

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC016697
Inspector	Wendy Anderson
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Chances CCFSS Limited
Registered person address	Chances Child Care & Family Support PO Box 5010 Gloucester (South) GL4 6YA
Responsible individual	Linda Wall
Registered manager	Linda Wall
Date of last inspection	27/01/2014

Inspection date	22/08/2014
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Previous inspection	good progress
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

This inspection	
Overall effectiveness	outstanding
Outcomes for children and young people	outstanding
Quality of care	outstanding
Keeping children and young people safe	outstanding
Leadership and management	outstanding

Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	outstanding
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Young people receive an outstanding level of care from a dedicated truly child centred staff team. They make exceptional progress in all aspects of their lives especially in self-behaviour management, education and the transition to independence.

The staff team provide young people with excellent individualised well planned care which takes into consideration all the young person's identified needs.

Staff have very high aspirations for the young people they care for. By the consistent delivery of agreed approaches, and developing trusting relationships with staff the young people learn to believe they can achieve the goals they set themselves and beyond.

Consultation with young people is a real strength of the home. They are involved in all aspects of their care and the development of the home. This approach empowers the young people. For some this is the first time their views have been sought and valued.

Young people are extremely complimentary about the home and the staff team. They see them as going above and beyond for them. This leads the young people to

feel very well cared for and that they matter.

Education at the home is given a very high profile and its importance is passed on to the young people. This is demonstrated by the homes commitment to provide support and funding additional support for young people at school and college.

The leadership and management of the home are excellent. Rigorous monitoring systems are in place to ensure procedures and plans are adhered too, records are current and of a high standard.

The homes leadership has high aspirations for the staff team and the home. They expect the best and instil this in their team. The management team are ambitious and dynamic. They see continual improvement as key to delivering a high quality service. They feel by having this attitude they will maximise the opportunities the young people will have available to them and enhance the progress they make. There have been no breaches of regulation identified.

Full report

Information about this children's home

This is a privately owned children's home which is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to four young people with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
27/01/2014	Interim	good progress
01/10/2013	Full	outstanding
18/02/2013	Interim	good progress
12/07/2012	Full	good

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for children and young people **outstanding**

Young people make excellent progress at this service. They benefit from receiving consistent care from a stable well established staff team who have the young people's wellbeing at the heart of all their work.

Young people love living at the home. They think the staff that look after them are 'fantastic' and enjoy spending time with them. One young person said 'staff look after us really well.'

Young people develop appropriate strong relationship with the staff which enables them to open up about some very difficult and painful period in their lives. Young people spoken too during the inspection praised the staff for 'sticking with them' through some very difficult and challenging times. One young person said they had experience a lot of different forms of care in their lives and this was by far the best. 'This is how children's homes should be run. You shouldn't get moved about just because things get difficult. 'I feel very lucky to have come here.'

Young people are enabled to develop self-awareness, self-esteem and self-worth. A young person commented that they felt they were 'worthless until I came here.'

Young people's educational attendance and achievements are outstanding when viewed from their starting point. Their achievements are celebrated and staff provided any additional support they may need to achieve their goals. Young people are taught the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle. This links in with the independence work the home undertakes. Young people are involved with devising, shopping and cooking well balance and varied meals which they enjoy and are very proud of the results.

A real strength of the home is the guidance they provide for young people to successfully move into semi or independent living. This work begins at admission and does not end when the young people either leave the home before or after their 18th birthday. The home clearly sees their duty of care as far reaching and several young people who have moved on from the home still receive support for the staff team. This is planned and focused support to enable young people to remain in the community. Young people are able to take part in a vast range of activities. These are not only fun but also purposeful, whether it is in building self-confidence, coordination or social skills. Young people are encouraged and enabled to join local groups to extend their social networks.

Young people benefit from regular family contact. The staff team are excellent at maintaining and, in some cases restablising, appropriate family contact. They also encourage young people to bring their friends to the home and friends are always made to feel welcome.

Quality of care

outstanding

Staff consistently have exceptionally high aspirations for all the young people. Young people's well-being and development is at the centre of their practice as they are consistently focused on their welfare. This work is partially based on the exceptional relationships that exist between the staff and young people. These relationships of mutual trust and respect are the foundation for all work undertaken.

