

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	19/12/2016
Unique reference number	SC015264
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Residential special school
Registered person	The Chartwell Group
Registered person address	The Chartwell Group Chartwell House School Goodens Lane Newton Wisbech PE13 5 QH

Responsible individual	Christopher Wright
Registered manager	Rick Ogle-Welbourn
Inspector	Michael Mulvaney

Inspection date	19/12/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Improved effectiveness
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.	
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good

SC015264

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Children's development has improved since they have been living in this home. They are able to manage their feelings better and have learned how to express themselves.
- The children make good progress at the on-site school. They are supported to gain confidence at school. Some are on track to complete GCSE courses. Others are completing foundation-level skills that will help them as they move into further education or work. Some children are attending a local college for day-release studies.
- Careful consideration is given to the assessed needs of the children and, in particular, ways in which the staff can meet the needs of children newly placed alongside the children already in the home.
- Close supervision of the children prevents difficulties in the group from escalating. The atmosphere in the home is calm and friendly.
- The children do not go missing from this home. They have positive relationships with staff, who are alert to the risks of exploitation in the community to the children.
- The staff understand the importance of the children's reviews, and external agencies comment on the good quality of the reports that are provided.
- There has been a noticeable improvement in case recording. As a result, staff are able to track the children's progress.

Full report

Information about this children's home

This home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to seven children who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties and/or learning difficulties. This home specialises in offering long-term placements to boys. There is an independent special school on site.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
08/03/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
24/11/2015	Full	Requires improvement
26/02/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness
25/09/2014	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
The children receive good-quality, consistent care. Observation of the interaction during this inspection shows that the children have positive and open relationships with a staff group that is committed to achieving the best outcomes for the children. The staff place the children's interests at the centre of their practice. A placing social worker commented, 'This home has been fantastic. This child has needed a great deal of support, and the staff have focused on their needs.' The staff spend time getting to know the children. They provide child-focused opportunities to speak to the children and are consistently seeking the children's views. This helps them to know the children and their wishes and feelings. The children are supported to engage in a range of interesting activities, including cubs and scouts as well as recreational time with peers at the cinema or roller skating. These events are discussed at community meetings with the staff. The meetings provide an opportunity for children to voice any issues that they have about the home. The children are making progress at the on-site school. Some children attend a local college for day-release studies. This helps them to make friends outside the home and to build on life skills, such as managing public transport to and from college. Other children have been supported to gain confidence at school. For some, this means that they are on track for six GCSE grades, while others are completing foundation skills. These qualifications will support the children as they move into further education or work. This has been a noticeable improvement for these children who previously had not been able to engage with schools. A placing social worker commented, 'Previously, they could not manage even the shortest time in school. But, working with the residential staff, they have managed to get him to engage and take part [in] lessons.' The children's needs are assessed ahead of their placement in the home. Consideration is given to how the staff can meet their needs alongside those of the children already in the home. The staff work with up-to-date care plans, which focus on these assessed needs. This helps the staff to manage the children's behaviour and to promote positive outcomes. Pathway plans are in place. This means that older children are encouraged to develop life skills, such as cooking and doing their laundry. Other self-help skills, such as making and attending medical appointments, are also promoted, dependent on the child's age and confidence. The children are encouraged to eat the healthy home-cooked food prepared. Fruit and vegetables are readily available, and exercise is encouraged through participation in sporting activities outside the home. The children are helped to maintain contact with the professional health services, such as doctors, dentists	

and opticians. The staff make and help the children to keep these important appointments.

A consultant psychologist works in partnership with the manager and the staff. This helps the staff to gain a fuller understanding of the children and how best to work with them. Consequently, the direct work completed by the staff is directed at developing positive relationships. These relationships help the children to begin to understand some of the issues that affected them. A placing social worker commented, 'The staff have been very mindful about his feeling of loss and bereavement. The key-work sessions have been done at his pace.' Careful and considerate supervision of the children, by staff, ensures that bullying does not take place. Because of the close observation of the staff and the relationships that staff have with the children, the children manage their emotions well within the group. This means that the atmosphere in the home is calm and friendly.

