

SC366343

Registered provider: Maple Leaf Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a private provider. It provides care for up to four children who experience emotional and social difficulties.

The home registered with Ofsted in February 2008.

The manager registered with Ofsted in October 2015.

Inspection dates: 10 to 11 December 2025

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
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The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection, and care.

Date of last inspection: 12 March 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/03/2025	Full	Outstanding
06/02/2024	Full	Outstanding
16/08/2022	Full	Good
09/02/2022	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children live in a spacious and beautifully presented home. Children feel relaxed and safe. One child said, 'I love it here- it's amazing.' Another child said, 'I wouldn't want to be anywhere else' and another, 'the home is lovely.' Children have large bedrooms, which are decorated to their individual taste. Children learn to take responsibility for their own rooms and the home's general cleanliness. Children are involved in having a say in how the home looks and what happens there.

Children living at the home are supported by staff to maintain good physical health. Children attend the dentist, optician, and primary health care services. One child's dental health has improved significantly after not attending appointments for some years. Staff help children maintain good hygiene routines. Children now rarely need any treatment on their teeth.

Children have made substantial progress in education, employment, and training since moving into the home. Children who have never attended school have now achieved qualifications and attend college or employment. Staff understand the barriers that children have experienced in education and training and are committed to their ongoing development. Leaders and managers have advocated for some children to obtain education and health care plans. This means that education and training providers are legally obliged to provide the help and support that children need.

Staff have nurturing relationships with children and there is love and affection between them. Children know they are loved and staff speak about children with warmth and compassion. Staff write to children in a daily diary and insert pictures and photos. These diaries contain treasured childhood memories. Leaders and managers have consulted children, care leavers and care experienced individuals about the best way of recording their experiences.

Staff do not use sanctions, consequences, or behavioural contracts to manage children's behaviour. Staff model good behaviour and provide small incentives for children to complete personal achievements and daily chores. Children's achievements are celebrated, and children recognise the progress that they have made.

Staff send letters and cards with positive affirmations to children. Staff also frequently tell children they are proud of them without prompt. Children and staff spend time fundraising and working for a variety of charities and good will causes. Children learn to be kind and make positive contributions to society. Children have increased self-esteem as a result.

Children have fun, both in the home and in the local community. Children participate in a range of group activities but also explore their interests independently. For example, several children have recently been to pop concerts with friends. Children kept in touch with staff while they were out. Children spoke openly about their enjoyment. Children and staff enjoyed a Christmas night out and celebrations for a staff member's birthday. Everyone was involved in the planning and felt included.

Leaders and managers work in partnership with children's relatives and there is a wraparound approach to care. They recognise the importance of children maintaining positive and meaningful relationships with their families and wider social networks. Children talk openly about their relationships, and this helps them navigate their social connections.

Leaders and managers ensure that family members are consulted regularly and kept informed about children's progress, routines, and key events. This helps relatives feel valued and they can contribute to children's identity and needs. Staff complete life story work with relatives and communicate this to children in an accessible way. One family member said, 'I don't know where we would be without [the home], staff are a god send and [name of child] wouldn't be the person they are today.'

Staff place a strong emphasis on preparing children for independence in a structured and child-centred way. They help children to develop practical life skills, including budgeting, cooking, cleaning, personal safety and managing appointments. Staff provide an effective balance between offering support and encouraging responsibility.

Children learn to make decisions responsibly and do not feel isolated or alone. There are plans in place to coordinate the ongoing support network for children when they reach adulthood. Staff provide an outreach service, visiting care leavers and offering companionship and physical support. They offer links with adult social care and provide practical help for young people. This includes help with arrangements for paying bills, provision of food parcels and clothing. They offer some initial therapeutic interventions from a qualified therapist. Children know staff will continue to help when they will leave care. This gives children hope and reassurance that they will maintain key relationships.

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

Risk assessments include children's known vulnerabilities. Staff help children to complete their own assessment of risk and develop an excellent understanding of children's views of likely harm. Staff determine the guidance that children need to lessen the risk.

Children complete regular safety plans, and this increases their self confidence and autonomy as they become older.

Staff have an exceptional understanding of children's health needs and have been educated around a specific health need for one child living in the home. Staff have undertaken specialist training and support the child with the diligent monitoring of the condition. Due to close liaison with health services and oversight of staff with a phone application, the child has been empowered to manage their own symptoms. This has led to increased self-confidence and lowered the child's levels of anxiety.

Children rarely go missing from the home. Staff genuinely care about children and are curious about their lives. Children living in the home keep in contact with staff because they know staff care. When children go missing, there is a well-coordinated response to locating the child. When children return to the home, their emotional and physical wellbeing is seen as paramount. Staff give children time and space and then work alongside children to find the reasons why they go missing. Staff support children to share information about who they spend time with and where they go. Children express any worries they may have and learn skills to become safer as a result.

Leaders and managers use news articles about extremism, exploitation, and criminality as learning opportunities for staff. Staff have an awareness of emerging risks in society and consider the impact on children. Real life scenarios are used as discussion points in children's meetings. Children talk about their vulnerabilities in a safe and supportive environment.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The home is run by an inspirational management team, who have lived experience of the care system. They continually reflect on what matters to children most and how to make lives better for children and their families. The registered manager fosters a culture of understanding and acceptance of others and is welcoming to everyone in the home. The registered manager is justly proud of all the children who they have cared for over the years, many remain in contact, and their photos can be seen in the home.

Staff are skilled and experienced social care professionals. Continuous professional development is a strength. The registered manager understands staff individual learning styles, their strengths, and areas for development. Staff have management qualifications, residential childcare diplomas, and access to a variety of training opportunities. The responsible individual performs independent work with various local authorities and residential provisions. This provides external insight and current critical thinking of what works in social care. Currently, staff are researching practice on the positive and negative impact of the use of artificial intelligence for and by children. The

responsible individual also accesses social care journals and research in practice for additional training materials.

Staff discuss their wellbeing, working practice and children's individual needs in regular, good-quality supervision sessions. Leaders and managers understand the potential stresses of social care practice, and staff's wellbeing is a priority. Staff feel valued and are given preference over their working patterns. One member of staff said, 'The management and staff go above and beyond for our young people. Working here with the staff and excellent management team is a privilege, I would not want to work anywhere else.'

The provider does not employ any agency staff. Children benefit from consistent care from committed staff.

Multi-agency working is a strength. Feedback from other agencies is overwhelmingly positive about regular communication and working together. One child's social worker said, 'They regularly update me and communication is excellent. Staff work with the multi-agency team risk assessments, and they are very thorough.' Staff also work with CAMHS, drug and alcohol reduction services, careers, and the virtual school.

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: SC366343

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Maple Leaf Care Limited

Registered provider address: Grosvenor House, 45 The Downs, Altrincham, Cheshire, WA14 2QG

Responsible individual: Nicola Higham

Registered manager: Susan Murfitt

Inspector

Sue Garner, social care inspector

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