

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 company and provides care for up to four children with social and emotional difficulties.

The home is managed by an experienced and qualified manager who has been registered since October 2015.

Inspection dates: 16 and 17 August 2022

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 **outstanding**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 9 February 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/02/2022	Full	Outstanding
16/01/2020	Full	Outstanding
23/10/2018	Full	Outstanding
22/11/2017	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Care is given by a manager and staff who are child-focused, passionate and committed to providing children with a warm, safe and homely place to live.

Children benefit from living in a spacious and welcoming home environment. Children's bedrooms are decorated to reflect their individual tastes and are personalised with family photos. The home is set in spacious grounds where children play, engage in sports and grow fruit and vegetables.

Children are offered a high level of care from an experienced, well-trained group of staff who know them well. Staff focus on building meaningful relationships with children. Excellent levels of communication and persistence from staff help children to understand that they are cared for, thought about and that they matter.

The staff offer children a high level of support to try and help them progress from their starting points. When children engage and access this support, measurable changes are made. However, some children display high levels of risk-taking behaviours and staff are not always able to actively engage them in the support on offer. For these children, their progress has been limited.

Children are supported well to understand their identity. Individualised life-story work has enabled some children to better understand their history and family dynamics. Children are also creatively supported to understand their emerging and developing identities. Bespoke work around gender identity and sexuality has enabled one child to progress in relation to their own sense of self and belonging.

Staff make children aware that their views count and seek to capture these through regular children's meetings and key-work sessions. Staff share children's views with external agencies and advocate well on children's behalf. Children are provided with an external independent advocate when required. This has resulted in one child changing their social worker.

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

Staff provide children with a safe and secure home environment. Children report that they enjoy living at the home, feel safe and are able to speak to staff about their worries and concerns. When asked about their experiences of living at the home, one child said, 'I think it is good. They look after me, care about me and I feel safe here.'

Risk management plans are detailed and clearly outline each child's risks and vulnerabilities. Staff have improved these plans since the last inspection, and they now detail clear strategies and protocols that must be followed when concerns arise. As a result, children receive a consistent approach from staff to be safer.

When children go missing from care, they receive a swift and well-coordinated response from staff. Excellent working relationships with the police ensure that children are reported missing from care promptly and information is shared to help locate them and bring them home. One police officer said, 'We are in regular contact with staff, and this home is by far the best at sharing information. Staff often do a lot of the investigation work for us, which helps us find children sooner.'

Multi-agency working is well embedded in staff practice. In-house records of multi-agency meetings are detailed and up to date. However, some children do not have all their required statutory case records. This means that some children may not understand their plans or agree with them.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The home is managed by a very experienced registered manager whose commitment to the children, staff team and continued development of the home is inspiring. The manager has been in post for several years and provides stable leadership, the quality of which is consistently high. As a result, staff retention levels are excellent, and children receive consistent, high-quality care.

The manager receives a high level of support from the responsible individual and through improved independent external monitoring visits. Together, these help ensure that practice in the home is constantly developing and that improvements are made in the best interests of children.

Leaders and managers provide each member of staff with excellent support, guidance and encouragement. Staff members receive regular, high-quality supervision and report that they feel extremely well supported by the registered manager. One member of staff said, 'Management offers support and guidance to all staff to maintain well-being and offer solutions to any issues that may arise in the future, either professionally or personally. In my opinion [name of home] is an amazing place to work.'

The manager and highly effective staff team have well-established and excellent working relationships with local services in the community. This enables children to receive high-quality care from a range of services in a timely manner. When children do not receive a prompt response from services, the manager actively challenges this on the children's behalf.

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 registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which— include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child; are kept up to date. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b)) This specifically relates to ensuring that statutory records for each child are available for children to read and that children understand their plans.	22 September 2022

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: 16a Regent Road, Altrincham, Cheshire WA14 1RP

Responsible individual: Nicola Higham

Registered manager: Susan Murfitt

Inspectors

Rob Neild, Social Care Inspector

Paul Scott, Social Care Inspector

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