community. It is not always clearly recorded if return interviews have been completed after a period of missing from care. The learning from these interviews is therefore potentially lost.

While the majority of safeguarding incidents are now notified to Ofsted in a timely manner, inspectors found one incident where no notification was received as required. It was a requirement of the last inspection that serious incidents are notified without delay. This requirement is therefore not met.

All areas for improvement identified at the last inspection have not been fully tested in this monitoring visit. Therefore, previous requirements remain in place.

## Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement            |
|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| 11/02/2020      | Interim         | Declined in effectiveness       |
| 09/07/2019      | Full            | Good                            |
| 06/02/2019      | Full            | Requires improvement to be good |
| 13/11/2018      | Full            | Inadequate                      |

## 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 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;</p> <p>and promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to-</p> <p>lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose.<br/>(Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a))</p> | 31 January 2021 |
| <p>The registered person must ensure that all employees receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience.<br/>(Regulation 33 (4)(b))</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | 31 January 2021 |
| <p>The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if there is any other incident which the registered person considers to be serious.<br/>(Regulation 40 (4)(e))</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | 31 January 2021 |
| <p>The education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure-</p> <p>that staff</p> <p>help each child to achieve the child's education and training targets, as recorded in the child's relevant plans.</p>                                                                                                                                                           | 31 January 2021 |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                 |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| (Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(i))                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                 |
| <p>In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must-</p> <p>if the registered person considers, or staff consider, a placing authority's or a relevant person's performance to be inadequate in relation to their role, challenge the placing authority or the relevant person to seek to ensure that each child's needs are met in accordance with the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 5 (c))</p> | 31 January 2021 |

## Recommendations

- When a child returns to the home after being missing from care or away from the home without permission, the responsible local authority must provide an opportunity for the child to have an independent return-home interview. Homes should take account of information provided by such interviews when assessing risks and putting arrangements in place to protect each child. (Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations including the quality standards, page 45, paragraph 9.30)

Specifically, missing-from-care records should make clear when an independent return-home interview has been requested and when it has taken place. Reasons why an interview was not requested or did not take place should be clearly recorded.

- Staff should continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. Where there are safeguarding concerns for a child, their placement plan, agreed between the home and their placing authority, must include details of the steps the home will take to manage any assessed risks on a day to day basis (Guide to children's homes regulations including the quality standards, page 42, paragraph 9.5)

Specifically, risk assessments should be signed and dated when read by the wider staff team.

## 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 its 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:** 31, Wellington Road, Nantwich, Cheshire CW5 7ED

**Responsible individual:** Simon Haddrell

**Registered manager:** Post vacant

## **Inspectors**

Dawn Parton, Social Care Inspector

Michael Charnley, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
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Manchester  
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