

SC426530

Registered provider: My Choice Children's Homes Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is run by a private organisation and provides care for up to 4 children who experience social and/or emotional difficulties. At the time of the inspection, 4 children were living in the home.

The manager registered with Ofsted in July 2023.

Staff working in the home are referred to as adults in this report.

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 January 2026

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

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 23 July 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
23/07/2024	Full	Good
17/10/2023	Full	Good
11/10/2022	Full	Good
22/06/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The home is warmly decorated, and children's bedrooms are highly personalised. Children's views are considered in decisions about changes to the home, and the children feel a sense of belonging. Children proudly display their photos in communal areas and their bedrooms. Overall, the home environment helps the children to feel comfortable and nurtured.

Children receive highly personalised care. The adults understand the children's needs well and tailor their approach accordingly. Children enjoy spending time with the adults, and they experience enriching activities such as visits to London or to local cultural festivals. They are aware of local amenities and the community events that they can attend.

Adults help the children to express their identities in ways that are important to them. The adults seek external professional advice when necessary to help them to respond to the needs of the children; bespoke training enables the adults to support the children's individual needs.

Children have transition plans for when they move into the home. Plans include an overnight stay before moving in permanently. This means that children can meet other children and adults from the home to help them feel more at ease when actually moving in. However, not all statutory paperwork has been in place when some children have been admitted to the home.

Adults encourage the children to value their education. All children are enrolled in education placements suited to their individual needs. When children do not attend school full time, they are supported with additional tutoring in the home. Adults work well with schools to ensure that the children have the support they need to maintain their places and overcome barriers to attendance.

Children move out of the home in a well-planned and flexible way. When it was not appropriate to give a child extended notice of their move, the manager ensured that the child understood why they were leaving and where they were going, and they were supported to have positive endings with important people in their lives.

The team of adults is diverse, enabling children to benefit from a range of perspectives as they learn about the world around them and social differences.

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

Adults promote positive behaviour through an ethos of trust and shared responsibility. They celebrate children's achievements and milestones proudly and in ways that are

specific and motivating to each child. As a result, there have been no formal consequences issued to children since the last inspection.

If children are vulnerable when accessing the internet, they are supported to learn about how to keep themselves safe online. Restrictions are individualised and proportionate, and only used when additional education or guidance is required. This means that children can access the benefits of the online community safely.

Recruitment is managed safely, in line with statutory guidance. This minimises the risks of children being cared for by unsuitable adults.

The use of restraint is extremely rare. When it is required, it is used for the least amount of time and in the least restrictive way. The manager ensures that both adults and children are spoken to after the incident so that they can identify any opportunities for learning or raise concerns.

When children go missing from the home, they experience a well-coordinated response from the adults. The adults work with the police and others in the children's networks to locate them and ensure their safe return. Adults work efficiently with placing authorities to ensure that children are offered an opportunity to speak to someone independent about their time away from the home.

Adults understand children's risks and vulnerabilities. They take effective action to address concerns about children's safety. However, records of one incident of self-harm did not include obtaining medical advice following the event.

Allegations are managed well. The manager documents correspondence with the local authority designated officer effectively and acts on the guidance given. This ensures that children feel heard and listened to.

Regular and effective communication with external professionals supports the ongoing management of risk.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is led by a capable manager who is committed to providing a secure and nurturing environment for children. She is passionate about children receiving the best outcomes. Her advocacy for children is exemplary. She successfully challenges other professionals when required to ensure that they are fulfilling their roles and acting in the children's best interest. This has resulted in several positive outcomes for children, notably around children's education provision and their attendance.

Adults are complimentary about the support that they receive from managers and say that their induction and training prepare them well for their roles. They have the skills needed to meet the needs of the children who live in the home. When there are

emerging needs, managers arrange for additional training. All mandatory training is up to date.

Adults have regular team meetings; these encourage consistent reflection and learning. Reviews of the workforce development plan take place periodically to support the development of the home and to check progress.

Leaders and managers have systems in place to share significant incidents with external professionals. However, the systems are not effective at ensuring that all regulatory notifications are made within the required timescales.

Children's voices are clearly heard in the setting, and they have a range of opportunities to share their views. This has led to improvements in the home's decoration, children's bedrooms being more personalised and changes to allowances for children to access technology.

Feedback from families and professionals is generally very positive. They say that communication is good and that the manager is a strong advocate for children. One professional noted that communication has been 'strong, clear and child focused'. They shared that the progress one child has made in the home is a 'true testament to the nurturing environment, high-quality relationships with staff and the consistent child-centred approach taken by the home.'

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff have the relevant skills and knowledge to be able to respond to the health needs of the children. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 34, paragraph 7.12)
- The registered person should have a system in place so that all serious events are notified within 24 hours to the appropriate people and that notifications to Ofsted are sent without delay. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 63, paragraph 14.13)
- The registered person should have systems and monitoring in place to ensure that statutory documentation is obtained for each child placed at the home; this relates to care plans from the local authority. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 56, paragraph 11.5)

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: SC426530

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: My Choice Children's Homes Limited

Registered provider address: Unit 3a Mill Green Business Estate, Mill Green Road, Haywards Heath, West Sussex RH16 1XQ

Responsible individual: Dawn Ives

Registered manager: Siobhan Coleshill

Inspectors

Maria Calway-Kennedy, Social Care Inspector
Glen Strowbridge, Social Care Inspector

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