

SC357133

Registered provider: Social Care Services 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.

The home provides care and accommodation for up to three young people, boys and girls, who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since January 2013.

Inspection dates: 3 to 4 May 2018

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: 30 January 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
30/01/2018	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
15/11/2017	Full	Requires improvement to be good
26/07/2017	Full	Inadequate
07/02/2017	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(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
12.—(1) The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. (2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— (a) that staff— (i) 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. (Regulation 12(1)(a) and (2)(i))	29/06/2018
When the independent person is carrying out a visit, the registered person must help the independent person if they consent, to interview in private such of the children, their parents, relatives and persons working at the home as the independent person requires. (Regulation 44(1)(2)(a))	29/06/2018

Recommendations

- The registered person should have a workforce plan which can fulfil the workforce related requirements of regulation 16, schedule 1 (paragraphs 19 and 20). The plan should be updated to include any new training and qualifications completed by staff while working at the home, and used to record ongoing training and continuing professional development needs of staff – including the home's manager. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.8)
- Regulations 35–39 detail the records that must be kept in children's homes. This relates to ensuring that the home's records are well maintained. ('Guide to the children's home regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.3)
- Children should have access to a computer and the internet to support their education and learning, unless there are specific safeguarding reasons why this would be inappropriate. In such cases, the home should consider whether and how it can support the child to access a computer and the internet safely. ('Guide to the children's home regulations including the quality standards', page 29, paragraph 5.19)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the last inspection, two children have moved into the home. Staff are building positive, secure and trusting relationships with both children. Children benefit from good-quality care and are responding to clear structures and boundaries. Consequently, they are making good progress from their initial starting points. One child said: 'It is awesome here. Staff actually care, listen to me and talk to me. If I ask for something, it gets done. All staff are understanding and [Name] always has something to say to make me feel better.'

Staff have high aspirations for children. They are proactive in ensuring that children who previously struggled to engage in any education are now attending. Staff help children to adopt better routines, such as going to bed and getting up early. This promotes positive educational outcomes for individual children. However, children do not have access to a computer in the home, which limits their learning opportunities outside of their educational placements.

Children live in a healthy environment that promotes both their physical and emotional well-being. Staff have established good links with specialist services to ensure that children receive the right help and support. Staff helped one child to make a 'happy box', which has lots of sensory items in it, and which they utilise when feeling low. The child explained to the inspector that they also have a safe word they use to let staff know when they are in need of support. They said that the staff then sit with them, or take them for a drive or walk until they are feeling better. This is helping them to develop more effective coping strategies when they are struggling to manage their emotions.

Regular house meetings ensure that children can contribute their views on the day-to-day running of the home. Furthermore, individual key-worker sessions support children to discuss their thoughts and feelings on any issues that are affecting them. Children have a positive choice in how they spend their time.

Placing authority social workers are kept up to date regarding children's progress through regular updates, emails and telephone conversations. A placing social worker said: 'The placement is very on the ball ... This is the most settled she has been ... They have invested in her compared to the other placements she has been in ... This is a very good placement.'

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

Since coming to live at the home, children are making good progress in reducing their risk-taking behaviours, such as going missing from home and misusing drugs and alcohol. Children spoken to confirmed that they feel safe in the home. In general, they said that they get along with their peers.

Despite staff successfully reducing known risks for children, some shortfalls in the risk assessments were identified. For example, one child's risk assessment identifies them as being at high risk from drugs and alcohol. However, more information is required in guiding staff when to seek medical advice or assistance, should the child return home under the influence of alcohol or illegal substances. Furthermore, staff should give full consideration to the information in children's local authority documents when assessing levels of risk at the point of placement.

Consideration is given to the matching of children in order to minimise the risk of unnecessary placement moves as a result of incompatibility. A comprehensive impact assessment is undertaken prior to a new placement to ensure that the home can meet the needs of each child.

There have been two incidents of children going missing from the home since the interim inspection. There are effective protocols between the home and police to help ensure that a child returns home quickly and safely.

Consistency of care is crucial to helping children develop socially acceptable behaviour. Positive behaviour management strategies focus on rewards and a restorative approach. Consequently, there have been no incidents of restraint or sanctions imposed since the last inspection. Furthermore, there have been no safeguarding concerns or incidents of bullying.

Children are protected by the home's recruitment practices. Staff are appropriately vetted prior to coming to work at the home. Safeguarding training ensures that staff have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities in keeping children safe.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The oversight and monitoring of the home have improved since the last inspection, and there is a much stronger focus on improving practice in the home. The home is much more settled, and staff morale has significantly improved. The manager is making better decisions about children coming to live at the home, and this has enabled the staff team to focus on meeting the needs of the children.

The home has an independent visitor who undertakes monthly visits. The independent visitor speaks to the children and staff during their visits. However, they do not seek the views of parents, relatives and stakeholders on the conduct of the home.

The home is adequately resourced and is meeting the aims and objectives outlined in the statement of purpose. There are sufficient numbers of staff to meet the needs of the children. Staff reported that they are well supported and receive regular supervision. At the last inspection, the manager had made some progress in developing the workforce development plan. However, this is still in the early stages of development, and, therefore, the recommendation is repeated. In addition, further work is required to ensure that the home's records are well maintained. For example, the inspector found that a child's risk assessment contained the name of another child who does not live at

the home. There is also conflicting information in another child's records relating to their being asthmatic. Therefore, the recommendation regarding record accuracy is also repeated.

The manager has addressed the one requirement and two recommendations raised at the last inspection. Professionals are very complimentary about the quality of care provided by the home. A professional recently emailed the manager and staff to thank them for all their hard work. It is evident that outcomes for children are improving as a result of the help and support they are receiving.

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: SC357133

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Social Care Services Limited

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

Responsible individual: Stephen Davitt

Registered manager: Raymond Ashton

Inspector

Michelle Bacon, social care inspector

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