

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 privately run children's home is registered to offer care and accommodation for up to three young people who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

The home is managed by a competent and experienced registered manager who is supported by an experienced and dedicated team.

Inspection dates: 31 July to 1 August 2018

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

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **outstanding**

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: 11 January 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: improved effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/01/2018	Interim	Improved effectiveness
24/05/2017	Full	Requires improvement to be good
31/01/2017	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
09/08/2016	Full	Good

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

Recommendations

- Children should be actively encouraged to read their records and to add further information to them. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.6) Specifically, this is in relation to key-work sessions.
- Records of restraint should enable the registered person and staff to review the use of control, discipline and restraint to identify effective practice and respond promptly where there are issues or trends of concern emerge. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 49, paragraph 9.59) Specifically, dedicated restraint records must include the distraction and re-direction techniques used prior to a restraint intervention and the duration of the restraint.
- Children should be provided with appropriate bedroom furniture. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 16, paragraph 3.17) Specifically, this is in relation to vacant rooms where furniture is broken or damaged. Prompt arrangements should be made to repair or replace those items.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Care planning is exceptional. Plans are detailed, relevant, updated and work seamlessly with the external agency support. This means that young people receive a high level of support specifically targeted to meeting their individual and complex needs. A social worker commented, 'I would highly recommend this home for a young person who needed care. The home, in my opinion, is excellent. The staff are approachable and go above and beyond expectations to get the right care support and outcomes.'

Young people work together with staff to develop and review their plans. Regular key-work sessions clearly highlight the level of engagement and progress that young people make while identifying future goals and targets. A young person said, 'I know exactly what my plan is and what we are doing to make it happen. I don't feel like I live in a children's home. This is home and they are my family.' However, some records are not reviewed or commented upon by young people. Reviewing this work helps young people to see the progress they make from their initial starting points and guides them towards their future goals and targets. A recommendation is made to address this matter.

Young people and staff form excellent relationships. Staff have an in-depth knowledge of each young person and work with them in a way that promotes their individual strengths. This means that young people have a continuous sense of achievement and this strengthens their individual self-esteem and confidence. A young person said, 'The

staff are brilliant. They have helped me so much. I am happy and really love living here.'

Staff understand the value of including families where possible in the planning for young people's care. They work extremely hard to develop trusting relationships. A parent said, 'They have gone over and above what I expected. They have really shown that they care for my child and do everything they can to get the best outcome for him.'

Although young people living in this home have a history of non-engagement or disruption within educational settings, educational attendance and achievement are consistent features within this home. Consequently, from their initial starting points, young people's attendance has significantly increased. Young people now enjoy school. They make excellent progress, including developing healthy friendships and young people achieve in school. For example, one young person recently completed 10 GCSE examinations and it is anticipated that he will do well. A deputy headteacher said, 'The support and encouragement shown by staff has been the driving force to this young person's progress. In the past 18 months they have come along in leaps and bounds.'

Healthcare is prioritised within the home. Young people are provided with additional external support from a variety of agencies, including counsellors, advocates, drug and alcohol support services and the looked after children's nurse. Young people engage with services. This means they receive the best help and support to make effective changes in their lives. In addition, staff are proactive in seeking out professional healthcare intervention where a concern for a young person's health arises. As a result, concerns are fast-tracked to ensure that young people receive the support and help they need, without delay.

Young people are supported to take on the challenge of new activities. A weekly programme of activities, named 'the wonderful world of weekly wonders', includes activities such as gym classes, horse riding, ice-skating, attending a youth club, go-carting and Girlguiding. Young people grow in confidence and develop their social skills, and this helps them to make and sustain friendships within the community. Photographs displayed in the home are a testament to the unique and valuable experiences and memories that young people make at this home. A young person said, 'I love the activities, I have so much fun.'

The young people's home is maintained to a high standard and is suitably equipped with the latest technology. Young people benefit from a games console room, homework area and spacious living accommodation. However, should the home decide to admit a third young person, the available bedroom is not prepared. It is currently used to store damaged furniture. A recommendation is made to address this matter.

Consultation with young people is prioritised in the home. Observations of engagement between staff and young people demonstrate how young people's views and opinions are respected, encouraged and also challenged. One young person has been nominated to represent the child's voice within the organisation's newly formed quality assurance for children forum. This young person said, 'I already have an agenda and I know what I would like changed. On the top of my list is a holiday abroad.' In addition, young people

engage in weekly team meetings, complete staff development questionnaires and regularly provide feedback to managers about how the home is run.

Young people enjoy living in this home, so much so that one young person created their own Ofsted report and presented their findings to the inspector. The young person said, 'Although I have already told you about the home, I wanted to write it down and this is what it should look like in your report.' It is this humour and self-confidence that shine through in the overall functioning and atmosphere within the home.

