

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	13/12/2016
Unique reference number	SC016697
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	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

Inspection date	13/12/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Sustained effectiveness
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Outstanding
The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the home contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help, protection and care.	
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Outstanding
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Outstanding

SC016697

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is outstanding because:

- The registered manager and the staff team have created a home for young people, which is warm, cosy and nurturing. Young people said that they are happy living in the home. There is a strong ethos of creating a family home, which includes maintaining relationships with young people who have become young adults and moved on from the home. The home has two dogs that young people shower with love.
- Young people are thriving and are making exceptional progress in all aspects of their lives. The quality of relationships that form between the young people and the staff team is outstanding. The home bases its ethos on providing a therapeutic environment and building respectful and trusting relationships. This helps young people to overcome the challenges that they face and realise their full potential. Young people are now in education. They are in regular contact with the people most important to them and their confidence is growing.
- The registered manager is a qualified psychotherapist and she provides a therapeutic home for young people. She trains and passes on her knowledge about therapeutic models of care to the staff team. There is a strong focus on identifying the emotional needs of the young people and incorporating these into written care plans. Through current research and best practice, strategies are developed to help to support young people.
- Young people develop trust with the staff team that helps to keep them safe from harm. When young people become anxious, they accept support from staff that helps them to feel calmer and more secure.
- The use of restraints continues to decrease and the registered manager's monitoring of incidents shows exceptional insight and reflection. Staff praise young people daily and use this method to encourage more positive behaviour.

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to four young people 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.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
22/03/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
12/01/2016	Full	Outstanding
26/03/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
22/08/2014	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Outstanding
This home, where young people live, is exactly that: 'a home'. It feels like a home; there is a sense of calm and peacefulness about it. Young people look relaxed; they smile a lot and laugh. The team waits at the door for young people to return from school, offering a cup of tea, a snack and a hug if they want one. A young person told inspectors, 'This is just the best place to live. Everyone cares about us.' There is a strong focus on building honest and trusting relationships with young people. The team tunes into young people's needs and builds on these to develop positive relationships. A new member of the team said, 'I have done a lot of colouring and listening to music to get to know one of the children.' The team reads to young people at bedtime. Young people get along with each other. The group is settled, and there are no immediate plans to change this dynamic while it is so strong. A social worker said, 'They've [staff and manager] created a family.' Young people thrive in this home and start to overcome challenges that they have faced in the past. The high level of support that the team provides helps to focus on improving young people's self-esteem and self-worth. Young people have clear sets of goals that they want to work towards; a common theme is about forming and maintaining friendships away from the home. A professional said, 'They get normal experiences like holidays. They [staff] nurture, and they are like just protective parents.' Young people are attending school on a full-time basis, which is an achievement for each of them. The links that the staff team builds with the schools are outstanding. The registered manager shares her knowledge about young people and develops strategies with each school that help young people to get through their school days. To start with, the staff team helps young people to settle in school by attending classes with them until they have built up trust and a strong enough relationship with their teaching staff. When things go wrong at school, the registered manager is on hand to support young people and the school to ascertain any triggers and learning that can inform current strategies in place to support the young people further. The team thinks about ways to make it easier for young people to attend school. During the inspection, a member of staff took a young person's cake project into school at the time when they needed it, rather than the young person struggle, carrying it around with them all day. There is a wealth of opportunities for young people to enjoy life and activities, and have fun. The home has lots of board games, arts and crafts, music and DVDs to entertain young people at home. A gym instructor also visits the home to practise various physical exercises and yoga with the young people who can choose if they	

want to join in or not. The staff practise with them. There is also the option of going to clubs in the local area or being on the sports teams at school. Young people go on holidays and are very good at choosing their destinations. One young person told inspectors, 'I like the caravans. We can go, be ourselves and be independent.'

Staff ensure that young people keep up to date with their health appointments. Young people develop confidence in this and agree to attend medical appointments that they have previously struggled to attend. The registered manager works collaboratively with other agencies, such as the child and adolescent mental health service (CAMHS), to get the best possible service for young people.

Information about young people and how best to meet their needs is extensive. The level of insight into past experiences and what these mean for them now is exceptional. The registered manager uses research and theories to inform care planning. The team supports young people to read information and process how much progress they have made from when they first moved in. Young people also create their own visual trees about what is important to them, their achievements and goals. This insight into their world is presented at their reviews, which inform their future care plans.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Outstanding
Young people feel safe living in the home. The team gathers a vast amount of information about young people and their experiences that enables them to create bespoke care plans and risk assessments. Risks are assessed individually and reviewed in line with young people's development and changes as they occur. The team manages risk well and talks to young people about risks and strategies that everyone can use to keep safe. Children do not go missing from this home. Helping young people to follow safe ways of accessing the internet and the safe use of the telephones is a priority as young people become increasingly more interested in technology. The registered manager and her team parent the young people appropriately about the use of these devices and how to use them safely. Young people sign up to this and see the value of sharing with the team what they have been looking at on the internet or text messages that they have received. The team talks to young people about exploitation, what it means and what to do if they are worried that it may be happening to them.	

