

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

The registered manager position is currently vacant.

Inspection dates: 26 to 27 April 2022

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: 25 May 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
25/05/2021	Full	Outstanding
17/12/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
16/07/2019	Full	Good
26/02/2019	Full	Inadequate

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children thrive in this home. All children are accepted for who they are. Care is individualised and specific to the needs of each child. The staff group is involved in the assessment of each child when they move in to the home and has a good knowledge of their needs within a short period of time. There is a continuous review of each child's progress and development. This means that their needs are well met. One child said 'I love it here' and another said 'they [staff] are considerate'.

Staff receive specialist training to ensure that every aspect of a child's needs is known and, subsequently, met by knowledgeable staff. The training extends to the wider staff and management team at other homes within the group to ensure that they too can meet the needs of the children should additional support be needed. Consequently, children are cared for by skilled and competent staff.

Children make excellent progress in all areas of their lives. Staff promote children's education well and work closely with their schools to ensure that their needs and subsequent progress are known. One child has made exemplary progress from a small nurturing group within their school, to a more structured and focused educational environment. There is a marked improvement in the educational progress of all the children.

Children value the therapy that they receive. They are supported by staff, who are involved in regular reviews of their emotional and psychological development. Because of this, children make remarkable progress in these areas. One child has made significant progress in managing their emotions, which has led to an improvement in their relationship with their peers.

Staff understand the importance of children's voices being heard. The daily house get-togethers mean that children can always express their views and share news from their days. Staff support children to use discussion aides to good effect. Consequently, children have learned to listen to each other's views and respectfully provide feedback and support.

Staff support children in all areas of their lives. Because of this, children have exceptional experiences at this home. Staff provide group activities while also encouraging children to develop their own interests. As a result, children attend Cubs, drama groups, sports clubs and even pop concerts.

Staff are committed to ensuring that new children are welcomed to the home. They support children to prepare for a new child and use house meetings to discuss how this will be done. Children are sensitive to the needs of the new child and have learned to welcome them while also giving them space to settle. This leads to children experiencing positive moves into and from the home.

Staff recognise the value of continued family relationships. They support children to have time with family and those who are important to them despite, in some cases, having to travel considerable distances. Consequently, children can maintain their identity and remain part of their community.

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

Children's safety and well-being are central to all practice in this home. Effective risk assessments are in place. These are detailed and specific to each child. For example, comprehensive risk assessments are in place around radicalisation and e-safety. Support and care are consistent. Children said that they feel safe and well cared for.

Children do not go missing. Clear and consistent procedures are in place and they are specific to individual children. For instance, one procedure is relevant to a child's developing independence and their need to explore the wider community and develop new friendships. This helps the child's confidence and improves their sense of self.

Clear and consistent boundaries contribute to a feeling of well-being and security for children. Effective positive behaviour plans are in place and staff know these well. All staff have received specialist training to manage challenging behaviour. Staff know how to use physical interventions when necessary. However, they do not always follow the instruction to refer to the specialist instructor when a child is held for more than the allowed period.

Good safeguarding arrangements are in place that help to protect children. Staff know how to keep children safe. They know how to respond to concerns about a member of staff. Staff are confident about the role of external professionals, including the designated officer.

Staff support children with their health needs and administer medication as needed. Staff receive training in complex medicine administration. One child can self-administer their medication under the close supervision of staff. This enables the child to have a level of independence and understanding of their ongoing health needs.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The registered manager left the home in February 2022. The new manager has applied to register with Ofsted. The manager shows an effective understanding of the needs of all the children despite being in the position for just a short time. She has started to make her mark in the home and models good practice to her staff team. She has high expectations for what the children can achieve and is committed to their continued progress.

Leaders and managers have a very clear understanding of children's progress. The specialist programme used in the home promotes strong progress and development

in all areas that will eventually lead to a suitable foster placement. Changes are made where needed, and where partner agencies have fallen short, the manager confidently chases them up. For example, when a child had no school place, the manager worked closely with relevant professionals to ensure that a tutor was provided. This meant that the child's education was not disrupted.

Leaders and managers are effective in managing staff and have provided a strong, supportive environment for them. Supervision is consistent and of a high standard. Staff said that they feel well supported and are impressed with the quality of the training that they receive. A new induction process is in place, which promotes well-prepared staff who are confident in caring for the children.

Leaders and managers know and understand the home's strengths and areas for development. They effectively address identified areas. Consequently, the home is achieving its stated aims and objectives, providing a high level of therapeutic care and support to children.

Leaders and managers have good relationships with a range of professionals. The manager liaises with them to ensure that there is all-round support to children in all areas of their lives. She contacted all the children's schools when she started at the home and is building strong relationships with all the therapists. The manager is strong in her promotion of the rights of children.

The manager has shown a continued commitment to the promotion of difference. She continues to ensure that books, films and menus brought into the house reflect diversity. A recent monthly theme was focused on neurodiversity and children have subsequently learned about the difference in how people communicate. The ethos of the home means that children can speak openly about their identity and confidently be themselves.

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
Restraint in relation to a child is only permitted for the purpose of preventing— injury to any person (including the child); serious damage to the property of any person (including the child); or a child who is accommodated in a secure children's home from absconding from the home. Restraint in relation to a child must be necessary and proportionate. (Regulation 20 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)) This specifically relates to referring extended physical interventions to the appropriate personnel for review as set out in the home's statement of purpose. Also, ensure that all staff are fully aware of this process and implement it as necessary.	15 July 2022

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: Post vacant

Inspector

Vevene Muhammad, Social Care Inspector

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