

Children's homes – Interim inspection

Inspection date	08/03/2017
Unique reference number	SC067895
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Channels and Choices Kent LLP
Registered provider address	Camburgh House, 27 New Dover Road, Canterbury, Kent CT1 3DN

Responsible individual	Martin Scholfield
Registered manager	Post vacant
Inspector	Sarah Olliver

Inspection date	08/03/2017
Previous inspection judgement	Good
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection This home was judged good at the full inspection. At this interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has sustained effectiveness. At the full inspection in September 2016, one requirement and four recommendations were made. The requirement regarding physical restraint records has been met as these now provide the details and description of the physical interventions used. This improved clarity helps the manager to determine whether such interventions were appropriate and effective. The home has also met two of the previous recommendations. Staff supervision is now consistent and regular, and domestic appliances are in good working order. The remaining two recommendations, in respect of the independent visitor's reports and young people's specific risk assessments, are not met. The independent visitor's reports completed since the last inspection do not provide an analytical and rigorous assessment. This fails to reliably assist the registered manager to understand the strengths and weaknesses of the home. Risk assessments for the young people lack clarity in describing the severity of the risks identified. Consequently, the risk levels remain unclear and the guidance does not reliably instruct staff on what to do. Furthermore, the location risk assessment has not been updated. Risks associated with the local area have not been identified. On one occasion, the young people engaged in risk-taking behaviours with other young people which could have been avoided. A new manager is currently in the process of applying for registration with Ofsted. He is bringing a questioning approach to the home's methods of working. This is leading to positive changes in practice, such as changes in behaviour management. For example, sanctions are being scrutinised to ensure that they are proportionate in response to young people's behaviour. As a result, the young people are experiencing clear boundaries that support their behavioural needs. Young people have made progress in accordance with the aims of their care plans. For example, some have successfully moved on to foster care. Others are working on making progress towards this, supported by visits to the home from the fostering team. A keyworker commented that a young person gave a percentage of her feelings about moving on as '80% excited, 15% happy and 5% anxious'. Outreach work conducted by the staff maintains an important link with individuals	

after they have moved out. Such practice supports their ongoing settling process in their new homes. However, for one young person the outreach visits did not take place as planned, risking feelings of rejection for the young person.

Young people enjoy and benefit from engaging in local social and sporting clubs. Holidays have included trips abroad. Young people proudly display photos of such trips throughout the home. Such reminders contribute to the homely feel and demonstrate the young people's sense of ownership and permanence about their home.

Young people speak positively about the staff. They said that they are well supported to make sense of their emotions and feel that the staff are approachable. The quality of these relationships enables the young people to build trust. Notwithstanding such progress, there are occasions when young people do engage in challenging behaviours; in one instance this resulted in staff being injured. The leadership has clearly and positively addressed such behaviours and implemented appropriate support for the staff involved.

Young people are able to recognise their successes through experiencing rewards. Staff have adapted the rewards system to individual needs. Whereas some young people require daily incentives and can access a 'lucky dip', others are working towards bigger rewards, such as theatre trips to London, which require a longer and more sustained period of progress. Staff members' creative use of this system demonstrates how well use their knowledge of the young people, in order to appropriately stretch their expectations of them.

Young people benefit from participating in cultural learning within the home to support their formal education. Staff seize opportunities to engage young people in learning about their wider world by holding themed nights. Recent topics have included 'Burns Night' and a Cockney-themed night with special foods. Photos are displayed in the home of these events, showing the young people enjoying learning about different cultures.

The manager's effective monitoring reliably informs staff practice. He uses his findings to lead the staff team to make improvements when shortfalls are identified. In response to a previous recommendation, the company has developed a new format for the independent monitoring arrangements of the home. However, the completed reports do not provide a rigorous assessment of the home's arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the young people. This is a missed opportunity to provide the manager with meaningful independent scrutiny. A recommendation is made to improve upon the quality and content of the independent visitor's reports.

Young people are making progress in many aspects of their lives. The manager recognises the areas for improvement, and he has clear plans in place for the continuing development of the home and the staff team.

Information about this children's home

The home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to three young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The home is operated by a private organisation. It offers therapeutic residential care.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
27/09/2016	Full	Good
08/03/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
21/12/2015	Full	Good
11/03/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person/s meets 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 registered person must review the appropriateness and suitability of the location of the premises used for the purposes of the children's home at least once in each calendar year taking into account the requirement in regulation 12(2)(c) (the protection of children standard). When conducting the review, the registered person must consult, and take into account the views of, each relevant person. (Regulation 46(1)(2))	16/06//2017

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further, the service should take account of the following recommendations:

- Any individual appointed to carry out visits to the home as an independent person must make a rigorous and impartial assessment of the home's arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children in the children's home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.5)
- Ensure that staff continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)
- The behaviour management strategy should be understood and applied at all times by staff, and must be kept under review and revised where appropriate. In particular, complete such a review in response to incidents resulting in staff injuries. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.34)

What the inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspection we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the 'Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection'.

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 who it is trying to help, protect and look after.

This inspection focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

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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