

SC368637

Registered provider: Channels and 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 three children who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The home is operated by a private organisation. It offers therapeutic residential care for children.

Inspection dates: 7 to 8 November 2017

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	outstanding
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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: 6 December 2016

Overall judgement at last inspection: sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: None.

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is outstanding because:

- Strong and thoughtful leadership and management from the registered manager guide the staff so that they can successfully implement the home's therapeutic ethos.
- The children respond to the calm, nurturing approach of the staff. Through the staff's consistent and predictable care, the children develop a sense of safety and security. They flourish and make considerable improvement in their emotional well-being, and consequently in their behaviour.
- Supported by a team of therapists and a clinical psychologist, the staff successfully implement research-led attachment practice. The staff understand the emotional needs of the children. This understanding, combined with meaningful, positive relationships and close supervision of the children, results in beneficial, focused and individualised support.
- Comprehensive care plans and risk assessments, based on detailed assessments of the children's needs, provide the staff with effective guidance to promote the children's safety, well-being and development.
- Managers are vigilant in monitoring the children's progress and in ensuring that appropriate support strategies are in place. They are keen to introduce new initiatives and continuously improve the care provided for the children to improve their future life chances.

The children's home's areas for development:

- The staff use bedroom door alarms to alert them when a child's door is opened at night. This practice has not been individually risk assessed to ensure that it is no more intrusive than necessary, and that it does not impinge on the child's need for privacy.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
06/12/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
26/05/2016	Full	Outstanding
09/02/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
19/10/2015	Full	Good

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 may only use devices for the monitoring or surveillance of children if the monitoring or surveillance is no more intrusive than necessary, having regard to the child's need for privacy. (Regulation 24(1)(d))	05/01/2018

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

The children are happy and relaxed living at the home. Through consistent and predictable therapeutic care, children who have complex emotional needs that result from serious attachment disorders are flourishing and making excellent progress. The children experience a warm, safe and nurturing environment, and develop emotionally. As their anxiety levels reduce, their behaviour improves. A social worker commented, '[Name of child] has grown in confidence and their demeanour has changed from wholly agitated to a much calmer and less stressed child.'

Daily targeted one-to-one key-work sessions are having a positive impact on the children's development. The staff prioritise the content of these sessions according to each child's specific needs. The staff receive explicit guidance on how to address issues. They review the topics monthly to ensure that the children are receiving relevant support.

The staff appreciate the importance of involving the children in decisions about their care and giving them opportunities to put forward their views. Through daily children's meetings, daily key-work sessions and one-to-one support from staff, the children express themselves. This day-to-day close contact fosters positive relationships as the children realise that staff listen and respond to their wishes and opinions. The children feel valued. Their confidence, self-esteem and emotional well-being have improved.

The children have good attendance at school, and are receiving education which is appropriate for their needs. One child has recently transferred to a local mainstream school to help her to achieve her academic potential. Communication and information sharing between the staff team and the school staff are effective.

Close monitoring of the children's physical and emotional health ensures that the staff identify the children's specific needs. The children receive suitable support in order that they can be healthier and happier. The staff work effectively with the organisation's therapy team, which identifies the children's attachment styles, and provides individual therapy and clear recommendations for strategies of support for the children. With a keen focus on play and therapeutic activities, the staff implement successful strategies to compensate for any developmental delays. Consequently, the children receive direct support to advance their psychological and emotional well-being, resulting in considerable improvements in their behaviour, and their ability to manage their emotions.

The children receive beneficial support from the staff to develop their independence. The staff ensure that this support is appropriate to each child's age and stage of development and this helps the children to achieve their long-term goals. Currently, the staff are supporting the children to make successful moves to foster placements in the future. The staff work proactively with the children's families to promote and maintain positive relationships.

