

SC357133

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. The home provides care for up to three children who may experience social and/or emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in August 2020.

Inspection dates: 8 and 9 November 2022

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 3 August 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
03/08/2021	Full	Good
04/09/2019	Full	Good
25/02/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
03/05/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

When children move in and out of the home, staff ensure that this is well planned. For children moving in, the manager considers the information about their history and the needs of the children who already live in the home. However, the manager and staff are not aware of the local offer, which sets out the support available for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This is a missed opportunity to access additional resources for children.

Children's plans are updated regularly. Any changes to the plans are discussed with children and staff so that everyone knows and understands what support children require daily. However, there is little information about the steps staff have taken to secure good progress and outcomes for the children in health, education, relationships, behaviour and keeping themselves safe. The children's information does not include their starting points and staff have not recorded what they have done to secure good outcomes. For example, the staff have worked extremely well with education professionals to secure placements for the children but education plans only say which school they attend. As a result, there is little information on how this progress was achieved. Therefore, this does not show the child's journey throughout their stay at the home.

Children have various opportunities to express their opinions, views and feelings through regular direct-work sessions, house meetings and daily chats. They said that staff are 'good', 'approachable' and 'do their best' for them. Each child could identify several members of staff to go to if they had a worry or concern, or for support. One child said, 'Staff are great and they listen to me when I am worried.' However, on the day of inspection, staff would not tell one child where the manager had gone with another child. This led to the child's anxieties being raised. When the inspector spoke with the child, it was clear that some staff had shared confidential information with them about another incident.

Staff support children to attend regular health appointments. When children require additional support for their emotional, mental or physical health, staff ensure that assessments are quickly arranged. This means that children's health needs are assessed and that children receive the help that they need.

Children have different arrangements for keeping in touch with people who are important to them. Individual plans give staff clear information and guidance when supporting any visits. This focus on positive time with family means that important relationships are maintained and built on.

The home is warm, welcoming and decorated to a good standard. Children said that they are fully involved in decisions about the home, such as the decoration and the choice of soft furnishings. They said that they help to keep the home clean and tidy. This shows that children are building skills that will assist them in later life.

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

The children said that they feel safe and protected in the home. The manager and staff help the children to understand risks and how to keep themselves safe. As a result, some children's risks have reduced over time.

Children's risk assessments and plans highlight all known risks that are recorded in children's local authority documents. Staff know what the agreed strategies are to de-escalate situations, and there is clear guidance for staff to follow if an incident occurs. This means that staff are consistent in how they support children.

Staff use strong safeguarding practice that promotes the welfare and safety of the children. Staff are trained in safeguarding and additional subjects such as child exploitation, county lines, e-safety and radicalisation. This means that they have the skills and knowledge to identify any potential concerns. Further to this, when talking with the inspector, several staff members confidently demonstrated their understanding of the action that they would take if there was a concern.

The manager follows all safeguarding procedures if there is an allegation or concern. Good records show the actions taken and the outcome. A safeguarding professional said, 'This home is one of the best in our area. The manager is excellent at sharing information and in ensuring that children are fully safeguarded.'

Children have been reported as missing from home. Missing-from-home procedures are in place, which staff understand and follow. Staff work in partnership with other agencies responsible for safeguarding, including the police. Independent return home interviews are provided to help gain a greater understanding of the reasons why children go missing.

Positive behaviour is continually promoted and rewarded. Children did not feel that consequences were fair. However, staff are working with the children to explore the reasons behind any differences in consequences issued, due to the difference in their ages and agreements their care plan. Records show that consequences are proportionate. Children said that they enjoy working towards their incentives and rewards.

Good recruitment and selection processes ensure that staff are suitable to work with children. Staff complete regular health and safety checks to ensure that the home environment is physically safe and secure.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is experienced. There is a stable staff team that provides continuity of care for the children. Several professionals said that the manager is very approachable, a good communicator and leads the staff team by example.

The statement of purpose, which is kept under review, clearly sets out the home's ethos, which is centred around the needs of the children.

The manager creates a supportive environment for staff, where they can express their views. Most of the staff hold a recognised childcare qualification and other staff are at different stages of completing a qualification. Staff enjoy their work and they work well together as a team.

Staff receive regular one-to-one supervision which gives them the opportunity to reflect on their practice and identify areas or opportunities for their development. In addition to this, staff have regular team meetings and daily handovers. This means that they can pass on relevant key information and provide continuity of care for the children.

All staff undertake mandatory training as part of their induction and this is refreshed regularly. Staff access a broad range of training courses to enhance their skills, knowledge and practice. However, staff have not received bereavement training to help them support each other and the children.

The manager and staff work collaboratively with a range of agencies and professionals who are involved in the children's care. When services have been slow to respond or not available, the manager has challenged the shortfalls effectively. This means that the children receive the services that they need in a timely manner.

The manager has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the care provided. The manager makes effective use of internal and external monitoring to identify and address any shortfalls quickly. However, his internal monitoring does not identify any improvements or developments for the future. This is a missed opportunity to build on the good work that staff do.

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 positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on— mutual respect and trust. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)) Specifically, the registered person should ensure that there is a balance between giving children information to ease their anxieties and not breaching confidentiality.	31 December 2022

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that managers and staff are aware of the local offer setting out the support available for children with special educational needs or disabilities. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 26, paragraph 5.4)
- The registered person should ensure that information from external and internal monitoring is used effectively to consider future developments or improvements for the home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24)
- The registered person should ensure that staff receive bereavement training. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.11)
- The registered person should ensure that the home's records on each child represent a significant contribution to their life history. This is specifically in relation to ensuring that the steps taken by staff to secure good progress and outcomes are clearly recorded in the children's records. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.5)

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: SC357133

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Social Care Services (Clayton) Limited

Registered provider address: 31 Shaw Road, Heaton Moor, Stockport SK4 4AG

Responsible individual: Annabella Foulkes

Registered manager: George Beesley

Inspector

Pam Nuckley, Social Care Regulatory Inspector

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