

SC016697

Registered provider: Chances CCFSS Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The therapeutic home can provide care for up to four children who have experienced childhood trauma and display emotional and behavioural difficulties.

The registered manager has been in post since 2001.

At the time of the inspection, one child was living in the home; however, the home has cared for two children overall since the last inspection.

For the purpose of this report, staff are referred to as carers, which is part of the ethos of this home.

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 February 2024

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
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The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: 10 January 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10/01/2023	Full	Outstanding
03/08/2021	Full	Outstanding
16/07/2019	Full	Good
07/11/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Carers have established strong bonds with the child by showing them consistent and empathetic care. They are committed to providing personalised care to the child; they are attuned to the child's needs and anticipate them. They promptly respond to the child's views and wishes, making them feel heard, valued and loved. These are all contributory factors to why the child has made excellent progress since they moved into the home.

The child says that they love living at the home because carers are kind; they describe it as the 'best home'. The child has told professionals that they want to stay at the home until they are an adult. Professionals from a range of agencies say that the care given to the child is exceptional and life-changing.

Children are supported to attend schools that meet their educational needs. The registered manager creates plans with children to help them manage their feelings at school, for example calming strategies that they can use in the classroom or playground. The manager shares plans with the schools, aiding their understanding of the children's needs.

Carers talk to children about their aspirations, which helps to motivate them and to make them hopeful for the future. This prompted one child to work towards a health-related goal, ensuring they could attend a school trip and socialise with their friends. Carers have supported another child to join the Air Training Corps, work towards swimming certificates and pursue professional horse-riding.

Carers support children with their health in a way that promotes their dignity. For example, children jointly create health plans with the registered manager. Children trust that their carers understand the strategies and will respond appropriately to their needs. This helps them to feel safe and benefits their health and well-being.

Carers support children to maintain and strengthen relationships with people who are important to them. For example, the registered manager has facilitated family time between one child and their brothers and sisters. They have also arranged for the child to spend time with their former foster carers and their pets, as well as their friends.

Carers help children to explore their identity. They have meaningful conversations about culture, race, gender, neurodiversity and political beliefs. These conversations are respectful and age-appropriate. Carers buy children books and take them to festivals that promote equality and diversity.

Managers maintain relationships with children who used to live at the home and proudly display their framed photographs. They speak warmly about the children

and celebrate the milestones they have achieved since leaving the home and becoming adults. For example, joining the police force or starting a family.

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

The registered manager is a qualified psychotherapist and has a good understanding of how trauma impacts on the brain and on behaviour. They have weekly therapy sessions with the child to help them make sense of their past experiences. They also help the children to identify unhealthy patterns of behaviour, and to adjust their perspective.

The registered manager works with children to create safety plans that work for them. Children are invested in their plans because they have contributed to them, and they have confidence in their carers' ability to follow them. Managers and carers have a sound understanding of the risks for children and the action they need to take to ensure their physical and emotional safety.

Carers are mindful of particular things that are emotionally unsettling for children, and they are curious about any changes in their behaviour. For example, they recognised that one child was trying to communicate with them via drawings. To better understand this, they agreed a symbol code with the child. This allowed them to initiate conversations when the child felt unable to.

Managers and carers model respect and appropriate boundaries in their interactions with children and their colleagues. This sets a clear expectation for children. However, staff understand that some children struggle to comprehend this given their own lived experiences. They have meaningful conversations with children to help them understand how their behaviour impacts on other children in the home.

The home has a positive response to supporting children with their emotions and behaviour. Restraint has not been necessary. Managers follow safer recruitment practice to ensure that adults caring for the children are suitable. Whilst they make enquiries about candidates education, copies of their qualifications are not always saved in their files.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

Managers are strong and influential advocates for children. They are committed to amplifying children's voices when they feel unheard by professionals from other agencies. For example, they raised a complaint with professionals about their delay in responding to one child's wishes and feelings.

The registered manager has established an ethos in the home that celebrates diversity; children are free to be themselves. The home environment and carers' practice show children that they are worthy of love and respect, regardless of their backgrounds, identity and needs.

The registered manager has created a learning culture within the home, and carers are expected to critically reflect on their care of children. For example, thinking about the phrases that they use and how children interpret them differently based on their lived experiences. This helps to ensure that practice is dynamic, continuing to improve and to develop to match the changing needs of children.

The registered manager is influential in their local community. By offering support to other professionals, they are able to steer improvements to their practice, for example helping a social care team to devise child-friendly care plans. They advocate for people who are neurodivergent, deliver training to GP practices and will soon deliver training to mental health professionals.

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

Recommendation

- The registered manager should retain evidence of employees' qualifications if they are relevant to their care role. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.6)

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: SC016697

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Chances CCFSS Limited

Registered provider address: 3 Fairview Court, 119-127 Fairview Road,
Cheltenham, Gloucestershire GL52 2EX

Responsible individual: Linda Wall

Registered manager: Linda Wall

Inspector

Tara Webb, Social Care Inspector

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