

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 who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The home is operated by a private organisation. It offers therapeutic residential care.

The manager has been registered since 16 June 2020.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

We last visited this setting on 17 December 2019 to carry out an interim inspection. The report is published on our website.

Inspection dates: 25 to 26 May 2021

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **outstanding**

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **outstanding**

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: 17 December 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
17/12/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
16/07/2019	Full	Good
26/02/2019	Full	Inadequate
31/10/2017	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children flourish in this home. The team around each child helps them to make progress in all areas of their lives. Care is specific to each child, and clear assessments from the beginning enable a good understanding of their needs. Children said that they are happy with the care and support they receive. One child said, 'The staff are nice and help me,' and another said, 'It's amazing here.'

Children benefit from a stable staff group that understands the importance of positive relationships. Children develop trusting relationships with staff and as a result they feel able to express themselves clearly and openly. They also develop trusting and respectful relationships with each other and learn to give each other space to express their views.

Staff understand the importance of children's voices being heard. Because of this, children feel able to express their views and ideas for making the home a positive place to live. They do this through regular discussions around the dining table and through individual time with staff, giving a family feel to the environment.

Staff promote the importance of education. All children now attend school and have made significant progress. Staff support transitions to new schools and advocate that this happens at the child's pace, ensuring a better outcome. The progress of one child is remarkable, as they have transformed their education from daily tuition at the home to a full programme at school.

Staff are committed to supporting children with their identity. Children explore their ethnicity, culture and sexual identity and can discuss these with staff. Staff work to educate the children about the world around them and do this through discussions about issues in the news, for example Black Lives Matter. There is a warm and welcoming feel to the home, which has pictures on the wall of the children and information based on festivals that reflect the culture of the children and the wider community.

Staff recognise the value of continued family relationships and they support children to have time with family and those who are important to them, despite the impact of COVID-19 restrictions. Professionals expressed how impressed they are with the way that this home promotes time with family.

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

Children's safety and well-being are at the centre of all practice in this home. Children have detailed and up-to-date risk assessments that address all their needs. Clear, positive handling plans are in place, and all staff know how to work with each child. However, not all staff have received training according to the needs of all children.

Clear and consistent boundaries contribute to a feeling of well-being and security for children. Any incident is well managed and reviewed by staff, some of whom are therapeutically trained. Children are involved in this process, and staff give them the opportunity to reflect on the incident. Children feel able to write an apology for their behaviour and recognise the impact that this has on others in the home.

Incidents of physical intervention have decreased because of positive relationships and clear boundaries. The debriefs with staff and children promote learning. Staff receive training in behaviour management and confidently support children whose behaviour challenges. Sanctions are proportionate, and there are very few, which shows that children feel settled and secure.

Children do not go missing. Children are well supervised, and the positive relationships that exist between them and the staff enable them to express their feelings and any concerns that they might have.

Children benefit from an experienced staff team that is committed to meeting children's needs. Staff ably support children with their health needs and administer medication as needed. Staff receive training in medicine administration and regularly complete competency quizzes to keep them refreshed. As a result, no medication errors are made.

Good recruitment practices are in place. This ensures that only appropriately vetted individuals work at the home and provide care for the children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The manager shows an excellent understanding of the needs of all the children. She has ensured that the children make progress by motivating a staff team that adheres to the ethos of high expectations.

COVID-19 had an impact on children accessing school, but a committed and determined staff group, supported by an equally committed manager, ensured that the children's education did not suffer. The manager and staff supported children with online lessons and with activities that promoted learning, such as science experiments and word games.

The manager is effective in managing her staff. Staff receive high-quality and consistent supervision and appraisal that meet their professional development. The

manager is skilled in identifying areas for further staff development and putting effective plans in place to make improvements.

The manager has put in place a process for gathering feedback from children and parents. As a result, their voices are clear in reviews of the home, and any developments clearly reflect these views. The manager has high expectations of the independent visitor. Reviews and challenges that she has made about the quality of the visitor's reports have led to improvement in content and accuracy.

Leaders and managers respond efficiently to safeguarding incidents. Clear and detailed action plans mean that any incidents are dealt with quickly and any learning is captured to ensure continued development. For example, after an incident involving a member of staff, updated training was provided to the team and was attended by the manager.

The manager has shown a commitment to the promotion of difference. As a result of an earlier recommendation, two members of staff are involved in the company's equality and diversity working group. Supported by the manager, they have worked to introduce into the house books, films and menus that reflect diversity. They are currently exploring different faiths with the children.

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff can access appropriate facilities and resources to support their training needs and should understand the key role they play in the training and development of staff in the home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.11)

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: Lisa Speight

Inspector

Vevene Muhammad: Social Care Inspector

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