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

Through applying a nurturing, therapeutic approach, the staff create a predictable and safe home for the children. Meaningful relationships between the staff and the children are the foundation of the staff's practice. The children settle at the home, respond to the close attention they receive from the staff and trust the staff to help them through their difficulties. The staff focus on recognising and understanding each child's particular needs. Guided by a team of therapists, they implement thoughtful, targeted support strategies to help the children develop and achieve their potential.

Detailed, but highly comprehensible, emotional-needs assessments and clinical psychology reports inform comprehensive care plans for each child. These, together with individualised risk assessments that are updated regularly, provide clear information that enables the staff to protect the children and promote their development.

The children currently living at the home are responding to the staff's therapeutic approach, and are able to talk about their emotions rather than demonstrate their feelings through challenging behaviour. Regular discussions with the therapy team enable the staff to explore and understand the meaning of the children's behaviour in the context of their past experiences. This understanding, combined with meaningful, positive relationships and close supervision of the children, enables the staff to de-escalate potentially difficult situations effectively. The children trust the staff and accept the support and direction they offer.

The staff use physical intervention only when necessary to prevent the risk of serious harm. Managers monitor and review incidents closely. Discussions between managers and the staff following such interventions are reflective, with the aim of identifying

adjustments to staff practice in order to provide positive support for the child.

Incidents of the children being missing are not frequent. The staff follow agreed procedures and protocols to safeguard the children and minimise the risk of harm. Appropriate follow-up discussions take place through independent return interviews and key-work discussions with the child, to raise their awareness of the risks they face and how to keep themselves safe.

Safeguarding training for the staff is wide-ranging. It includes all aspects of safeguarding, so that the staff are aware of the dangers children may experience. The staff respond appropriately to protect the children. The children receive ongoing information and guidance to help them to keep themselves safe.

The staff use bedroom door alarms to alert them when a child's door is opened at night. This practice has not been individually risk assessed to ensure that it is no more intrusive than is necessary, and that it does not impinge on the child's need for privacy.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

Strong, but calm and thoughtful, leadership from the registered manager guides the staff so they can successfully implement the home's therapeutic ethos. Through his commitment to this approach and his supportive and purposeful management of the staff, the children benefit and improve their future life chances.

By implementing research-led attachment practice, the staff provide the children with consistent care within a family-like environment, where they experience a stable base from which they can develop and fulfil their potential. The staff embrace this culture and share the managers' commitment to providing exemplary therapeutic care. A member of the staff commented, 'We provide a secure base for the children, a safe environment and the children thrive on this.'

Training for the staff is comprehensive and includes relevant staff development to ensure that they are competent and confident in providing a nurturing and therapeutic approach to the children's care. In addition to training, a team of qualified therapists works closely with the staff in 'therapeutic thinking time' sessions, to analyse the children's behaviour and emotions and formulate strategies of support that are appropriate to their specific attachment styles. Consequently, the children benefit from considered, focused and individualised support. Supervision for the staff is integral to improving practice and embedding the ethos of the home. Regular, individual supervision sessions are reflective and centred on the needs of the children and their safety. The managers are thorough and attentive in addressing any issues regarding the staff's practice in order to maintain high standards of care.

With an aspirational attitude, the registered manager is continuously monitoring the quality of the provision, with a focus on developing the staff's understanding of the children's needs and their practice, in order to promote positive outcomes. The

managers keep the children's progress under constant review and take appropriate action to ensure that they receive specific support to promote their development.

With the support of senior managers within the organisation, the registered manager and the staff are introducing new initiatives. The staff are receiving training to embed restorative practice. The managers are developing child-friendly care plans so that the children are able to have meaningful and relevant discussions about their goals, and are able to contribute constructively to plans for their care. Currently, the staff are receiving further training from an eminent academic in the field of therapeutic childcare, in order to advance their knowledge and understanding and so improve the children's emotional health and well-being.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and 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 whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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: SC368637

Provision sub-type: 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: Raymond Ashton

Inspector

Jan Hunnam: social care inspector

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