The young people's care plans are of an excellent quality. These are frequently reviewed and updated to ensure they reflect the individual young person's current situation. This process robustly demonstrates the progress the young people have made since their starting points upon admission which has been outstanding. Within these plans there is a significant emphasis on the therapeutic input the young people receive. The Registered Manager is a highly qualified therapist and oversees all of these plans. Her knowledge and experience is shared with the staff team and forms part of the team's training and development. This approach means the home delivers creative innovative care packages which meet the needs of some very complex young people. Of particular note is the work undertaken with the young people who have a range of attachment disorders. The intensive work undertaken by the team has not only led to young people being able to establish and maintain effective relationships with their families and the homes' staff team but also with members of the wider community. One young person said that they felt very alone when admitted to the home but now they have a great social networks and support systems. They said over the years they have been at the home they have been able, with the help knowledge and perseverance of the staff team, to look at not only what had happened to them in the past, the effect it had on them but also how they act in light of this. Through this process they have been able to relearn what a healthy relationship not only looks like but how to be the sort of person people want to be friends with.

Consultation with young people is a key ethos of the service. They are extremely involved in all aspect of not only their individual care, but also the day to day running of the home. They are involved in the recruitment of new staff as well as how their own bedrooms and the communal spaces are decorated and furnished. Young people also have their own copy of the sanction logs. This enables them to be empowered to effectively respond to the records kept by staff and develop an understanding of their behaviours. It is part of the reflective work the team undertake with the young people. The home also carries out regular survey work with young people as well as additional surveys when they leave. All of the information gathered during this vast range of consultation is used to further enhance the home's practices.

Health care provision is very robust. Young people receive all the support they require as well as accessing additional services where needed. The staff team are very proactive in this area. This has included not only challenging placing authorities

to gain access for the young people, but also financing additional support. The Registered Managers attitude 'is if it's in the young person's best interest and to meet their needs then we will make sure they get what they need.' The staff team work very closely with medical professionals. One example of this is where a young person needed extensive dental work, staff worked with the dentist to develop a programme of visits to put the young person at ease so that treatment could be undertaken. Linked to this is the delaying of a young person's leaving date to ensure all work was completed. The young person concerned said that these actions 'show just how much the staff really do care for us.'

Young people make extensive progress in their education from their point of admission. In some cases this progress is at a very impressive rate. The home have exceptional relationships with the education providers the young people access. They have gone so far as to provide education providers with additional staff, which the home funds, to ensure the young people get the support they need. The home sees education in its widest sense, undertaking projects with the young people outside of school hours. This includes providing a high level of purposeful activities to enhance their education.

The home is very proactive in addressing any barriers to the care, help or support a young person may require. An example of this was recent contact the home had with an independent reviewing officer. The letter written to a young person about their review was not in a form that the young person could understand. The young person received an apology and the information about their review was provided in a child friendly format. The staff have the strong belief that, although young people have advocates, they are the main advocates for the young people living in the home and it is their job to be the young people's champions.

Equality, diversity and equal opportunities are clearly visible in the homes' ethos and work. During the recent world cup young people took part in a number of events linked to the team that were playing to develop their understanding and appreciation of the wider world. In addition, when a young person had a change of social worker the home and social worker worked together to develop the young person's understanding of the social workers Muslim culture.

The home has a true multi-disciplinary approach to their work. They have developed and maintained dynamic working relationships with fellow professionals. Surveys and contact with professionals who work with the service view the service extremely positively.

The home has a comprehensive independence programme. Young people who have left the service are able, where possible, to maintain themselves in the community. A significant number of them are still in close contact with the home. The team feel this is an important part of their role. The team effectively equip the young people with not only practical skills, but also the social skills they need to be effective members of the community.

The home is appropriately located. The internal décor and furnishings are of a high standard. The home has a warm welcoming atmosphere. There is ample external space which the young people make good use of.

Keeping children and young people safe outstanding

An exceptionally strong safeguarding culture at the home ensures young people are protected from harm. The commissioners from one placing authority have held the homes safeguarding procedures and practices up as an exemplar to other homes they use.

The home has exceptional risk management systems in places that are consistently adhered to by staff which means young people's safety and welfare is protected and promoted. These systems include detailed information on child sexual exploitation. Detailed and dynamic risk assessments are frequently reviewed and updated. They cover all foreseeable events and include substantial input from young people. By including the young people in this process the team are able to work with them on developing their understanding of, and ability to manage, risk. From their starting point there is a dramatic drop in the number of risk taking behaviours. These range from none to extremely minimal. The staff teams' in-depth knowledge of the young people they care for means they understand the vulnerabilities of each individual and are able to address and reduce risks.

The staff team have an excellent knowledge and understanding of safeguarding. This was robustly demonstrated during interviews with staff. The homes management has strong links with the local safeguarding board. This working relationship ensures the homes practice is in line with local procedures. The team is very proactive regarding research and development in the area of safeguarding and child care in general. They discuss recent research and developments in team meetings and use this information to further enhance their practice. The team have the mind-set that there is always room to improve.

