

SC015264

Registered provider: The Chartwell Group of Companies Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

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

Inspection dates: 31 May to 1 June 2017

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: 23 March 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection

None

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because:

- The manager and staff complete good-quality care plans. These plans are reviewed and updated regularly to show any progress made.
- Staff set consistent boundaries and challenge unwanted behaviours.
- The children make good progress in their education at the on-site school.
- Children are encouraged and supported to take part in a wide variety of activities, both in the home and in the community.
- The children benefit from staff who understand the importance of and facilitate family contact.
- Children do not go missing from the home.
- The children say that they feel safe.
- The home works closely with families and professionals to ensure that children have well-planned transitions.

The children's home's areas for development:

- Children have good individual crisis and behaviour plans in place, but not all of the staff have read and signed the plans.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
23/03/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
19/12/2016	Full	Good
08/03/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
24/11/2015	Full	Requires improvement

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

Recommendations

- Staff should continually and actively assess the risks to each child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)
In particular, ensure that the staff are aware of the content of the individual crisis and behaviour plans, and that they understand them.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children make good progress in this home. The staff complete good-quality individualised care plans that fully involve the child. Staff take time to get to know the child's history, what works well for them, and support them to make age-appropriate choices. This enables the children to develop good trusting relationships with the dedicated staff team. A social worker said, 'His [child's] progress has been amazing. He has improved in every area. The staff really know and understand him.' A child commented, 'I feel listened to. I trust the staff and I can go to any of them about anything.'

Education is an area in which all of the children have made good progress. Prior to moving into the home, many of the children were not attending school regularly. All of the children now attend the on-site school and achieve 100% attendance. An independent reviewing officer said of one child, 'Significant progress has been made. He has settled there well. Education was a huge problem for him prior to being placed at the home and now he is progressing academically.' A social worker commented, 'The most notable progress is in education. The home has managed to settle his behaviour and he can now concentrate to learn.'

Professionals describe the communication with the home as excellent. The manager monitors case records and ensures that staff provide regular updates. A social worker said, 'His key worker keeps in constant touch with me. The level of communication is excellent.' Another said, 'The communication is always very good. The home works in close partnership.' Parents spoken with were equally complimentary. One commented, 'Staff are consistent and always update me regularly.' Another said, 'They have been brilliant, very approachable. I do not have a bad word to say about the home.'

The staff understand the importance of the children accessing a wide variety of activities, both in the home and in the community. The children enjoy day trips out to the beach, local parks, roller skating and go-karting. This gives the children new experiences and the opportunity to develop their social skills. One of the children said, 'I really like all of the activities and I especially like the holidays. I had never been abroad

before coming here. We go out all the while and have fun. It's like having younger brothers.' The children are able to earn extra activities as rewards. This encourages them to manage their behaviour and make further progress.

There have been no complaints since the last inspection. The staff ensure that the children know how to complain. The children have access to 'grumble forms' and all of the children attend the monthly house meeting. The meetings provide the children with the opportunity to discuss any worries or concerns, as well as to plan activities and purchases for the home. There is a comprehensive children's guide which details how to make a complaint and the actions that staff will follow to resolve it. A child said, 'I can talk to any of the staff if I have a problem. I feel safe here.'

The children receive good-quality day-to-day care. The children have individual daily routines that remain consistent. Staff promote a healthy varied diet, exercise is encouraged and all appointments with health professionals are monitored and maintained. The staff recognise the children's daily achievements and praise them openly. This shows the children that they are valued, and that the staff recognise when they have done well.

The children are well supported to develop their independence in line with their age, understanding and ability. One child was eager to share that the home has purchased a gym membership for him. He cycles there on his own and is really enjoying training. He said, 'It makes me feel more confident.' The child was able to explain how he keeps himself safe and what to do if he is worried while he is out. This shows that the staff are not risk-averse and that they teach children how to manage risk when they are out in the community.

The children have pathway plans in place to encourage them to develop life skills. The older children are learning to budget and cook. They plan the meal that they wish to make, purchase the food and cook it, with staff supporting. All of the children are encouraged to undertake basic housekeeping skills by keeping their bedrooms tidy and helping to clear up after meal times. This helps the children to develop a sense of ownership and take pride in their environment. A child commented during this inspection that he really likes his bedroom and likes it to be tidy.

Staff support family contact in line with the children's care plans. They understand the importance of maintaining contact for both the children and their families. All of the children, their parents and professionals spoken with described this as a strength of the home. A parent said, 'Staff really promote contact. They remain local during contact sessions in case I need any support.' A child commented that staff encourage him to telephone and visit his family regularly. A social worker said, 'The staff are very good at advocating on [child's] behalf. They work in partnership and facilitate contact arrangements. I'm very happy with the placement.'

Transitions in and out of the home are well planned. The home works closely with families and professionals to ensure that transitions are successful. One child has left the home since the last inspection. The child's parent said, 'The staff were always very

helpful. I do not think that the transition home would have been successful without their help and support.' A recently admitted child's social worker said, 'I am very pleased. The staff have been very flexible and facilitated a good phased introduction. He [child] has settled remarkably quickly. His mood is lighter and he looks so well.'

