

SC062931

Registered provider: Channels & Choices Kent LLP

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is run by a private provider. It can support up to four children with social and emotional difficulties.

The manager applied to Ofsted for registration in January 2023.

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 March 2023

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 22 March 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
22/03/2022	Full	Good
31/07/2019	Full	Good
06/03/2019	Full	Good
05/10/2017	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children appear happy and relaxed with staff who respond to them in a supportive, nurturing manner. Children say they feel safe and well cared for. They are able to seek support from staff when they need to. Children said that staff listen to them when they feel worried.

Children's placement plans are comprehensive and informed by health and education documents. Children are assessed to determine their therapeutic needs, and therapy is an integral part of the support they receive. This means children are more able to manage their behaviours and emotional responses to difficult situations.

Since moving to the home, all children have made progress in education. Personal education and education, health and care plans clearly reflect the work staff are doing to support children. Education staff and staff from the home work closely together to ensure that children receive consistent support to achieve their educational targets.

Parents and professionals say children are well supported and make progress. One parent said that her son is much calmer and understands his emotions better. An independent reviewing officer praised staff for the support they provided to a child with complex trauma.

Staff support children to engage in healthy lifestyles, including eating balanced diets and taking part in physical activity. Staff encourage children to be fully involved in meal planning and preparation. Children are involved in physical activities that they find interesting, including football and swimming. Children are registered for health services and have attended dental and optician appointments when required. This encourages children to make healthy lifestyle choices.

There are good transition plans for children who are moving on. One child was supported for a significant period until the placing authority found a new provision that could better meet her needs. This means there was a positive end to her time at the home, and the new placement has given her the best possible start.

The home is well decorated and comfortably furnished. Communal areas have photos of children and staff together on the walls. This gives the home a feeling of community and togetherness. Children's bedrooms are decorated to reflect their individual personalities and interests. One child's room has a train set that he built. He also has an 'identity board' that contains pictures and information about his hometown.

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

Staff are swift to identify potential conflict in children's relationships. Individual and group key working has been carried out to explore peer relationships and how to positively manage difficulties. Children are protected from issues of abuse and bullying and are supported to build positive relationships with peers. This has been successful in addressing conflict and potential bullying behaviours during periods of conflict between children.

Children are encouraged to be part of their care planning. They are involved in the completion and updating of plans and risk assessments. Each child has a consultation on file, which they complete to let staff know how they want to be supported and their likes and dislikes. This is reviewed in line with the child's progress. Therefore, children understand their care plans. They showed an understanding of why they live at the home when talking with the inspector.

Staff use a range of strategies to encourage children to think about how their behaviours and actions affect themselves and others. Children have individual reward charts on the walls and are working towards rewards of their choosing. Consequences are put in place for behaviours such as aggression and property damage. This educates children about behaviours and boundaries and encourages them to take responsibility for their actions.

There are monthly health and safety audits in place to ensure the living environment is safe for children. Children and staff have been involved in regular fire drills to ensure they can safely evacuate the home if required. There is a current fire risk assessment in place, and all actions have been completed to ensure the building complies with safety standards.

Risks are not always fully understood when children move into the home. There is little analysis of how children's risks and needs impact other children already living in the home. Managers have recently introduced a new format to complete impact risk assessments. However, the most recent assessment has been completed using the old format.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

There are a new manager and a deputy manager in place. The recently appointed manager has applied to Ofsted for registration.

The transition period between managers has been overseen by the area manager, who knows and understands the service. This has ensured a good level of management oversight during this period. It has also provided the children and staff with consistency and stability during a time of uncertainty.

Staff say they feel supported by the manager and that improvements have been made in the short time he has been in place. Staff receive monthly supervision that offers support with personal and professional issues. There is a good focus on

development and training, and staff are encouraged to think about career progression in the organisation.

Managers have undertaken a critical learning review after a child's placement ended early. They have revised how they assess children before they move to the home. They have identified that the process needs to be more robust and that referral information should be questioned and challenged if there are perceived gaps.

Staff receive appropriate training to ensure they understand and can meet the needs of children. New training is now available following the outcomes of the critical learning review. Staff are now completing trauma-informed practice and safe care training.

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
The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)) In particular, ensure that there is proper consideration of children's needs and risks before they move into the home and how these will affect children already living in the home.	17 April 2023

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: SC062931

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Channels & Choices Kent LLP

Registered provider address: 44 The Pantiles, The Pantiles, Tunbridge Wells,
Kent TN2 5TN

Responsible individual: Kate Stephenson

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Tom McGhee, Social Care Inspector

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