

SC016697

Registered provider: Chances CCFSS Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to four children who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The home provides bespoke care that incorporates therapy facilitated by the registered manager who has the suitable qualification and clinical supervision to do so. The home is owned by a small private company.

Inspection dates: 12 to 13 December 2017

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: 21 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 outstanding because:

- Children are the heart of the home; the registered manager and her care team develop caring, nurturing relationships with them. Children's needs are central to the day-to-day running of their home. Children's views are integral to the home and how it develops. The registered manager successfully puts children first and the care team recognises that it is a privileged guest in the children's home.
- The registered manager and her care team provide children with effective care that is therapeutic and attuned to their needs. For example, the home uses therapy dogs well to support children to regulate their emotions.
- The home feels like a family home. Children have a strong sense of identity within the home and their photographs and artwork are everywhere. The home is cosy and has comforting smells of freshly laundered clothes and food cooking.
- Children make excellent progress from their starting points. They begin to flourish and make notable achievements. Children are supported to develop positive friendships with other children in the local community whom they meet at school or through leisure activities.
- Children feel safe in the home. The care team supports them to develop and enables them to take appropriate risks and to learn from their mistakes. Children have mobile phones with access to the internet and social media. The care team supports them to use these safely.
- School and learning are prioritised in the home. All the children go to school and leaders and managers work effectively with school to ensure that they have positive experiences in education. The care team steps in to support in school when children need it. The registered manager provides training to school staff to ensure that they understand the children's needs.
- The care team is intuitive and knows the children well. Staff support children to find interests that help them when they need to let off steam such as baking, dancing, combing hair or going for a walk. Children develop strong relationships with the care team and maintain these once they move on.
- The registered manager and her care team support children to keep in touch and spend time with their families in a way that is tailored to their needs and wishes. Children build on and maintain positive relationships with their families.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/03/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
13/12/2016	Full	Outstanding
22/03/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
12/01/2016	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

The quality of therapeutic care that children receive in this home is consistently outstanding. Children have lived in the home for over three years and have made significant progress from their starting points. A professional said, 'This is an amazing home. My child is thriving and has made immense progress.'

In every sense, this is a home that takes pride in the children living there. The whole house is very homely and warm. Photographs of the children, the care team and their families are around the home for everyone to see. The children are encouraged to express their creativity and have their artwork on display. The dogs are part of the family too and the children enjoy caring for them and seeking them out for comfort, cuddles and fun. The registered manager identifies smell as an important sense for the children living in the home. The home is full of cosy and warm scents such as homemade cooking and laundry.

Members of the care team spend time with children, know them exceptionally well and develop strong and positive relationships with them. The registered manager has successfully created a family environment. Everyone sits together at the table for family mealtimes. Children are caring and respectful of one another. A professional said, 'The staff are committed, experienced and caring. What they do for children is unbelievable and they should be out there showing everyone how it's done because it is the best.'

Children have individualised, detailed care plans that clearly show that the care team has an in-depth knowledge about the children, their previous experiences and current needs. Children's identities and personalities shine through in these records. Care plans refer to research, and models of supporting children who have experienced trauma are used well. Children are supported to have realistic goals and aspirations. The care team helps children to understand what they need to do to achieve their ambitions and career choices. Children develop a positive attitude for the future that increases their self-esteem.

The quality of support that children receive from the care team to attend school is worthy of wider dissemination. Children attend local schools full-time and this is an achievement for them. Children have robust plans that enable them to successfully attend school, make friends and achieve. The registered manager and her care team work closely with teachers, teaching assistants and the virtual school to make children's experience of education a success. When children need comfort and support from members of the care team, they go into school and offer that support without drawing unnecessary attention to the child.

The registered manager delivers training to the children's teaching staff to provide them with information about children's needs and how best to meet them. Creative strategies are used to support children. For example, when one child's regular teaching assistant was absent for some time, the registered manager created a book for the child to use to

communicate their feelings to teaching staff because they found it difficult to express their feelings verbally to staff whom they did not know so well.

Two children have enjoyed going on holidays organised by their schools. Bespoke support plans enabled the children to go, have fun and experience new things. One child went abroad for the first time with school without being accompanied by a member of the care team. Careful planning prior to the trip ensured that it was a success. For example, the registered manager identified with the child and teaching staff key adults on the trip whom they could seek out for support. For another child who did not feel ready to stay overnight on their school trip, a member of the care team drove them to the holiday destination every day from the home and back again so that they could sleep in their own bed but still enjoy the activities during the day.

Children are very busy at home and have the opportunity to undertake activities that are fun and enrich their experience such as going ice skating and attending music concerts. They also have time to relax and enjoy their time at home watching DVDs, reading or listening to music. Children have made friends with children at school and friends are welcome to spend time at home with the children and have dinner with them. The children have also enjoyed spending time on caravan holidays with members of the care team, where they enjoyed swimming, crabbing and the discos.

