

# SC062931

Registered provider: Channels and Choices Kent LLP

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 aged between eight and 17 years old on admission. The home is operated by a private organisation. According to the statement of purpose, the home caters for children with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since 5 July 2018.

**Inspection dates:** 6 to 7 March 2019

|                                                                                           |             |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| <b>Overall experiences and progress of children and young people,</b> taking into account | <b>good</b> |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|

|                                                             |      |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| 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:** 5 October 2017

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** outstanding

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement    |
|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------------|
| 05/10/2017      | Full            | Outstanding             |
| 22/02/2017      | Full            | Good                    |
| 05/07/2016      | Interim         | Sustained effectiveness |
| 14/01/2016      | Interim         | Sustained effectiveness |

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

### Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to meet the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards'. The registered person(s) must comply within the given timescales.

| Requirement                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Due date   |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| <p>The registered person must ensure that the employment of any person on a temporary basis at the children's home does not prevent children from receiving such continuity of care as is reasonable to meet their needs.</p> <p>The registered person must ensure that—<br/>at all times, at least one person on duty at the home has a suitable first aid qualification. (Regulation 31(1)(2)(a))</p> | 10/04/2019 |

### Recommendations

- Care which meets each child's needs and promotes their welfare, taking into account of the child's gender, religion, ethnicity, cultural and linguistic background, sexual identity, mental health, any disability, their assessed needs, previous experiences and any relevant plans. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 14, paragraph 3.2)  
In particular, ensure that the children's plans and impact risk assessments at the point of admission take account of their ethnicity and cultural needs.
- As set out in regulations 31-33, the registered person is responsible for maintaining good employment practice. They must ensure that recruitment, supervision and performance management of staff safeguards children and minimises potential risks to them. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1)  
In particular, ensure that there is sufficient emphasis in staff supervision on performance management and follow-up actions when shortfalls in practice are identified.
- Many children placed in homes may undergo a difficult transition and what should be simple aspects of their care take on a substantial significance in this context. Staff should provide a nurturing environment that is welcoming, supportive, and which provides appropriate boundaries in relation to their behaviour. Homes must also meet children's basic day to day needs and physical necessities. Staff should seek to meet the child's basic needs in the way that a good parent would, recognising that many children in residential care have experienced environments where these needs have not been consistently met – doing so is an important

aspect of demonstrating that the staff care for the child and value them as an individual. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.7)

In particular, ensure that the kitchen is in good working order and maintained to meet the needs of the children.

- Children's home staff should take every step to make sure that individual children and young people are not subject to discrimination, marginalisation or bullying from their peers by virtue of their gender, religion, ethnicity, cultural and linguistic background, sexual identity, mental health, disability or for any other reason. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 16, paragraph 3.12)

In particular, ensure that staff working in the home have undertaken equality and diversity training so that they are equipped with the skills to challenge discrimination and increase their understanding of racism.

## Inspection judgements

### Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

In a calm and organised home, staff provide the children with nurturing care, tailored to their specific needs. Children benefit from positive relationships with the staff, who want the very best for them. As a result, the children develop and grow in confidence.

Staff are attuned to the children and invest their time with them. Children attend lots of activities and clubs in the community. Individual interests are nurtured and encouraged by staff. One child whose passion is fishing is being supported by the staff to set up a fishing club for the home and the wider organisation. Staff recognise that fostering the children's talents and strengths helps increase the children's resilience and self-esteem.

A well-established attachment model informs staff practice and the children benefit from direct access to the organisation's in-house clinical team. Staff receive regular support from the clinical team to help them understand the children's therapeutic needs. Children experience empathetic and meaningful relationships with the staff. As a result, the children develop a greater sense of agency.

Staff ensure that good routines are in place to support school attendance. Children attend schools that are part of the organisation and they enjoy small class sizes and focused support. Reading is very much encouraged by the staff and there are lots of books available in the home for the children. There is daily and effective communication between the school and the staff. As a result, problems are addressed, school attendance is good, and the children make steady academic progress.

Staff provide care that considers the needs of the children's ethnicity and culture. For example, there are displays in the home of positive black role models. However, in some of the children's placement plans, there were no references to the children's identity or cultural needs. This lack of focus has the potential to undermine the children's ability to

develop a positive sense of self and of their cultural identity.

Staff make good use of the home's location and children enjoy living near the seaside. One parent commented, 'It feels like a home.' The children's bedrooms are spacious and personalised. However, there is limited space in the downstairs living area for children to have space and quiet time from each other. The kitchen requires a refurbishment, which is due to take place soon.

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

Staff know how to identify and report safeguarding concerns. Staff spoken to were clear on whistle-blowing procedures. Staff understand the children's individual risks and vulnerabilities, and there are clear strategies in place to help reduce them. This includes high levels of staff supervision, which is used effectively and positively to engage with the children.

Staff maintain clear and consistent boundaries with the children. This provides the children with a sense of safety. A parent said, 'The children feel secure and comfortable with staff.' As a result of staff's warmth and attentiveness, children develop trust and respond well to the help and support given to them. Consequently, the children are learning new ways to manage difficult feelings.

The structure and routines in the home provide the children with a sense of safety. Staff set appropriate boundaries that are warm and supportive. This assists the children to understand acceptable boundaries and develop positive relationships with each other. Emphasis is placed on restorative measures and de-escalating negative behaviour. As a result, children experience predictable and responsive care.

Staff support the children to make positive choices and take part in decisions about their lives. Daily children's meetings provide a good opportunity for the children to express their feelings and for success to be celebrated. Individual key-work sessions help the children to learn to take responsibility for their actions and acquire new skills to achieve their goals.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good**

The registered manager is passionate and dedicated to improving the lives of the children. Staff spoken to said that they felt well supported by the registered manager and the wider organisation. The registered manager and leaders are visible and involved in all aspects of the home to ensure that children receive high-quality and consistent care.

The staff use restraint as a last resort to protect children and others from serious harm. There is good management oversight that ensures that each incident is scrutinised to ensure safe practice. Detailed records show the actions taken by the staff and debrief meetings in place to see what can be learned. The registered manager monitors all incidents to identify triggers and patterns and is committed to reducing the number of

incidents leading to physical intervention.

The registered manager is developing a nurturing and reflective culture where learning is encouraged. However, supervision could be strengthened by a greater emphasis on performance management and follow-up actions when shortfalls in practice are identified. This will minimise potential risks to the children and unsafe cultures developing in what is a relatively new staff team.

Staff benefit from the organisation's training programme, which covers a good range of relevant topics. Safeguarding and child protection training is evolving in response to the changing landscape of risks to children. However, not all staff have completed first aid training, which has led to occasions when there has not been a staff member in the home with a first aid qualification. The training shortfalls are currently being addressed and are in part due to the number of new staff that have recently joined the home.

The location of the home is in a predominantly White British area, and staff do not reflect the children's ethnicity. Impact risk assessments on admission have not taken into account wider structural issues of racism, specifically the location of the home. On occasion, staff have not addressed incidents of racism from the community with sufficient rigour. Staff have not had equality and diversity training. The registered manager recognises such training will help equip the staff with the skills to challenge discrimination and increase their understanding of racism.

## **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:** SC062931

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider address:** 31 St Georges Place, Canterbury, Kent CT1 1XD

**Responsible individual:** Lisa Speight

**Registered manager:** Simon Anstice and Ty Warcken

## Inspector

Anne-Marie Davies, social care inspector

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