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

The home provides a calm and settled environment for the children. Staff respond in a consistent manner, they challenge any unsafe behaviours and reinforce boundaries. An independent reviewing officer said, 'I have seen a significant positive change in his behaviour since being at this home. He is receiving a balance of structure and variety alongside nurturing care.' A parent said, 'What the staff have achieved is brilliant. His behaviour has improved dramatically. He is settled and has turned into a bright young lad.'

Children say that they feel safe living in the home. The children are relaxed and happy in staff members' company and use appropriate banter while engaging. Children spoken with say that they have developed good trusting relationships with all of the staff. One child said, 'I can tell them everything. They help me and I trust them.' Another said, 'I like the staff and really like my key worker, she is my favourite. I can talk to any of the staff and feel safe here.'

There have been no incidents of children going missing from the home. Such incidents have not occurred at the home for a significant period. Staff work well with the children at times of emotional upset and resolve incidents effectively. The home has a detailed missing person policy and individual risk assessments in place that consider any potential risks. This ensures that staff are aware of the procedures to follow should an incident occur.

All staff have completed physical intervention training. Records show that there has been a significant reduction in the number of physical interventions since the last inspection. Staff spoken with are clear that the strategies implemented have proved successful with a particular child. Staff use distraction techniques and facilitate time out for the child in a safe space. A social worker said, 'The reduction in the need for physical interventions is completely down to their successful use of de-escalation techniques.'

At the last inspection, a shortfall was highlighted that there was no mechanism in place to scrutinise the manager's actions. This related to physical intervention incidents or sanctions given which the manager was directly involved in. The manager of the provider's sister home now oversees the records of any incident that the manager has been involved in. This ensures that impartial monitoring takes place and actions taken are fair.

The staff complete robust good-quality risk assessments. These are monitored by the manager and updated regularly. All of the children have individual crisis and behaviour plans in place that are of a high standard. The child's key worker completes these plans and details the strategies for staff to follow to de-escalate situations. However, not all

staff have read and signed the plans. This does not evidence that the staff are fully aware of any updated guidance to follow to reduce risks further.

There has been one notification to Ofsted since the last inspection. This relates to the practice of a previous member of staff. A review of the investigation demonstrates that the manager has been proactive in addressing the matter. The designated officer confirmed that the incident has been satisfactorily resolved. The designated officer said, 'I am positive about this home. I have no concerns. The manager follows safeguarding policies and procedures well. The manager invited us to visit to offer advice to new staff, to enable them to gain a greater understanding of our role.' All of the staff have received mandatory safeguarding training. Staff spoken with during the inspection have a clear understanding of the procedures to follow and they recognise that they have a duty to safeguard children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is well managed by a knowledgeable, experienced and suitably qualified registered manager. He carefully monitors and reviews the children's comprehensive care plans and ensures that staff undertake any actions required. All staff spoken with have a good understanding of the children's history and needs. They are ambitious for the children and take pride in providing good-quality care.

There have been significant changes to the staff team since the last inspection. This has not had an impact on the care provided, which has remained stable throughout. There is always a senior member of staff in the home and the rota is adequately covered. Staff spoken with said that they feel well supported by the manager and each other.

The monthly staff meetings are structured and informative. The staff use this time to discuss the progress that the children make and to monitor their own interactions. This ensures that the children continue to receive a consistent response.

Staff supervision is of good quality, with discussions in relation to the children, safeguarding practices, reflective practice and training needs. New staff receive a structured induction and all of the staff have completed the mandatory training. Eligible staff have begun or completed a relevant level 3 qualification. This means that staff are well equipped to care for the children safely.

The independent visitor provides well-considered reports that recommend actions for improvement. The manager makes sure that all of the staff read the report and address any actions suggested. This ensures that the children receive a high-quality service and that the service development is continuous.

The manager's monitoring is robust. He performs daily and weekly checks to ensure that any care practice issues are promptly resolved. The manager's six-monthly review of the home now details the views of the children, parents and professionals. This shows that the manager has consulted and considered their opinions and includes them in the report. The recommendation made at the last inspection is met.

The home provides a safe physical environment for the children. It is situated in a quiet village, feels homely and is well maintained. The children eat all of their meals with staff in the dining room and this is clearly the hub of the home. The children have personalised their bedrooms and present as being very proud of their home. A child said, 'I really like the house. I especially like my bedroom. I chose the curtains and quilt and I'm choosing a new colour paint for the walls.'

The statement and purpose is kept under review and updated accordingly. Staff spoken with understand the ethos of the home, which is that all individuals have the ability to change, given the right environment and opportunities to do so. The home is achieving this effectively. The children enjoy a wide range of experiences and staff encourage them to make considered safe choices which aid their progress.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and 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.

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: Residential special school

Registered provider: The Chartwell Group of Companies Limited

Responsible individual: Christopher Wright

Registered manager: Richard Ogle-Welbourn

Inspector

Lynne Drage, social care inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: <http://www.gov.uk/ofsted>

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