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

The registered manager and her care team take a proportionate view to risk, which enables children to grow and develop. This gives children similar, age-appropriate experiences to other children as they start to go out and meet their friends, attend more clubs and have a smart phone and more regular use of the internet. The registered manager and her care team are suitably curious about how children are spending their time. For example, when they are using internet-enabled devices, staff speak to them about the applications that they are using and who is online that day. The children have developed a very open relationship with the care team about their use of the internet and social media; they often talk about online conversations and whom they are connected with as part of general conversation. The care team support children to understand online safety and how to ask for help or report if they feel unsafe.

Children have many rewards and incentives that promote their positive behaviour. The positive relationships the care team have with children are integral to supporting children therapeutically. The children have lived in the home for over three years and the care team knows them exceptionally well. They are intuitive to their needs and quickly recognise when children need additional support to help their day go as smoothly as possible. A member of the care team described how for one child they know what support they may need by the music they choose to listen to that day. Children develop strategies relating to their interests that will comfort them such as baking, playing with dolls, walking and dance. A professional said, 'They have made huge progress with communication and behaviour, which used to be distressing. The home has enabled them to reflect and figure out why they were communicating in that way.'

Reflection and learning form a large part of the ethos of this home and this is positive for the children. The children feel confident to talk about their feelings, reflect when things do not go to plan and talk to the care team about how it could be different next time. The focus of this reflection is very much about the care team ascertaining why they might not have got it right for the child and how they can change in the future. Members of the care team value this feedback from the children and develop their practice from this learning.

Children have journals with a vast amount of information about significant events in their lives. These tell a story about the child's life and include achievements, reflection and learning. The children like the way these records detail their experiences and some like to sit and go through them with the care team. There are no negative consequences imposed on children.

None of the children have gone missing since they moved into the home, which is over three years ago. The registered manager and her care team keep up to date with the policies and guidance on children going missing from home. There are good links with the local police force, missing and child sexual exploitation officer but children do not actively need to access their services.

Children have good access to services that support their positive mental health. They benefit from the registered manager's experience and skills as a qualified psychotherapist. All children engage in therapy with the registered manager and this is available all of the time. When the registered manager is not at home, she is on call for therapeutic advice and time with the children. This is a strength of the home.

The home has effective protocols to manage any child protection concerns as and when they arise. There are good links with the designated officer and local police force.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The registered manager is consistent and committed to the children living in the home. She is highly skilled and qualified for her role. In addition to the registered manager's psychotherapeutic qualifications, the deputy manager has a level 5 qualification and has the skills and knowledge to run the home effectively in the registered manager's absence. This home has consistently been judged by Ofsted as providing children with outstanding care.

There is very little change with the care team, as staff tend to stay and commit to children. Because of this, children receive consistent care from people who know them very well. Members of the care team are very good at sharing information with each other so that all staff adapt to children's changing needs day to day.

The registered manager creates a supportive environment for the care team to work within and this is a strength of the home. Care team members have individual reflective journals to complete. These are used well and inform formal supervision sessions. The care team receives frequent supervision that is of an exceptionally high quality. Children

also spend time reflecting with the care team as and when it feels appropriate and natural to do so.

The registered manager receives regular clinical supervision from an external professional who is suitably qualified. Members of the care team also receive regular clinical supervision, which is an addition to the supervision they have with their line manager. The registered manager keeps up to date with the latest research, which is used well to inform children's care plans and the home's development plan.

Care team members have their performance appraised at least annually. Each member of the team has a performance development plan. These plans inform the home's overall training plan and are individualised. The needs of children are central to developing the training programme. The registered manager commissions specialist training to ensure that the care team has the most up-to-date skills and knowledge.

Children maintain and build on their relationships with their families. Members of the care team support children to keep in contact with their families in many ways. Families are made welcome when they visit the home and often the care team goes to great lengths to make it a successful visit for the children. Examples include collecting families from train stations and planning family time carefully so that the children can get the most out of the visit. One child attended a large family wedding with a member of the care team. The registered manager explores every possibility for children to keep in touch with their families. One example included visiting a local authority to read a child's file to build the family tree and identify safe people for the child to reconnect and spend time with.

The registered manager has a strong presence in the home and is part of the team of staff caring for children. She understands the home's strengths and weaknesses. Children are central to the home's development plan and have an active voice in the day-to-day running of the home, decisions about their care and the presentation of the home. The care team also takes pride in nurturing the children. One example includes decorating a bedroom beautifully for one child and then surprising them with this when they came home from school.

The relationships with other agencies that support the children are strong. The registered manager and her care team work tirelessly with other services that support the children to ensure that other professionals thoroughly understand children's needs. When a new professional is identified to support a child, the registered manager plans meticulously how best to introduce them to the child and build a positive relationship.

The registered manager and her care team are strong advocates for children; this achieves positive outcomes for them. Children feel confident to use the adults around them to challenge decisions and ideas about their care. One child is supported to use an independent advocate. In addition, children access other support services such as the children's commissioner. One child was able to engage more successfully in their review as the registered manager and the care team found a creative way of making a 'remote control' with the child so they could stop, pause and play throughout the meeting.

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 differences 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: 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

Nicola Lownds, social care inspector

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