

2553543

Registered provider: Social Care Services (Clayton) Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is a privately run children's home that provides care for up to three children. The home's statement of purpose states that children living in this home may have a range of social and emotional difficulties.

The manager was registered with Ofsted in April 2020.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021.

Inspection dates: 8 and 9 February 2022

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

How well children and young people are helped and protected requires improvement to be good

The effectiveness of leaders and managers requires improvement to be good

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

Date of last inspection: not previously inspected

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: not applicable

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children make good progress in key areas of their lives. Children are happy and like living here. The children have lived in the home since it opened. This stability has provided them with a sense of permanence and belonging. Both children have pets which they enjoy looking after.

Children regularly attend and achieve in education. One child has had some time off school. The manager and staff have worked closely with school professionals to support the child to return to education. One child has received an award as the longest serving student at her school. She is on track to achieve her GCSEs and has already secured an apprenticeship due to start in September.

Both children have their individual health needs met. This includes their emotional and mental health needs. One child would not engage with child and adolescent mental health services, so staff had monthly meetings to discuss strategies to work with the child. The manager and staff team work closely with external support agencies to try to understand the individual needs of children, to ensure that they received the right care and support to meet their needs.

Children's time with family members is actively promoted and supported by staff. Children, where possible, enjoy overnight stays with family members. This helps children to retain their relationships with people who are important to them.

Staff actively promote children's peer relationships. They have got to know one child's friends and facilitate activities for them at the weekend such as roller skating. Staff are welcoming and children can have friends visit them in the home. This means that children have a safe and friendly environment in which to socialise and engage in positive activities.

Children's independence is promoted in line with their individual plans. One social worker said the staff are 'driving independence and are being creative with future plans'. The manager plans to provide ongoing support to one child when she moves on from the home to live independently. This support and approach will help the child to positively transition from the home to independent living.

Children's bedrooms are appropriately furnished and decorated to the children's tastes. The home is large, and children have enough space for time alone and privacy. However, some areas of the home require fresh decoration, and cleaning of the home could be improved.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

Children have individual, up-to-date risk management plans which effectively address children's known risks. Staff understand the risks, and the strategies identified in the plans to reduce risks are clear and effective. Where an identified risk is no longer relevant to a child, these risks are removed from their plans with a clear rationale. These risk management plans are used effectively to help children feel safe and protected.

Since living in the home, risks for children have reduced. One child was identified as being at high risk of child sexual exploitation and would regularly go missing. Since living at the home, the risk of child sexual exploitation has reduced for this child and there have been no incidents of missing from home episodes since July 2020.

Recruitment of new staff is done safely with all the relevant checks being completed. These safe recruitment procedures make sure that children are protected by preventing unsuitable adults from working in the home. Children can identify a trusted adult in the staff team and say that they are able to talk to staff about things that are worrying them.

There has been one incident in the home which has led to a physical intervention. However, recording of the incident did not identify that a physical intervention took place. As such, the correct procedures were not followed, meaning that the child and staff involved in the incident did not have the opportunity to reflect on the incident and identify any learning from the incident.

Three allegations regarding staff have been made in the reporting period. Two allegations have not been dealt with in line with child protection procedures. For one allegation, there is no record of discussions with the staff member around the allegation and the rationale for the action taken, following the outcome of the investigation. This staff member has now left the home. On another occasion, an incident was not recognised as an allegation and so the appropriate procedure was not followed. These two allegations took place during the period that the registered manager was away from work. A requirement has been made.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The registered manager has recently returned to the home after a period of maternity leave. There was an interim manager in post; however, he did not apply to register in a timely manner, resulting in the home being without a registered manager for nine months. The staff team is supporting children to achieve good outcomes. However, there are weaknesses in the leadership and management of the home.

The home is suitably staffed. There is a long-standing and consistent staff team. This provides the children with continuity of care. Staff are all working towards their level 3 qualification. They have all received relevant training.

Staff receive supervision regularly. However, these discussions are not always reflective. This means that staff do not have the opportunity to review incidents or identify improvements in the quality of care provided for children.

Lack of effective monitoring means that the manager has not always recognised the failure to follow the correct procedure, to safeguard children. Ineffective monitoring means that opportunities to learn from incidents and develop practice can be missed.

The manager has failed to notify Ofsted when there has been an allegation about staff. This hinders Ofsted's ability to review the information in notifications to ensure that the provider has taken the necessary steps.

The rota does not currently record the actual hours worked by staff. This means that an accurate record is not available should there be any safeguarding concerns raised in the future.

The statement of purpose should be kept up to date and any changes must be sent to Ofsted. A requirement has been raised in relation to this regulation.

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, the 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 protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child; help each child to understand how to keep safe; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)) This is specifically in relation to child protection procedures not being consistently followed when children make allegations about staff.	22 March 2022

The registered person must— keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16 (3)(a)(b)) This is specifically in relation to the updated statement of purpose being sent to Ofsted.	22 March 2022
The registered provider must appoint a person to manage the children's home if— there is no registered manager in respect of the home; and the registered provider— is an organisation or a partnership; does not satisfy regulation 28; or is not, or does not intend to be, in day-to-day charge of the home. If the registered provider appoints a person to manage the home, the registered provider must, without delay, give HMCI notice of— the name of the person so appointed; and the date on which the appointment takes effect. (Regulation 27 (1)(a)(b)(i)(ii)(iii) (2)(a)(b)) This relates to there being no registered manager in post for 9 months.	22 March 2022
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation; an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious; there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there;	22 March 2022

a child protection enquiry involving a child — is instigated; or concludes (in which case, the notification must include the outcome of the child protection enquiry); or there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(a)(b)(c)(d)(i)(ii)(e)) This is specifically in relation to ensuring that Ofsted is notified of allegations against staff.	
Schedule 4 sets out the other information that the registered person must keep in relation to a children's home. The registered person must— maintain in the home the records in Schedule 4. (Regulation 37 (1)(2)(a)) The provider needs to record on rosters all hours that all staff have worked, including the registered manager.	22 March 2022

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that supervision allows staff the opportunity to reflect on their own feelings and behaviours, and how these may affect the children they care for. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 39, paragraph 8.15)

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: 2553543

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Social Care Services (Clayton) Limited

Registered provider address: Social Care Services Group, 31 Shaw Road,
Stockport SK4 4AG

Responsible individual: Rebecca Doherty

Registered manager: Samantha Kean

Inspector

Rachael Crook, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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