

SC015264

Registered provider: The Partnership of The Chartwell Group

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately owned home provides care and education in a small group setting for up to seven children with social, emotional and/or behavioural and/or learning difficulties. The home specialises in offering long-term placements to boys. The on-site school is registered with the Department for Education.

The registered manager left in April 2021.

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

Inspection dates: 1 to 2 September 2021

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **good**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 12 February 2020

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/02/2020	Full	Good
18/12/2018	Full	Good
31/05/2017	Full	Good
23/03/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since September 2020, two children have moved on from the home. One child had a planned move and the other child moved to somewhere more suitable when it was clear that this home was not the best place for him. There were two children living at the home at the time of the inspection. They have benefited from long-term placements of two and three years.

The staff have positive relationships with children. They know the children well and understand their individual needs. Staff are nurturing and provide good care. Consequently, children feel valued and well cared for.

The children have good education outcomes. Both children attend the school that is on the same site as the home. The staff and the school staff work together well to support children both at school and at the home. The children benefited from the school remaining open throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, which meant that their learning continued.

Children spend valuable time with family members who are important to them. Staff support children to see their families. Staff take time to build trust with the children's families. Parents said that their children are happy and safe. One family member said that his brother 'could be a little boy again' since living at the home. Families feel assured that their children are receiving good child-centred care.

Staff encourage children to try new activities and join clubs. One child is part of a drama group and has recently received an award for the best newcomer. One child has recently applied to join the cadets. Staff encourage the children to meet new people, make friends and learn new skills. Giving children these opportunities improves their self-esteem, encourages them to experience new activities and enables them to form new friendships.

Staff encourage children to be a part of the local community. Children have been involved in various fundraising activities and projects. These include sending Christmas parcels to service personnel abroad and taking part in a sponsored walk to raise money for a local cancer unit. Helping children to help others gives them a sense of pride and develops their empathy. Getting children involved with the local community gives them a sense of belonging.

The house is spacious and welcoming, and it feels like a family home. There are photos of the children and awards that the children have achieved displayed around the home. The children have use of several separate rooms to play games and enjoy arts and crafts. The garden has a large fruit and vegetable patch that the children help to maintain. Children's bedrooms are personalised to their own tastes and to meet their individual needs. The children are relaxed at the home and benefit from the well-kept environment.

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

Children are safeguarded and feel safe at the home. The manager has ensured that the staff have the appropriate training and that they understand the safeguarding procedures. Staff are confident and equipped to manage safeguarding incidents, which helps to keep the children safe.

The children's behaviour plans focus on positive reinforcement. The plans include children's input on how they want to be supported. The plans guide the staff effectively. The staff have created a unique and personalised model for reward systems. Children are positively motivated by the reward system. They are developing good coping strategies to manage their feelings and emotions safely.

The staff rarely use physical interventions, and when they are used, they are appropriate, necessary and proportionate. Staff are supportive and nurturing to children during and after any incidents. Staff encourage the children to reflect after incidents and help them to manage their emotions in a safe way. Supporting children in this way has resulted in a reduction of physical interventions.

Staff take bullying incidents seriously and support the children involved. Staff take action to reduce the likeliness of recurrence. They help children to understand the impact of bullying and to explore their feelings and emotions. Children feel safe to talk about bullying concerns because the staff act and listen.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

There has been no registered manager in post since April 2021. However, there are strong interim management arrangements. A qualified and experienced manager from within the organisation oversees the home. She knows the home well. Staff and a social worker have given good feedback on these management arrangements. The organisation is striving to recruit a suitably qualified and experienced manager. The action that leaders have taken to provide daily oversight of the home has meant that the absence of a registered manager has not had a negative impact on the children's progress. Despite this, the organisation is required by regulation to have a permanent registered manager to lead and manage the home.

The staff said that the interim manager is supportive and approachable and has an open-door policy. Staff have regular and effective supervision. The interim manager has made improvements in communication and is providing a consistent approach. Staff feel well equipped to meet children's needs and benefit from the manager's experience.

The staff have training to meet the children's individual needs. The manager and staff benefit from support from a clinical psychologist, who provides consultations to the staff. The consultations give staff good training and guidance which encourages them to use a consistent and therapeutic approach with the children.

The previous manager identified that the children are at risk of climbing on the shed roof in the garden. The interim manager has implemented safety strategies to reduce the risk. However, these strategies have not been recorded. This means that the records do not reflect how the risk is being managed.

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 registered provider must appoint a person to manage the children's home if— there is no registered manager in respect of the home; and the registered provider— is an organisation or a partnership. (Regulation 27 (1)(a)(b)(i)) In particular, appoint and register a suitable manager.	3 November 2021

Recommendation

- The registered person should review the appropriateness and suitability of the location and premises of the home at least once a year. In particular, ensure that risk-reduction strategies in respect of children climbing onto the shed roof are recorded. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 64, paragraph 15.1)

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: SC015264

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: The Partnership of The Chartwell Group

Registered provider address: The Jays, Goodens Lane, Newton, Wisbech, Cambridgeshire PE13 5HQ

Responsible individual: Christopher Wright

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Amy Miles, Social Care Inspector

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