

SC067895

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 registered to provide care and accommodation for up to four children with emotional and social difficulties. The home is operated by a private organisation. It offers therapeutic residential care. At the time of this inspection, four boys were living in the home.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since 28 March 2023

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 April 2023

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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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	outstanding
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The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection, and care.

Date of last inspection: 26 April 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
26/04/2022	Full	Outstanding
25/05/2021	Full	Outstanding
17/12/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
16/07/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children receive care in a home where managers and staff have their best interests at heart. Because of this, children make exceptional progress.

Children receive individualised care that is specific to their developmental needs. Clear plans are in place to ensure children's continued development from the time that they enter the home until they leave. The specialist therapeutic programme used in the home promotes strong progress and development. The care that children receive has a very positive impact.

Children make exceptional progress towards independence. They enjoy the process of learning new skills. One child has grown in confidence and now walks to and from school on their own. Another child understands and manages their health condition with the support of staff.

Children have positive experiences that support their social and emotional development. Informal discussions take place around the dining table. This gives a family feel to the home, and children can share how they are feeling and the positives of their day. The use of 'social dilemmas' is an additional way of raising points for discussion. Children learn to give others space to express their views and respectfully wait their turn.

Staff understand the importance of education. They go to great lengths to ensure that children have a positive learning experience. All children have school places and attend daily. The regular communication between the home and school ensures that children's daily experiences are well known, and staff can respond effectively. The manager and staff liaised with education professionals to ensure the provision of schoolwork when a child was without a school place. Staff gave this child excellent learning experiences that helped their education. As a result, this child was well prepared for their new school.

All children, despite their challenges, have made significant progress. Children have access to therapeutic input that helps them in all areas of their lives. One child has made exceptional progress towards managing their emotions. Another child is better able to express themselves. Staff receive therapeutic 'thinking time', which they value. The involvement of the clinical team helps staff to understand the children and their needs. It also helps staff to manage how they feel when dealing with demanding situations.

Staff consult children in all decisions that affect them. Staff know their views and help them to express their wishes and feelings. Children are aware of the plans for them and give their views on them. Staff involve children in menu planning. Individual dietary needs are well catered for. Children have contact with their family

and staff support this well (despite the distances and challenges that are sometimes involved).

Children access clubs that help them to be part of the community. They attend activities such as football, basketball, swimming and cheerleading. Children also enjoy activities arranged by the provider. These include Halloween parties and community dog walks. Because of these experiences, children feel part of a large family.

Children experience positive beginnings and endings at this home. They are kindly received by the other children who live here. Staff prepare their rooms and personalise them. Staff find out their likes and dislikes and prepare their favourite meal for when they arrive. When children move on, it is well managed and done at the child's pace. This helps them to understand that moving on is a part of life and that it can happen in a positive way.

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

Children's safety and well-being continue to be central to all practice in this home. Staff are aware of the risks that children are subject to. Detailed risk assessments are individual to each child. Staff support children to understand these assessments. This helps children to feel involved. Staff work with children about how to keep themselves safe, particularly when they are out in the community. Staff complete significant pieces of work with children around their safety. They use one-to-one sessions to further explore risks.

Children do not usually go missing from this home. However, if this happens, staff are rigorous in following the missing-child procedures. They work closely with a range of agencies to ensure the safe return of the child. Staff provide a welcoming environment when the child returns. They undertake continuous work that highlights the dangers and risks of this behaviour.

Staff support children to understand bullying. When a child was subject to this at school, there was a prompt response from the manager. This was effective and improved the situation for the child.

Children have high-quality, positive behaviour plans. These plans recognise children's likes and dislikes. Staff know what kind of intervention works for each child, and they use them well. Consistent boundaries are in place. This is to ensure that children know the expectations of their behaviour. Staff receive specialist training to help them to manage difficult behaviours. Professionals feel that their child is safe in this home.

Safeguarding arrangements are in place to protect children and to promote their welfare. The manager works effectively with the relevant safeguarding agencies if concerns arise. However, there has been at least one occasion when an allegation against staff was not notified to Ofsted. The effective actions of the provider limited the impact of this. However, the oversight of the regulator was reduced.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The manager registered with Ofsted in March 2023. She has been in post for over a year and continues to make a significant impact in how the home is developing. The living environment has improved, and it continues to be welcoming and homely. The manager models good practice to her staff. As a result, children receive excellent care and support.

A strong management team is in place. Leaders and managers show an effective understanding of the needs of all the children. They have high expectations of what children can achieve, and they provide opportunities for them to grow and develop.

Leaders and managers understand the progress that each child is making. They are aware when children are not making the expected progress and take action to improve this.

Leaders and managers provide a supportive environment for the development of staff. The succession planning by leaders and managers means that staff have a range of opportunities to develop their careers. Staff receive regular and effective support. They receive individual supervision as well as group supervision and therapeutic 'thinking time'. The involvement of therapists strengthens staff understanding of the children that they care for. Because of this, children receive exceptional, well-informed care.

Staff receive high-quality training that meets their needs. Leaders and managers ensure that staff receive training specific to the needs of children, such as training to support children in relation to issues such as loss and grieving, gang culture and county lines. Staff speak positively about the training that they receive. They are enthusiastic about their continual professional development.

Leaders and managers know and understand the home's strengths and areas for development. They identify these areas and put plans in place to address them.

Leaders and managers have excellent relationships with a range of professionals. They work closely with them to ensure the best possible care for all the children that they care for. The manager acts when the responses from other services are not effective. She is thoughtful and takes appropriate advice before making an appropriate challenge. Her input improves the care and support that children receive. The promotion of children's rights is a strong area of practice in this home.

Leaders and managers actively promote equality, diversity and inclusion. For example, each week, the children learn a new sign. They add this to the sign language folder for future reference. Children can be themselves in this home. Leaders, managers and staff support them to maintain their identity and keep links with their community.

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 registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation; an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious; there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there; a child protection enquiry involving a child — is instigated; or concludes (in which case, the notification must include the outcome of the child protection enquiry); or there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(a)(b)(c)(d)(i)(ii)(e))	3 August 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: SC067895

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: Amy Fraser

Inspector

Vevene Muhammad, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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