

# 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 that provides care and accommodation for up to three young people who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

**Inspection dates:** 15 to 16 November 2017

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| <b>Overall experiences and progress of children and young people,</b> taking into account | <b>requires improvement to be good</b> |
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| How well children and young people are helped and protected | requires improvement to be good |
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| The effectiveness of leaders and managers | requires improvement to be good |
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The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

**Date of last inspection:** 26 July 2017

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** inadequate

### Enforcement action since last inspection:

Four compliance notices were issued in relation to regulation 10, health and well-being; regulation 12, protection of children; regulation 13, leadership and management and regulation 34, policies for the protection of children. Ofsted carried out a compliance monitoring visit on 5 September 2017 and found that the provider had taken action to improve. The notices were met.

## Key findings from this inspection

The children's home requires improvement to be good because:

- The staff team is still not receiving regular supervision that supports their professional development.
- Several requirements and recommendations made at the last inspection in July 2017 have not been fully addressed.
- When young people are not in school during the day, they are denied access to their bedrooms.
- Despite the efforts of the staff, they have been unable to effect positive change for the young people, particularly in relation to cannabis misuse, anger management and criminality.
- Staff work hard to keep young people safe and help them to think about the choices they make. However, the young people continue to put themselves and staff at risk by smoking in their bedrooms. Measures such as handing in lighters at bedtime have proved ineffective.
- The manager's report on the quality of care provides some analysis and evaluation of the quality of care that young people receive. However, the report does not clearly identify any actions required for the next six months or how these will be addressed.

The children's home's strengths:

- There are improvements in the recording of medication administration. Staff clearly record the time that they administer a young person's medication. This means that the manager can be satisfied that young people have received their medication as prescribed.
- One young person has formed positive relationships with key members of staff. Observations of interactions confirm that they enjoy spending time with staff.
- The provider was able to demonstrate that effective action has been taken in response to a recent allegation made against a member of staff.
- Staff work well with health and educational professionals to try and improve outcomes for the young people.

## Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement      |
|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------------|
| 26/07/2017      | Full            | Inadequate                |
| 07/02/2017      | Interim         | Sustained effectiveness   |
| 11/05/2016      | Full            | Good                      |
| 11/02/2016      | Interim         | Declined in 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   |
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| <p>8(1) The education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so.</p> <p>(2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>(a) that staff—</p> <p>(viii) help a child who is excluded from school, or who is of compulsory school age but not attending school to access educational and training support throughout the period of exclusion or non-attendance and to return to school as soon as possible. (Regulation 8 (1) (2))</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | 01/01/2018 |
| <p>14. (1) The care planning standard is that children—</p> <p>(a) receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and</p> <p>(b) have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home.</p> <p>(2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>(a) that children are admitted to the home only if their needs are within the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home's statement of purpose;</p> <p>(b) that arrangements are in place to—</p> <p>(i) ensure the effective induction of each child into the home;</p> <p>(ii) manage and review the placement of each child in the home; and</p> <p>(iii) plan for, and help, each child to prepare to leave the home or to move into adult care in a way that is consistent with arrangements agreed with the child's placing authority. (Regulation 14).</p> | 01/01/2018 |
| <p>6.—(1) The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who—</p> <p>(a) understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children;</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | 01/01/2018 |

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| <p>(b) use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential.</p> <p>(2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>(b) ensure that staff—</p> <p>(ii) protect and promote each child's welfare.</p> <p>Specifically that staff identify a solution to young people smoking in their bedrooms. (Regulation 6)</p>                                                                                                                                                              |            |
| <p>11. (1) The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on—</p> <p>(a) mutual respect and trust;</p> <p>(b) an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and</p> <p>(c) positive responses to other children and adults. (Regulation 11)</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | 01/01/2018 |
| <p>The registered person must ensure that—</p> <p>(b) children can access all appropriate areas of the children's home's premises; and</p> <p>(c) any limitation placed on a child's privacy or access to any area of the home's premises—</p> <p>(i) is intended to safeguard each child accommodated in the home;</p> <p>(ii) is necessary and proportionate;</p> <p>(iii) is kept under review and, if necessary, revised; and</p> <p>(iv) allows children as much freedom as is possible when balanced against the need to protect them and keep them safe. (Regulation 21)</p> | 01/01/2018 |
| <p>The registered person must ensure that all employees receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33(4)(b))</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | 01/01/2018 |
| <p>The registered person must review the appropriateness and suitability of the location of the premises used for the purposes of the children's home at least once in each calendar year taking into account the requirement in regulation 12(2)(c) (the protection of children standard). (Regulation 43(1)(2))</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | 01/01/2018 |

## 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 the ongoing training and continuing professional development needs of staff – including the home's manager. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.8)

- Regulations 35-39 detail the records that must be kept in children's homes. All children's case records (regulation 36) must be kept up to date and stored securely whilst they remain in the home. Ensure accurate, succinct and evaluative record keeping. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.3)
- Ensure the review of the quality of care report clearly identifies any actions required for the next six months and how those actions will be addressed. The whole review process and the resulting report should be used as a tool for continuous improvement in the home. ('Guide to children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.4)

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good**

The two young people who were living at the home during the last inspection in July 2017 continue to live at the home. No new young people have been admitted to the home since then. Following the last inspection, there is a mixed picture in terms of actual progress and experiences for the two young people. Despite the efforts of the staff they have been unable to effect positive change for the young people, particularly in relation to cannabis misuse, anger management and criminality.

