

SC400355

Registered provider: Social Care Services (Clayton) Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is run by a private organisation. It provides care for up to three children who may have social and emotional difficulties.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since November 2017.

Two children were living at the home at the time of this inspection.

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 June 2023

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 9 and 10 August 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/08/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
15/03/2022	Full	Good
16/01/2020	Full	Good
19/02/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children receive care from a stable and committed staff team. They are supported to build trusting relationships with staff, who care about them. This helps children to develop a sense of belonging and underpins the progress they make.

One child has left the home since the last inspection. The staff were unable to keep the child safe and give them the level of support required to meet their needs. The registered manager worked closely with the child's social worker to maintain the child's placement until it was no longer in the child's best interests to do so.

Pre-admission assessments to inform decision-making about children coming to live at the home do not evidence how the needs of children already living at the home are considered alongside the needs of children who are new to the home. This has not impacted on the two children currently living at the home.

Some internal and external areas of the home appear tired and untidy. Children's bedrooms are cluttered and there is insufficient space for them to store all their personal belongings. The living room is in need of redecoration and personalisation. Old furniture in the back garden needs removing. A requirement was made in relation to the environment of the home at the last inspection and this has been restated.

Children's views are sought regularly. Their feedback is used to inform staff practice and contributes to the care they receive. This enables children to feel listened to and ensures that their voices are heard.

Children are encouraged to understand and address their physical and emotional health through frequent one-to-one discussions with staff. Health plans are thorough and updated regularly. Children are supported to lead healthy lives.

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

Internal placement plans are thorough and child-centred. They provide children with a good understanding of the expectations of their care while living at the home and what staff will do to support them to make progress.

Children's risk plans are individualised and give staff clear directions to follow to safeguard children. Staff are involved in regular multi-agency information-sharing and planning to reduce risks to children. When children go missing from the home, staff ensure that they are supported to return home safely. However, there are no systems in place to receive feedback from children's independent return home interviews. This is a missed opportunity to gain further information to inform children's care and reduce their risks in the community.

There is clear and timely management oversight and evaluation of significant incidents for children. The oversight of incidents is used to provide a detailed reflective analysis and identify any learning to support staff in their care of children. The registered manager ensures that all serious incidents are notified to Ofsted in line with regulation.

Room searches and consequences for negative behaviours are used appropriately and proportionately. The rationale for actions and decision-making is clearly recorded and there is good management oversight. However, staff involved in these incidents are not routinely signing their account of the actions taken, and there is no evidence of input from children on these records. As a result, it is unclear whether children are aware of their records, and there is a lack of written accountability from staff for their practice.

The home's daily logs are not always legible. This means that there is a lack of transparency for some records. This does not help children to access their records or to understand their care.

Safer recruitment practices are followed when recruiting new staff. There has been one complaint against a member of staff since the last inspection. This was dealt with swiftly and information was shared with the child's placing authority and all relevant parties. These practices help to keep children safe.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is suitably experienced and qualified. He has been at the home for a number of years and is well established in his role. He is supported by an experienced and long-standing responsible individual. There is strong oversight and evaluation of practice from leaders and managers.

Staff said that they work in a supportive environment. Staff receive good-quality supervision, which is focused on the children's needs as well as their own development. New starters receive more frequent supervision in line with the provider's supervision policy. Supervision records are comprehensive but are not always signed by managers or staff. As a result, there is a lack of formal agreement that issues discussed in these meetings are accurate and agreed.

Team meetings take place regularly. They are well structured and are well attended by the staff team. Team meetings encourage staff to reflect on their practice and the work undertaken with children living in the home.

Staff have undertaken a range of training to ensure that they can meet the needs of the children in their care. Staff hold the relevant qualifications and new staff are enrolled following the end of their probationary period.

Staff spoke positively of both the face-to-face training and the online training that are available to support them in their roles and how they implement the training in

practice. An example of this is how staff are using training from the child and adolescent mental health service to inform their care of a child.

The registered manager works well with external professionals. He is able to challenge and escalate any concerns appropriately to avoid drift and delay for children and to ensure that their needs are met.

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 quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— provide to children living in the home the physical necessities they need in order to live there comfortably. 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. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(i) (2)(a)(i) (3)(a)(i)) Specifically, the registered person must ensure that: - children's bedrooms have sufficient storage for clothes and personal items - communal areas of the home are well maintained - old furniture is removed from the back garden and disposed of. This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	31 August 2023

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that pre-admission assessments provide a clear rationale for the matching of children new to the home with children already living in the home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)
- The registered person should ensure that staff understand the importance of careful, clear recording. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. In particular, handwritten records should be legible and staff should sign documents they have written. ('Guide to the

Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

- The registered person should ensure that staff encourage children to understand and regularly contribute to their care records in a way that reflects their voice. If children do not want to read or sign records, their views should be recorded by staff. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 58, paragraph 11.19)
- The registered person should ensure that arrangements are in place with each placing local authority to receive information provided by return home interviews to assess risks and put arrangements in place to protect each child. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.30)
- The registered person should ensure that supervision records are signed by both the person giving the supervision and the staff member. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.4)

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 (Clayton) Limited

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

Responsible individual: Annabella Foulkes

Registered manager: Robert McEwan

Inspectors

Dawn Parton, Social Care Inspector
Helen Fee, Social Care Inspector

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