

SC400355

Registered provider: Social Care Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is operated by a private organisation. It provides care and accommodation for up to three young people who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

The home is run by a qualified and registered manager.

Inspection dates: 16 to 17 January 2020

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **outstanding**

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

Date of last inspection: 19 February 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
19/02/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
31/07/2018	Full	Outstanding
11/01/2018	Interim	Improved effectiveness
24/05/2017	Full	Requires improvement to be good

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
The registered person must— keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16 (3)(a)(b))	29/02/2020
The independent person must provide a copy of the independent person's report to— HMCI; upon request, the local authority for the area in which the home is located; the placing authorities of children; the registered provider and, if applicable, the registered manager; and the responsible individual (if one is nominated). (Regulation 44 (7)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e))	29/02/2020

Recommendations

- Staff should be familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective, and clear recording. Staff should record information on individual children in a non-stigmatising way that distinguishes between fact, opinion and third-party information. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

Specifically, this refers to the need for handwritten records to be legible.

- Under Regulation 46, the registered person should review the appropriateness and suitability of the location and premises of the home at least once a year. The review should include the identification of any risks and opportunities presented by the home's location and strategies for managing these. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 64, paragraph 16.1)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Young people with different experiences of care and differing levels of engagement with the home receive consistently high levels of care and support. The focus of the home is on the quality of relationships between young people and the adults who care for them. The quiet persistence and patience of the whole staff team mean that young people experience a stable and nurturing home environment. This helps young people to build relationships and develop a sense of belonging and self-worth.

There is a mixed picture in terms of progress for young people. One young person who has been discharged from the home since the last inspection made significant progress and was supported to make a planned and positive move into supported living. A young person who has been in placement for a number of years has made good progress from her point of admission. She has built strong relationships with staff. Staff have not yet been able to effect significant positive change for a young person more recently admitted, although this placement is still in its infancy.

Young people's education is supported by a manager and staff who understand and value the importance of regular educational attendance. They work well with education professionals to try to improve young people's attendance and participation. However, the impact is variable as some young people continue to have inconsistent levels of attendance and engagement. One young person is not currently accessing any formal education as a result of an unplanned move to the home. She is also not engaging with educational activities in the home despite the best efforts of staff. This is an additional barrier to a successful reintroduction to a school setting.

Young people are registered with health services locally, and they are supported to attend these services when required. Young people are also helped to access specialist help when required. As a result, young people's physical, sexual and emotional well-being is promoted effectively.

Young people's contact with their families is encouraged where this is in their best interests. There is good communication between the home, family members and social workers. Staff work with families, including those at a considerable distance from the home, to support young people spending time with people who are important to them. As a result, young people are supported to develop and maintain links to their history, heritage and identity.

Young people are cared for by staff who have a good understanding of the model of care practised in the home. Staff use their knowledge and skills effectively to support young people and help them to make progress.

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

Staff have an excellent understanding of the risks that young people face. Risk assessments and plans to reduce risk are comprehensive, regularly reviewed and followed in practice. Staff are tenacious in their efforts to protect young people from harm.

Young people at high risk of sexual and criminal exploitation receive a robust and caring response. Staff work well with the appropriate authorities, so that a multi-agency approach is agreed. When young people go missing from home, staff work tirelessly to locate them and ensure their safety. The proactive approach of the home in seeking to help and protect some very vulnerable young people is exemplary.

Young people have strongly tested the boundaries, resulting in staff dealing with some very challenging behaviour. The home has not sought police involvement to manage the behaviour of young people. This reduces the likelihood of young people being criminalised for behaviours which take place in the home.

Incidents of physical restraint are rare. Staff are skilled in de-escalating behaviours and resolving conflict. When restraint has been used, the recording of incidents is comprehensive. There is clear management oversight of practice, which is evaluative and ensures that young people are safeguarded.

The physical environment of the home is maintained to a high standard. Some fencing at the rear of the home has been damaged and needs replacing to ensure the security of the property. Potential risks to young people in the community are assessed within the locality risk assessment. Some police information in this document is out of date and needs reviewing. These issues have not impacted on young people.

Staff have a good understanding of the risks posed to young people by social media. There are clear plans in place to manage these risks, which are individualised for each young person. The positive impact on young people of constructive use of the internet is also recognised. Young people are supported to use social media with appropriate oversight and safeguards. A social worker told the inspector, 'The home has a nice reasoned approach. They [the staff] are not risk averse.'

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The home is led by a dynamic and highly effective management team. The registered manager, assistant manager and senior provide the wider staff team with excellent role models through their standards of practice and the high aspirations they have for young people.

There are established systems in place through which the registered manager has oversight of the quality of care being provided. There are examples of this overview clearly evident throughout the work of the home. The registered manager is supported in his oversight of the home by a senior manager in the organisation who has a specific

quality assurance role. The regular audits and reviews undertaken by the quality assurance manager provide good challenge, which helps to drive improvement and promotes best practice.

The home benefits from regular independent person visits. The reports arising from these visits are thorough and provide effective external scrutiny. The statement of purpose for the home is regularly reviewed and updated by the registered manager. The registered manager has not ensured that the independent person's reports and the statement of purpose have been provided to Ofsted. The registered manager has not met regulations in this respect. This has not adversely impacted on the care of young people.

Young people's case records are comprehensive. They provide young people with a good understanding of their experiences and the plans for their care. A minority of daily logs are not legible as they are handwritten. This is a potential barrier to young people accessing their records. The majority of recording is well presented and supports young people to read and contribute to their care records.

Staff experience an excellent level of support through regular informal and formal supervision. In addition, structured induction and probationary processes ensure that new staff have a well-planned introduction to the home and good management oversight of their practice. Where concerns have been raised about the behaviour of staff, there is evidence of a timely and thorough response from senior managers in the organisation. This has ensured that young people are safeguarded while also demonstrating a duty of care to staff.

Young people benefit from a stable, skilled and committed staff team. Staff are passionate about their work and their roles in helping young people. The consistency of the staff team and its embedded child-centred practice helps young people to build trusting relationships with staff. Where additional staff are needed, they come from other homes within the organisation. They are well known to young people. The addition of these staff has been of benefit to young people, providing them with opportunities to experience a greater diversity of carers.

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: SC400355

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Social Care Services Limited

Registered provider address: Social Care Services Clayton Limited, 31 Shaw Road, Stockport, Cheshire SK4 4AG

Responsible individual: Stephen Davitt

Registered manager: Robert McEwan

Inspector

Dawn Parton: social care inspector

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