The registered manager has served notice on one young person's placement because of the negative impact they are having on the other young person. Both young people are regularly going missing together and smoking cannabis. One young person has caused further damage to the home, resulting in them receiving a youth offending order.

The staff have been very proactive, providing young people with the opportunity to access specialist help and services, particularly in relation to their cannabis misuse. However, the young people have refused to engage with these services. The staff have had some success in getting one young person to attend some of their routine health appointments, including visiting the dentist. That said, the young person is refusing to go back and have the dental treatment they need. A placing social worker said, 'They [staff] have been very honest about the dilemma they've got with him... they have tried to engage him from the beginning... his missing from homes have significantly reduced'.

Since the last inspection, a young person is engaging with workers in respect of their emotional and psychological health. The staff have provided appropriate encouragement and support to prompt the young person into attending their appointments.

Staff have worked well with education professionals, such as the virtual head, to try and improve young people's educational outcomes. They have worked tirelessly to motivate one young person to engage in some form of education or training with limited success. This impedes any future employment and career opportunities. Another young person

has received a number of exclusions due to their behaviour. Staff provide some learning opportunities when the young person is not in school. That said, much of their school day remains unstructured. This requirement is repeated. A social worker said, 'Up until this issue with education, his risks had reduced... he needs the structure of school. So while his risk-taking behaviour is quite high at the moment, the staff can see he is workable when he hasn't the negative influences around him. They [staff] have not found the right mix yet.'

One young person has formed positive relationships with key members of staff. Observations of interactions confirm that they enjoy spending time with staff. Records of key-work sessions show that staff discuss expectations of behaviour with the young people. However, the house meeting minutes lack detail and context. This makes it difficult for the reader to understand the content of these meetings.

There are improvements in the recording of medication administration. Staff clearly record the time that they administer a young person's medication. This means that the manager can be satisfied that young people have received their medication as prescribed.

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

At the monitoring visit in September 2017, the provider was able to demonstrate that they had taken steps to improve staff responses to all safeguarding concerns. Staff's roles and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding practices were revisited, including referring allegations to outside agencies without delay. The provider was able to demonstrate that effective action has been taken in response to a recent allegation made against a member of staff. The allegation has been dealt with in line with safeguarding procedures, including a referral to the designated officer. There is also a clear audit trail of events, including actions taken in response to allegations. This practice ensures that the welfare and safety of young people are protected.

Staff work hard to keep young people safe and help them to think about the choices they make. However, the young people continue to put themselves and staff at risk by smoking in their bedrooms. Measures such as handing in lighters at bedtime have proved ineffective. Therefore this requirement is repeated.

Risk assessments contain sufficient detail and guidance for staff to follow. This means that risks are clearly identified, with strategies in place to manage and minimise incidents. A local fire safety officer undertook a visit to the home to ensure that it is compliant with fire safety regulations. Records of fire drills make it clear what time a drill took place. This means that the manager can monitor when the staff and young people last took part in a night-time drill, so they know how to evacuate the building safely at night.

Young people regularly go missing from the home. The staff liaise well with the police and placing authorities and share any concerns appropriately. Young people have access

to an independent person interview following any episode of going missing. An independent person who was visiting a young person confirmed that the staff are 'responsive' to concerns about young people's missing behaviour. However, it is not always clear from the missing from home records whether a visit has taken place; this is more of an administrative error.

When young people are not in school, they are denied access to their bedrooms during the day. Communal rooms, including the lounges and kitchen, are fitted with locks. The kitchen is locked at night. The manager explained that this is a safety measure to prevent young people from getting up to light their cigarettes on the cooker. These measures have not been risk assessed. Furthermore, the locking of doors restricts young people's freedom of movement around the home.

Since the last inspection, the home is now reporting any serious concerns to HMCI. This enables the regulator to monitor any action taken to promote the welfare and safety of young people.

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

The registered manager has been in post since November 2012. He is suitably qualified and experienced. The registered manager has, for the most part, a better understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the home, and is committed to improving practice. The registered manager and staff need time to implement the improvements they have identified, for example building on and improving working relationships with external agencies, such as the looked after children's nurse and designated officer to promote young people's welfare and safety.

The numbers of staff on duty are sufficient to meet the needs of the young people. The gender balance of staff in the home provides appropriate role models for the young people. Staff are committed to delivering a good standard of care to young people. However, only three out of eight staff are suitably qualified, including the registered manager. The remaining staff are either undertaking training or registered with training providers, so they can obtain their professional qualification. A recommendation raised at the last inspection to ensure that all that staff receive regular supervision has not been met. A requirement has been raised in respect of this. Furthermore, there is still no workforce development plan to identify what training staff have undertaken, what needs updating or whether new training has been scheduled. This recommendation has been reissued.

The manager acknowledges that the quality of records requires further improvement. For example, the minutes of staff meetings are very brief and do not demonstrate how the staff team is helping to develop and improve the service. Furthermore, the home's locality risk assessment has not been reviewed or updated since August 2016. The health and safety file needs updating as there are a number of risk assessments in there that are out of date. For example, there are risk assessments dating back to 2014 and 2015 in there. This has the potential to cause confusion for the staff.

A requirement made in relation to complaints has been met. There have been a number of complaints made by the young people and neighbours. Records show that the manager has thoroughly investigated the complaints and found a suitable resolution.

The manager's report on the quality of care provides some analysis and evaluation of the quality of care that young people receive. However, the report does not clearly identify any actions required for the next six months or how these will be addressed. Furthermore, he has not recognised how the practice of locking doors restricts a young person's liberty.

## **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 (Clayton) 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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