

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	21/12/2015
Unique reference number	SC067895
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Channels and Choices Kent LLP
Registered person address	31, St. Georges Place, CANTERBURY, Kent, CT1 1XD

Responsible individual	Martin Scholfield
Registered manager	Post vacant
Inspector	Suzy Lemmy

Inspection date	21/12/2015
Previous inspection judgement	Sustained effectiveness
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.	
how well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
the impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Inadequate

SC067895

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- The manager is a strong leader who has implemented new processes to ensure that improvements in care planning reflect the progress of the young people. She leads a staff team who deliver therapeutic support to the young people. They actively participate in daily meetings in which they are confident to express their feelings and opinions.
- Young people have made good progress in all aspects of their lives. Reward charts, devised with young people, incentivise young people to change behaviours and learn new skills.
- Comprehensive placement plans underpin the excellent care that staff provide. These plans remain live documents, which inform staff about changes to young people's needs and enables a consistent approach to their care.
- Supervision is now regular and effective; however, the manager does not specifically discuss safeguarding, this does not allow staff to reflect on young people's safety. Supervisions were not regular during the transition to a new manager. The changes in management of the home affected monitoring of records and a complaint by a young person was not clearly recorded. This meant that the decision-making was not transparent.

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 with the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
13: The leadership and management standard In order to meet the leadership and management standard (2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to- (h) use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home, particularly in relation to the transition period between managers.	24/02/2016

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the service should take account of the following recommendation(s):

Ensure that the records of staff supervision clearly demonstrate that supervision safeguards children and minimises potential risks to them. (The Quality Standards, page 61 paragraph13.1)

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to three young people with 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
11/03/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
07/01/2015	Full	Good
02/01/2014	Interim	Good progress
17/04/2013	Full	Good

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
Young people make good progress, reward charts encourage young people to manage their behaviours more effectively and learn self-care skills. For example, one young person is now able to manage her evening routines independently, another young person who showed challenging behaviour in his previous placement does not show these behaviours in this home. Staff value positive interaction with young people, settling times at bedtime are nurturing. Young people have individual time, which increases their self-esteem and self-worth. They were observed to be happy during a Christmas dinner, shared with all the staff, creating a caring family atmosphere. One young person said 'this house is pretty good, amazing, outstanding'. Young people's placement plans are extremely thorough, covering all aspects of their care. They are based on impact risk assessments completed before young people are admitted to the home. The manager ensures that young people new to the home are compatible with those already living there. Individual needs	

assessment and therapeutic treatment plans inform the placement plans. Staff adhere to these to ensure a consistently high standard of care.

Staff work with professionals to ensure that young people are able to see individuals that are important to them, such as parents and siblings. They travel long distances and supervise contact to maintain young people's relationships.

Young people are actively involved in decision making relating to the running of the home. Staff and young people have daily meetings to reflect on their day, plan activities and discuss worries. Young people value this time, one young person said 'the best thing is the daily meetings, they are useful'. Another young person said 'we talk about any issues we have in the daily meetings'.

Staff support young people throughout planned transitions, for example, visiting placements and preparing them to make the transition to family life. One young person was supported to make a successful transition to foster care. Staff continue to remain committed to young people's emotional well-being by remaining in contact with them. One young person who moved to another placement said 'it was a good house, I did get a lot of support, I speak to staff once a week'.

Staff foster respect and harmony, the young people have good relationships with each other. They enjoy activities in the community, for example, swimming lessons, Sunday school, horse riding and a zookeeper day. Young people participate enthusiastically in charity work, for example, Macmillan coffee mornings.

The home has a comfortable family environment. Young people choose decorations and have individualised bedrooms. One young person proudly showed me his poem displayed in the dining room. Young people are encouraged to take responsibility for the home by sharing chores. This encourages a sense of belonging and community.

All young people are attending the company school and making good progress. Staff work closely with the school to ensure that young people's educational, behavioural, and therapeutic needs are met. For example, one young person's school report records that 'he is making the right decisions more now and is learning to deal with being upset or angry in a way that is more appropriate'.