The staff celebrate the family lives of the children, working with them to ensure that all contact with family is as positive as it can be. The staff facilitate supervised contact if this is required, to ensure that it is safe. Link work is completed after each session, to explore the children's views and to listen to their experience of the contact.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
The children do not go missing from this home. The staff complete training to alert them to the risks of exploitation in the community. The home has developed a positive relationship with the police, and staff attend community meetings in which concerns about the neighbourhood are considered. The close supervision of the children by staff and prompt action prevent difficulties from developing between the children. As a result, there have been no reports of bullying. The manager has managed one incident regarding the working practices of a member of staff since the previous inspection. Liaison with the designated officer for safeguarding within the local authority has taken place. A review of the investigation, during this inspection, indicated that it had been managed in line with the policy and procedures of the organisation. There have been no safeguarding notifications since the previous inspection. The staff are aware of, and are confident to use, the whistleblowing procedure. A review of the organisation's policies and discussions with the manager and staff provide assurance that processes will be followed and robust action taken to manage any	

future incidents.

The staff are trained to intervene physically to prevent the children from harming themselves or others. Since the last inspection, there have been 35 occasions when staff have had to use these skills. A review of the records of these events describes the attempts that staff made to de-escalate the situation before using restraint and indicates that each episode has been managed well.

The home is spacious, and there are areas for relaxation as well as play. The staff regularly ensure that any maintenance is swiftly completed. As a result, the home is clean, tidy and homely. The children are encouraged through positive rewards and affirmative relationships to behave well. Careful consideration is taken to ensure that sanctions that are issued are fair and achieve their goal of improving the children's behaviour. The manager routinely reviews incidents and behaviour reports. This is to ensure that they are reasonable and that any action required is followed up. The staff update risk assessments to reflect the individual needs of the children. These are included in behaviour management and care plans, which help the staff to be able to meet the needs of the children.

The staff have good working relationships with the police. An officer regularly visits the home to discuss any issues with the staff and is available to the children if they wish to raise any concerns.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
The manager has a diploma level 5 in management and a relevant residential social care qualification. This means that he has the skills required to work in this setting. He has worked for over 25 years in social work, including managing several residential children's homes. He carefully supervises the staff to ensure that the focus of their work is on caring for the children safely. All eligible staff have the relevant diploma level 3 qualification. Newly appointed staff have received induction training, which provides them with the knowledge required to work with the children. The monitoring and oversight of practice from the manager and the reports from the independent visitor ensure that risks are considered and minimised. These are contained in care plans, which the staff understand and use to ensure that children's progress is monitored and improved. This results in the service being managed in line with the statement of purpose. The manager has reviewed the	

statement of purpose and, as a result, it is up to date and user friendly. The manager has targeted improvements in record-keeping as the focus of the development plan. There has been a distinct improvement in these case notes. The staff are able to track the children's progress better because of these developments.

The manager considers that the strength of the service is the staff team, which he believes is growing in confidence. There have been changes in the training provided in order to enhance the role of the residential support worker and to provide opportunities for staff members to develop practice and improve interventions with children. The settled environment for the children and the sympathetic approach of the staff help the children to become more confident. There are proactive relationships with the placing local authorities that speak highly of the quality of care provided by the staff and of the progress made by the children in their care.

The manager of the independent reviewing officers commented:

- 'Staff clearly understand the importance of the looked after children's review. The quality of the reports is very good.'
- 'The department is impressed with the home and the care provided.'
- 'It is a good resource, which meets their educational needs, and children have made good progress with education. Children have been supported to settle into the life of the home.'

The staff have seen the children's development improve. Some children have been able to manage their feelings better and have learned how to express themselves without the frustration that led to aggressive outbursts. Other children have been able to manage personal hygiene issues, which has increased their confidence and ability to participate in more activities. Other children have learned how to listen to others' views and understand issues from the other person's perspective.

The manager has notified Ofsted once since the previous inspection. A review of the information regarding this notification demonstrates that the manager has followed the policy and procedures required to keep the children safe.

What the inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against 'Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection'.

An **outstanding** children's home provides highly effective services that contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help and protection and care. Their progress exceeds expectations and is sustained over time.

A **good** children's home provides effective services that help, protect and care for children and young people and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

In a children's home that **requires improvement**, there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. The welfare of children looked after is safeguarded and promoted. Minimum requirements are in place. However, the children's home is not yet delivering good protection, help and care for children and young people.

A children's home that is **inadequate** is providing services where there are widespread or serious failures that create or leave children and young people being harmed or at risk of harm or that result in children looked after not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people living in the children's home. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference adults make to the lives of children and young people. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with children, young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care given to children and young people. Wherever possible, they talked to children, young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service 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'.

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