All the team has received the enhanced safeguarding training, and each member demonstrates good knowledge about child protection policies and how to keep young people safe. The registered manager has strong working relationships with the police and the designated officer. She reports and manages any child protection concerns robustly. If concerns arise about a team member, the registered manager takes swift and decisive action to ensure that the young people in her care are protected. The registered manager has received training in safer recruitment and uses these principles to recruit to the staff. Young people benefit from the fact that the registered manager is a psychotherapist. The approach is centred on providing therapeutic care. The registered manager leads the team to reflect on the causes of and triggers for how young people behave when they are struggling. This enables staff to recognise how young people need their emotional support to build up their resilience. A professional said, 'The level of emotional care is like nothing I have ever experienced; it's phenomenal.'

The two dogs are part of the family. Young people are taking an active role in training the puppy as a therapy dog and caring for an animal that is dependent on them for walks and food. The registered manager is already incorporating this into young people's strategies to help relax them after a busy day at school.

The therapeutic ethos decreases the amount of restraints and incidents that occur. Restraints have all been low-level hand holds. The registered manager's analysis shows clear insight into the trends of restraint, indicating patterns about significant dates or incidents that trigger challenging behaviour. When restraints occur, the emotional support to young people is excellent. Staff are not afraid to show emotion and cry with young people. Young people are not left alone until they feel safe and secure.

The level of reflection that young people engage in with the team is outstanding and offers extensive insight into their thoughts and feelings. Young people are happy to engage in this process, which helps them to progress and take ownership of their behaviour. If young people have upset someone or damaged anything, they are supported to make amends in a restorative manner.

A robust risk assessment is in place that looks at the location of the home and its proximity to other services in the area and any potential risk that young people could be exposed to. The registered manager is continuing to develop the 'Prevent' duty risk assessment further, as she gathers more information. All the team has received training on radicalisation.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Outstanding
The registered manager is also the responsible individual and owns the company. She is suitably qualified for her role and, in addition, she is a qualified psychotherapist. The registered manager is the therapist for all the young people living in the home. Independent scrutiny of her practice comes from the deputy manager as well as the clinical supervision that she receives from an external qualified practitioner. Her skills and expertise are shared with some national organisations to improve services for other young people. The registered manager demonstrates exceptional commitment to young people. She cares directly for the young people and forms part of the staff team. In addition, when she is away from the home, she is available for impromptu therapy sessions if young people are in crisis and need her support. The team has worked exceptionally well this year to cover some unpredicted staff shortages. This provided the young people with consistent staffing without the home having to rely on bank or agency staff. The registered manager's analysis of this meant that she over-recruited to ensure that the team returned to full numbers swiftly. There is an extensive training package in place that is designed around the needs of young people. All the team is up to date with training. New members of the staff team complete a comprehensive induction before working solely with the young people. The induction focuses on training as well as building relationships with young people. The team members say that they feel supported. Supervision is regular, and the registered manager ensures that the process is based around reflection and learning. The registered manager has a strong vision for the home and what it can achieve in the future. Development plans focus on each young person and what is important to them. These plans detail what the team can do to help them to achieve it. There are also plans in place to continue with home improvements, which are planned to take place while the young people are on their holidays, to cause the least disruption to them. Monitoring of the quality of care is highly effective as the registered manager has a strong presence in the home. Each record is critiqued by the registered manager who identifies any learning from it. As a result of new approaches to monitoring behaviour and restraint, the registered manager anticipates a further reduction in the use of restraints to manage challenging behaviour and incidents. The voice of young people permeates the home, with a key focus about what is most important for them. There have been no complaints. A number of compliments from social work professionals have been well received. The	

registered manager fights for these young people to ensure that they have everything in place that they need to succeed at anything they choose to do. She will raise for the young people any concerns that there are about the provision of services or education; she acts as a strong parental figure and advocate on their behalf. All young people have the option of accessing an independent advocate.

Families are made to feel welcome and are seen as an important part of the care that young people receive. The registered manager advocates avidly for young people to get the right number of visits to their families, which meets their needs. A parent said, 'We feel so welcomed by them. They are part of our family.'

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 that 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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