

SC062931

Registered provider: Channels & Choices Kent LLP

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a private company and is registered to provide care for up to four children who may have social and emotional difficulties. At the time of the inspection, four children were living in the home.

The manager has been registered since May 2023.

Inspection dates: 11 and 12 December 2024

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: 27 February 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
27/02/2024	Full	Good
07/03/2023	Full	Good
22/03/2022	Full	Good
31/07/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The home is well maintained and homely. The manager and staff are proud of the children's achievements and children are rewarded for their efforts. Certificates of children's celebrations and achievements are displayed alongside photos and memorabilia. The children are settled and are well supported by the staff. One social worker said, 'The staff provide excellent care...and go above and beyond.'

The staff give children information about any plans for them moving in or moving on. These plans explain the arrangements for them. Children's needs are well thought out and, when possible, bedrooms are personalised before children move in. The manager considers how children will live alongside each other. Staff have a clear understanding of children's needs, including those of children who have recently moved in, and are responsive to them. This approach helps children to settle well. Staff create memory books for each child which capture memories and document their time in the home.

Staff provide children with opportunities to have their views, wishes and feelings heard. They promote children's engagement in ongoing consultation and the manager listens and responds. Children participate in daily meetings and staff engage them in individual conversations. The children have chosen to support a charity and have a fundraising event each month for a dog they have sponsored.

The stable and permanent staff team supports the continuity of care for children. Staff and children interact in a natural way and there is warmth in their relationships. Children regularly seek out staff for comfort and reassurance.

Children are encouraged to maintain relationships with those people who are important to them. Staff advocate for children to reconnect with family members and have increased access to them.

Staff work collaboratively with other professionals. School staff report positive collaborative working. Staff maintain frequent communication to support children to access their education and ensure children are prepared for learning. Children have good attendance at school. A headteacher said, 'By working together we have seen a significant impact on [name of child]'s well-being. [Name of child] is now much more settled and is now engaging in learning at school and home.'

Staff ensure that children's health needs are met. They encourage the children to engage in a range of activities that promote their individual hobbies and interests. This supports children to develop friendships in the wider community.

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

The home is settled and there are few serious incidents. There have been no allegations, complaints or incidents of bullying. Children do not go missing from this home and safeguarding incidents are rare. When safeguarding incidents do occur, these are responded to and recorded appropriately. The manager ensures any necessary agencies are informed and consulted with. This adds a level of external scrutiny.

Staff understand the children and their vulnerabilities. They understand how to keep children safe and manage risk. They carry out direct work with children to help them understand and manage risk.

Door alarms are used overnight on children's bedrooms, and the need to use these is regularly reviewed by managers and the placing authority. Children are consulted on the use of door alarms and understand why these are in place.

Staff are trained in the home's model of de-escalation and restraint. Staff use the least restrictive methods to support and manage any behavioural incidents. Staff have developed strong relationships with the children. They help them develop the skills to manage their emotions and difficult feelings. This is reflected in the low levels of physical intervention. When physical intervention is used, records of the incident are detailed and clear. Staff and children have the opportunity to reflect and debrief.

The manager ensures that the home is safe and well maintained. Medication is securely stored and administered as directed by trained staff.

The manager ensures suitable safer recruitment practices are followed. This helps to ensure that only appropriate adults work with the children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager has a good understanding of the children, their needs and the home. He has a clear vision for the home and ensures the development plan is regularly reviewed and responds to any emerging themes or patterns.

Staff retention is good, and the home has a full complement of permanent staff. Staff feel well supported and are provided with opportunities for professional growth and development. One member of staff said, 'I have confidence in the manager to support me to achieve what I want to achieve.'

Staff have the training they need to meet the needs of the children. The manager ensures that external courses are sourced when these are not available internally. One member of staff is qualified to teach staff about the home's model of de-escalation and restraint.

Staff receive regular reflective supervision which supports their practice. Senior leaders regularly check staff well-being, together with operational and practice targets. Team

meetings take place regularly and minutes of these are recorded and distributed. They are well attended, and staff have input. Staff have opportunities to reflect on specific areas of practice or behaviours through additional meetings which are facilitated by a therapist.

Records are generally well maintained and up to date. However, some files lack attention to detail, including an incorrect name on one child's record and inconsistent information regarding a child's potential allergy.

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

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

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: Atlas Chambers, 33 West Street, Brighton, East Sussex BN1 2RE

Responsible individual: Kate Stephenson

Registered manager: Martin Banning

Inspector

Cassie Martin, Social Care Inspector

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