Young people receive the health services that they require. They access daily therapy as part of the school curriculum. Staff training includes attachment theories; this means they have the experience to care for young people therapeutically.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
Safeguarding processes are professional and policies are clear. An experienced staff group are able to use their knowledge to protect young people. Staff have had recent safeguarding and child sexual exploitation training. Radicalisation training is booked for January 2016. Staff closely supervise young people so they do not go missing. They are able to demonstrate sound knowledge of the missing from home policy, their roles and responsibilities. Staff use therapeutic thinking time to reflect on young people's behaviour and emotional well-being. The nurturing and responsive relationships developed help young people to address attachment issues and self-regulate their behaviour. One young person was seen taking herself to her bedroom when she became stressed. Staff work as a team to understand young people's triggers, discuss interventions and strategies to minimise the impact of their experiences. As a result restraints have reduced significantly. Recording of restraints are evaluative and reflective. The young person's safety is clearly paramount and staff seek their views. The manager analyses the records to identify any learning points. Sanctions are used proportionately with an emphasis on restoration. Observations of staff interactions with young people demonstrate a positive praise approach and nurturing relationships, creating a harmonious atmosphere. One young person said 'the adults here keep you safe'. Daily key working sessions enable young people to have protected time to share issues or concerns with a trusted adult. Key work action plans identify areas for staff to focus on, for example, road safety awareness and e-safety. Young people have attended e-safety training and fire induction. Staff educate young people so they can keep themselves safe. Swift referrals and consultations with safeguarding authorities have ensured effective protection. The manager effectively liaises with the local authority designated officer and has a good working relationship; this safeguards young people. There was one occasion when a record of how decisions are made lacked clarity; this was during the management transition period. Recruitment processes are robust; checks completed demonstrate that care staff are suitably vetted prior to employment. Young people are involved in the recruitment process. The manager provides a thorough and extensive induction period, one member of staff said 'I was able to ask questions and staff were very supportive, I didn't work directly with the young people until I was ready'. Health and safety measures are in place and fire safety checks are completed. Staff and young people undertake regular fire drills. The location risk assessment	

is thorough. Local knowledge means that the manager and staff are fully aware of potential risks that young people face within the community.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Inadequate
Leadership and management is inadequate, as the home has not had a Registered Manager since March 2015. The current manager was appointed in July 2015 having previously been a Registered Manager elsewhere in the organisation since November 2012. She has a Level Five qualification in Leadership and Management for Residential Child Care. The manager is a strong leader who is committed to driving forward change and developing the service. Young people's needs are central to all practice, planning and development. All decisions focus on their best interests, promoting positive outcomes. The manager has devised charts to track progress. Creative reward systems motivate young people to work towards identified goals. She has high expectations of standards of practice within a culture where the staff provide excellent levels of care for young people. A Social Worker reported 'my young person has made progress; he is more active in the community and is kept busy with activities'. Good professional relationships promote multi-disciplinary working. The manager ensures that all social workers have comprehensive three monthly reports. Feedback from professionals reflect how highly valued the manager and staff are. An Independent Reviewing Officer reported that 'I am pretty impressed with the home; they have grasped the young person's needs and issues. They provide therapy, tailored to the young person's needs'. A Social Worker said 'my young person is in the best place; they manage difficult behaviour and work through issues'. Supervision is now regular and in line with the statement of purpose. During the transition to the new manager, there was some gaps in supervision frequency. The current manager has addressed this. Therapeutic thinking time compliments the reflective ethos of the home; however, supervision does not reflect discussions in relation to safeguarding young people. Staff demonstrate a commitment to educating young people in e-safety; one member of staff said 'young people need to be able to take risks for us to assess that risk'. The manager is highly thought of by staff who have experienced a number of changes in management recently. One said 'the manager is pretty good, the	

home is more settled, you can go to her because she is experienced'. Another reported 'we get all the training we need, we asked for specific training to meet a young person's needs and that was organised straight away'.

The manager is committed to developing the service by learning from external monitoring processes; she completes any actions identified. She is developing internal auditing, evaluation and analysis of records to improve practice.

What the inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

An **outstanding** children's home provides highly effective services that contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help and protection and care. Their progress exceeds expectations and is sustained over time.

A **good** children's home provides effective services that help, protect and care for children and young people and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

In a children's home that **requires improvement**, there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. The welfare of looked after children is safeguarded and promoted. Minimum requirements are in place, however, the children's home is not yet delivering good protection, help and care for children and young people.

A children's home that is **inadequate** is providing services where there are widespread or serious failures that create or leave children and young people being harmed or at risk of harm or result in children looked after not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

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 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 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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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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