There are outstanding behaviour management systems in place that have been very successful with the young people living in the home. Detailed individual plans are developed for each young person and these are adhered to by all staff. These plans are again linked to the therapy the young peoples are receiving. They also link with plans used in the young person's educational setting. The Registered Manager feels that by having these consistent approaches across all aspects of the young person life change is more achievable. Young people's behaviour seen throughout the inspection was exceptional. One young person said that 'they were a complete nightmare' when they arrived at the home. They said they staff team 'stuck with me' and 'no one else has ever done that for me.' The homes' approach to behaviour management has enabled young people to effectively self-manage their behaviours whilst being able to acknowledge their own issues and triggers.

Safe holding is very rarely used at the home. Where it is used comprehensive records are maintained. These are not only used to monitor the appropriateness of restraint but also used with the young people to reflect on their behaviours and develop coping strategies. Sanctions are also minimal. The main focus of these is reparation and talking therapy with the young person looking at the root of the behaviour and how things could have been handled to achieve a more positive outcome.

Young people do not see bullying at the home as an issue. They said staff would 'sort this out real quick' if it happened. The home operates a robust anti-bullying policy. This includes proactive work with the young people through one-to-one and group sessions. This is linked to being a good effective member of the wider community.

Incidents of young people going missing are extremely rare. There have been none since the last inspection. The home works closely with the local police on this issue. The homes policies and procedures are line with the local police procedures.

The homes recruitment and vetting procedures are very robust and strictly adhered to in practice. This approach ensures young people are protected from unsuitable adults. Excellent records are maintained in this area and include a comprehensive visitor policy. Identification documents are requested of visitors and this is verified before they are allowed access to the building. Young people, during the inspection, talked about how well the staff team protect them.

Dynamic risk assessments and health and safety systems are in place and these are robustly monitored to ensure they are effective. This ensures the young people live and develop in a safe environment.

Leadership and management

outstanding

The responsible individual is also the Registered Manager. She is highly qualified for her role, holding qualifications in social work, transactional analysis counselling and integrated psychotherapy. The Registered Manager has exceptionally high expectations for herself and her staff team. The staff team share her drive and determination to provide young people with the best possible care. The theme running through their work is 'how can we improve, what can we do better.' The manager has been the registered individual since March 2007 and the Registered Manager since February 2012.

At the last full inspection on 1 October 2013 the home was rated as outstanding. At the interim inspection on 27 January the home was rated as making good progress. The recommendation made at the interim inspection for the home to ensure sanction records contained full details of the events which led to a sanction has been met.

The home has an outstanding statement of purpose. It presents potential placing

authorities with a comprehensive picture of the work the home undertakes, the skills of the staff team and the theory their practice is based on. The young person's guide contains all the required information in a child friendly format.

The staff team are very complimentary about the Registered Manager. Some expressed the view that she is the best manager they have ever worked for. One reason for this they felt, was that the Registered Manager does shifts just like they do. Thus they feel she really understands what they work is like from their perspective. The staff team are proud of their home and they have a sense of ownership as their views and opinions are sought, valued and, where possible, acted upon.

The senior staff team are also well qualified. Along with the Registered Manager they provide the team with purposeful support and inspire them to drive their individual practice forward. This approach has developed a very stable team who are passionate about the work they do.

The whole team are provided with an exceptional level of training. This includes meticulous training in the homes therapeutic approaches. Robust systems are maintained to ensure all staff receive the required training with refreshers at the required intervals. The majority of the staff team are NVQ level 3 or above. Staff training programmes are also informed by the comprehensive supervision the team receive. This includes clinical supervision linked the homes therapeutic approach. This supervision takes place in one-to-one and group sessions. There are also regular team meeting where, in addition to comprehensive discussion about the young people and staff, practice research and development in the field of child care is discussed. Information from all of these formats linked with a strong emphasis on reflective practice is used to constantly push the home practice to a higher level. Each member of staff has an annual appraisal which is comprehensive. It reflects on the previous years' work, identifies training needs and set goals for the coming year.

Monitoring systems within the home are very effective as are external monitoring reports. These are evaluative and challenge the service where required. The Registered Manager and team are swift to address any areas for improvement.

There is an effective system for the reporting of significant events to the appropriate authorities by the Registered Manager in a timely manner. Records are highly organised and maintained. They are securely and safely stored and contribute to a strong understanding and comprehensive record of the young person's life. The home is run in line with current legislation and good practice. The quality of the service the home provides for young people consistently exceeds the National Minimum Standards for Children's Homes.

What inspection judgements mean

Judgement	Description
Outstanding	A service of exceptional quality that significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Good	A service of high quality that exceeds minimum requirements.
Adequate	A service that only meets minimum requirements.
Inadequate	A service that does not meet minimum requirements.

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The 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 relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the framework of inspection for children's homes.