

SC400355

Registered provider: Social Care Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned by a private provider. It provides care for up to three children who may have social and emotional difficulties.

There were two children living in the home at the time of the inspection. Both children shared their experience of living in the home with the inspector.

The manager registered with Ofsted on 14 November 2017.

Inspection dates: 20 and 21 August 2024

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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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: 21 June 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/06/2023	Full	Good
09/08/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
15/03/2022	Full	Good
16/01/2020	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

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

The experiences of children living in the home are varied. Children do make progress in some aspects of their lives. However, shortfalls in leadership and management mean that children are not consistently provided with a warm and nurturing environment in which to thrive.

Children have begun to form positive relationships with some members of staff. One child has begun to explore their identity since living in the home, supported by staff. This ensures that children are happy and confident to be themselves.

Both children have made progress in education since living in the home. Managers and staff understand the importance of children engaging in formal education. This means that children are equipped with the essential skills that they need.

Staff ensure that children enjoy positive experiences outside of the home. The children have recently enjoyed a holiday together. This ensures that they are building relationships with one another and having fun.

Managers and staff do not always consistently communicate expectations of behaviour to children. Staff do not always ensure that children understand why there are specific rules in the home. This means that children are sometimes confused or frustrated when boundaries are put in place.

Some areas of the home need maintenance and cleaning. One child's bedroom has a wooden bar across the window. This does not provide the children with a homely place to live. Issues with the condition of the home have been raised at a previous inspection.

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

Children are safeguarded effectively by staff. When children go missing from home, staff are proactive in going to look for them. As a result, children return home safely, and the number of missing-from-home incidents for both children has reduced.

Staff have completed training specific to the individual vulnerabilities of the children. This ensures that staff have the necessary skills to keep children safe.

Managers do not ensure that children's risk plans provide detailed guidance for staff to follow. Children's risk plans are not regularly reviewed and updated. The impact of a child moving into the home on the other children is not always fully evaluated. This means that staff are unclear on their responsibilities to keep children safe.

Leaders and managers have not ensured that investigations into staff conduct are robust. When one child raised a complaint about the conduct of staff, managers did not address the issue effectively. As a result, one child's relationships with some staff members have been affected.

Staff do not consistently hold important conversations with children to support their understanding of risks. One child has risks relating to internet safety, but this has not been addressed sufficiently. This is a missed opportunity for staff to support children to keep themselves safe.

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

The manager has significant experience of working in residential care. Staff say that they feel supported by him. However, one child said that they would like him to spend more time in the home with them, and for their views to be consistently heard.

Managers hold regular team meetings, which are well attended by staff. Managers ensure that staff supervisions are held frequently and are reflective. This ensures that staff are provided with opportunities to develop their practice.

There is a consistent staff team in place. There has not been any use of agency staff since the last inspection. This ensures that children are cared for by people who are familiar to them.

Managers have begun to implement monitoring systems to identify patterns and trends. However, there are shortfalls in management oversight of staff practice. This limits the improvement of practice to help staff meet the needs of the children.

The independent person has not consistently viewed all areas of the home on visits. Reports completed by the independent person are not submitted to Ofsted consistently. This does not ensure that the regulator has oversight and review of the care being provided to children.

Managers have not always submitted notifications of serious incidents to Ofsted when required or within the required timeframe. This limits the external evaluation of the response by managers and staff to ensure that children are safe.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person 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 must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose; ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate; ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child. understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home; demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on— and feedback on the experiences of children, including complaints received; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2) (a)(b)(e)(f)(g)(ii)(h)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that there are systems of monitoring in place to identify and address shortfalls	18 October 2024

in staff practice quickly and effectively. Complaints from children must be taken into account and acted on effectively. The registered person must ensure that staff are working together effectively and that strategies they use are consistent.	
The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— understand the children’s home’s overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; use this understanding to deliver care that meets children’s needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to— meet the needs of each child; and enable each child to participate in the daily life of the home. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)(i)(ii)) The registered person must ensure that the home is maintained to a high standard of cleanliness, repairs are completed in a timely manner, and that the wooden bar is removed from the window in a child’s bedroom. This requirement was made at the previous inspection and is restated.	18 October 2024
The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child’s relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child; help each child to understand how to keep safe;	18 October 2024

have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(v)(vi)(b)) Specifically, the registered person must ensure that children's risk plans provide staff with clear guidance to keep children safe. Risk plans must be regularly reviewed for their effectiveness and updated. The registered person must ensure that there is a clear evaluation of the impact on children living in the home when a child moves in. The registered person must ensure that staff hold conversations with children specific to their individual risks.	
The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on— mutual respect and trust; In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— meet each child's behavioural and emotional needs, as set out in the child's relevant plans; strive to gain each child's respect and trust; understand how children's previous experiences and present emotions can be communicated through behaviour and have the competence and skills to interpret these and develop positive relationships with children. (Regulation 11 (1)(a) (2)(a)(i)(viii)(ix))	18 October 2024

The registered person must ensure that staff responses to children are consistently trauma informed, and relationships between children and staff are repaired when required.	
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4) (e))	18 October 2024
The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children's home at least once each month. When the independent person is carrying out a visit, the registered person must help the independent person— to inspect the premises of the home and such of the home's records (except for a child's case records, unless the child and the child's placing authority consent) as the independent person requires. The independent person must provide a copy of the independent person's report to— HMCI. (Regulation 44 (1) (2)(b) (7)(a))	18 October 2024

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: SC400355

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Social Care Services Limited

Registered provider address: Social Care Services Group, 31 Shaw Road, Stockport SK4 4AG

Responsible individual: Annabella Foulkes

Registered manager: Robert McEwan

Inspector

Sarah Gilbert, Social Care Regulatory Inspector

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