

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 and the manager registered in October 2015.

At the time of this inspection, four children were living at the home and were spoken to by the inspector.

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 March 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: 6 February 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
06/02/2024	Full	Outstanding
16/08/2022	Full	Good
09/02/2022	Full	Outstanding
16/01/2020	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children receive outstanding care, support and guidance from a highly committed, competent and nurturing staff team. Consequently, children say they are happy and enjoy living in the home.

Children move into and out of the home in a planned and positive way. When planning a move into the home, the manager carefully considers how the children's individual needs will be met. For example, one child spent time with staff and other children before moving into the home. This helps to promote positive relationships for all concerned. Children moving out of the home are also well supported. For example, one child who recently left the home has maintained close relationships with staff and children by returning twice weekly for tea.

Children make exceptional progress in their education. Managers and staff work closely with education professionals to identify and overcome any barriers to learning. Three children who had not attended school before moving into the home now attend full time and are proud of the targets they achieve. The manager and staff advocated for one child who was not attending formal education. The child is now attending an alternative provision and doing work experience at a local charity shop with a view to accessing an apprenticeship.

Children's health is exceptionally well supported. Staff help children to attend health appointments and promote their oral hygiene, with positive results. Two of the children are being supported to attend the dentist for significant dental work. This support enables the children to achieve good health outcomes. The staff have ensured that one child, who has significant health needs, receives consistent care from all professionals. The manager has been proactive in ensuring that school staff are supported to attend additional training with staff from the home to ensure that they are able to meet the child's needs consistently.

The relationships between the manager and staff and external professionals and parents are strong and constructive. The team has worked with grandparents to complete life-story work for two children. This included a life-story book about their mother, completed with the staff and family. Professionals provided positive feedback about the quality of communication and updates they receive about the ongoing care of the children. A social worker said communication is excellent, noting that, 'The manager always keeps in touch. She is the biggest advocate.'

Staff prepare and enable the children to take reasonable risks as part of their growth and development. As a result, children are becoming more independent and enjoy spending time in the community with their friends. The children are making excellent progress with developing their independence skills. There are clear plans in place to support children's journey to independence. For example, one child will need additional

support when they leave the home and the staff have already contacted adult services, as well as bringing family together to form a comprehensive support plan for the child.

The home is decorated to a high standard. Children are supported to decorate their bedrooms to reflect their own interests and identities. This enables children to develop a sense of belonging and pride in the home.

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

The children say that they feel safe living in the home and enjoy spending time with the manager and staff. Children are protected by a highly trained, knowledgeable and competent staff team who are proud of the care they provide to children.

The children are involved in creating individualised risk management plans. Their plans are regularly reviewed and updated to reflect their current and emerging risks. Staff have a comprehensive knowledge of the children's risks and vulnerabilities and take time to talk to the children and educate them about risk. 'Research into practice' sessions are embedded in everyday practice at the home. Team meetings support the learning and development of the staff. As a result, the children's risks around exploitation, substance misuse and going missing from home are greatly reduced.

Incidents of children going missing from the home have reduced. When children do go missing, managers and staff search for the children and liaise effectively with relevant professionals to ensure that the children are supported to return home safely. There are robust missing-from-home protocols in place which are fully understood and followed by staff. Staff ensure that children receive welcoming, nurturing care on their return.

Care plans for the children clearly set out what is needed to help them to make significant progress. The plans consider the barriers that might hinder the children's progress, and they identify creative ways to overcome them. This enhances the life chances of the children. Children are involved in reviewing and updating their plans. They also undertake focused work with staff to help them to meet the aims and objectives set out in their plans.

One child's health needs are well understood and safely managed by staff. The registered manager ensures that staff receive specialist training in relation to children's individual health needs before they move into the home. Medication is stored securely in the home and the processes for children's medication coming in and out of the home are robust. The administration of medication is reviewed by the manager to ensure that practice is safe.

Positive recognition and praise outweigh consequences for negative behaviours. The manager evaluates consequences, ensuring that they are proportionate and restorative. Staff also implement clear boundaries, routine and structure to create a space for the children to feel emotionally safe.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The home is managed by a dedicated, ambitious and caring manager who advocates extremely well for the children. She is suitably qualified and experienced. The manager ensures that she is present in the home and accessible to staff and children. Staff talk about the children with pride, affection and enthusiasm.

The stable and settled staff team promotes consistency and strong attachments for the children. One member of staff said, 'Safeguarding and development of our young people is always the most important part to our job. Oh, and don't forget the fun and laughter of activities we are able to do with the young people!'

The manager speaks passionately about her role and the care provided to the children. She reflects on her own and staff practice to make improvements. Staff say they feel exceptionally well supported personally and professionally and speak positively about the strong ethos and values of the manager and staff team.

The manager uses highly effective internal and external monitoring systems to continually review and develop practice in the home and to improve outcomes for children.

No requirements or recommendations were made at this inspection.

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

Debbie Dawson, Social Care Inspector

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