

SC407169

Registered provider: Choices Home For Children Limited

Interim inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is privately owned and run. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to four children who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

The previous registered manager cancelled their registration with Ofsted in January 2020.

Inspection date: 12 February 2020

Date of last inspection: 11 June 2019

Judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

This inspection

The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection

This home was judged good at the last full inspection.
At the interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has declined in effectiveness.

Since the last inspection, some young people at the home have made progress with their educational attendance and developing their leisure activities. Some of these activities have led young people to increase their confidence levels. These activities include swimming, indoor skydiving, trampolining and horse riding.

When young people have joined the home on a planned basis, there has been suitable information gathering and the managers have met young people before admission. However, an emergency admission failed to fully plan for one young person's continued educational attendance or to appreciate the expectations of the local authority or young person in this respect. In addition, it is not clear how the impact of risks that each young person presents will be effectively managed by the staff.

Young people are offered a warm welcome into the home and through the efforts of staff positive relationships are established.

Some young people benefit from regular therapeutic support. However, there has been a delay for one young person accessing this input. The challenge provided to the local authority by managers has not been timely or sufficiently rigorous.

The staff and managers have responded appropriately to increased concerns regarding some young people's behaviours. There is timely sharing of information with other agencies and multi-agency meetings are held to discuss those concerns. When allegations have been made by young people, these have been responded to and appropriately referred to the designated officer.

At the last inspection, a recommendation was made regarding the prompt repair and overall upkeep of the home. At this inspection, it was found that there was significant damage to plaster work, that the home presented as worn and tired-looking and that young people do not have sufficient storage for their belongings.

A previous requirement made regarding young people being offered care from a stable and consistent staff team has not been met. Since the last inspection, half of the staff team members have left the home, including the registered manager.

A recommendation made at the previous inspection with regard to room searches has not been met. It is not clear from documentation that when young people's belongings are removed by staff, when, or if, those belongings will be returned.

There is a workforce development plan in place that offers a structure for

appropriate induction to new staff working at the home. However, this document does not detail the time frame in which staff are to have achieved mandatory training prior to working on shift.

The current manager is aware of the weaknesses at the home and has begun to develop plans to improve on those areas.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/06/2019	Full	Good
18/06/2018	Full	Requires improvement to be good
06/12/2017	Full	Good
29/03/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person 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 must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child (Regulation 13 (1)(2)(e)).	31/05/2020
The registered person must ensure that each employee completes an appropriate induction (Regulation 33 (1)(a)).	30/04/2020
The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's need and supports them to fulfil their potential. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff— provide to children living in the home the physical necessities they need in order to live there comfortably (Regulation 6 (1)(2)(b)(vii)). In particular, that repairs to damaged plaster work are repaired promptly and redecorated, that children have sufficient storage for their belongings and that they are assisted to keep their rooms clean and tidy and that the kitchen floor is repaired or replaced.	12/03/2020
The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home (Regulation 14 (1)(a)). In particular, that the registered person should only accept placements for children where they are satisfied that the home can respond effectively to the child's assessed needs as recorded in the child's relevant plans and where they have fully considered the impact that the placement will have on the existing group of children.	12/03/2020
The health and well-being standard is that— the health and well-being needs of children are met.	31/03/2020

In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that each child has access to such dental, medical, nursing, psychiatric and psychological advice, treatment and other services as the child may require (Regulation 10 (1)(a) (2)(c)).	
In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff— if the registered person considers, or staff consider, a placing authority's or a relevant person's performance or response to be inadequate in relation to their role, challenge the placing authority or the relevant person to seek to ensure that each child's needs are met in accordance with the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 5 (c)).	31/03/2020

Recommendations

- Usually, rooms should only be searched if the child has been informed or asked their permission ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 17, paragraph 3.20).

In particular, that a clear rationale should be provided for the removal of any belongings and that their retention should be reviewed.

Information about this inspection

This inspection focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full 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: SC407169

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Choices Home For Children Limited

Registered provider address: 31 Wellington Road, Nantwich, Cheshire CW5 7ED

Responsible individual: Susan Mackay

Registered manager: post vacant

Inspector

Pauline Yates, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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