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

Young people's safety is highly prioritised. Detailed impact assessments ensure that all young people placed at the home are assessed against the needs, interests and aspirations of those already resident. Individual risk assessments are balanced against a full chronology of life events. This means that risk is measured, and appropriate individual strategies are in place to address any concerns.

Redirection and de-escalation techniques are a consistent feature within this home. Each young person has a de-escalation plan which is based on the individual personality and traits of the young person. This method ensures that young people in crisis are managed in a way that supports the best outcomes and enables young people to gain control of their emotions in a supportive and positive environment. The use of physical intervention is minimal. On the whole, records provide a clear reflection of any intervention, including key-work sessions and debriefs. However, there are a small number of records that do not include the de-escalation techniques used prior to the intervention or the length of time spent in the restraint. A recommendation is made to address this matter.

From their initial starting point, young people's risk-taking behaviour has considerably reduced while living in the home. For example, young people with a history of being missing for extended periods no longer engage in this type of behaviour. When a young person is missing from the home, staff respond in accordance with the risk assessment, resulting in the young person being returned home quickly. Evidence of consistent, focused key-work sessions, coupled with praise and reward, highlights the level of engagement with young people and the progress they make towards reducing and managing risk.

Behaviour management is consistent and effective. Young people and staff form excellent relationships based on trust and mutual respect. Therefore, young people work with staff to identify areas for development and a suitable reward for the progress they make. Staff are consistent in their approach, and this enables young people to work within the house boundaries. The registered manager and staff work seamlessly to ensure that young people receive a consistent approach to unwanted behaviour and praise and reward for progress and development.

Some young people become accommodated when they are on the periphery of gang-related crime or at risk of gang-related exploitation, known as county lines. Staff are extremely proactive in not only assessing immediate and potential risk, but also

engaging external Protect teams and drug misuse services in the planning for and arrangements for care. This has proved to be highly effective. Staff have enabled young people to break the cycle of behaviour by replacing risk with positive and enjoyable experiences and the receipt of consistent wraparound support.

Young people are encouraged to develop and maintain friendships within the community or, where possible, their home community. Friendships are promoted. Friends are invited to the home and names and addresses are confirmed and kept on file. However, should a young person experience any difficulty or concern while in the community, they are provided with a dedicated mobile code in order to alert staff. This safeguarding protocol ensures that staff respond immediately, in order that young people's safety is not compromised while away from the home.

Young people know how to complain and they receive valuable information from the home and their placing authority to guide them in this area. Since the last inspection, there have been two minor complaints made within the home. Evidence highlights that these matters were prioritised, investigated and a mutual outcome agreed. A young person said, 'The staff really listen. They will admit if they get something wrong and will always do something to put it right. Staff are great.'

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The registered manager has been in post since 2017. He brings to the role 10 years of experience and is qualified at NVQ level 5 in social care management. He is committed to leading a consistent, dedicated and strong team in the delivery of individualised progressive childcare practice.

Young people live in a home that is managed in their best interests. The home meets and exceeds the aims and objectives of the statement of purpose, and young people, social workers and families are clear about the service and support that the home provides.

Internal and external monitoring systems provide the home with an exceptional approach to the overall monitoring of care. Detailed information highlights areas for development, and the manager's action plan details the methods used to enhance the service.

Staff receive a high level of support from the manager. Supervision takes place regularly and serves to identify training needs and personal development targets.

Staff are provided with consistent mandatory training and an excellent in-house training package developed by the registered manager. This level of training ensures that staff are suitably equipped to provide dedicated, bespoke care for young people. Staff undertake regular training focusing on the theoretical framework for attachment and youth development, including studies such as iGens (the iPhone generation). This insightful view of how the youth of today operate, is the basis for all planned work in the home.

The registered manager makes good use of reflective practice, and the views of external services and families are considered to ensure that young people's needs are appropriately met and that patterns and trends are routinely analysed. Data provides an excellent tool for staff and young people when reviewing progress and planning for the future.

The registered manager and staff demonstrate a strong commitment to delivering excellent child-centred practice that is tailored to the individual and personal needs of young people. The effectiveness of this approach is measurable in the progress young people make, particularly in education, self-esteem and positive social integration.

The home employs a strong and committed staff team. Fifty percent of staff are qualified at diploma level three, with the remaining 50% nearing completion. The training of staff at this level ensures that they are suitably qualified in the care and management of young people.

Leaders and managers ensure that all referrals to the home are suitably assessed for compatibility. Evidence of impact assessment leading to decisions not to place demonstrates a clear commitment to the young people already placed.

Managers and staff routinely notify Ofsted, placing authorities, parents and community police of any concern or event involving a child, in accordance with regulation 40. Immediate action is taken to reduce risks, including, where necessary, additional staffing. The home places the needs of the young people at the forefront of its practice and this is evidenced in the excellent progress they make.

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 (Clayton) Limited

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

Responsible individual: Stephen Davitt

Registered manager: Robert McEwan

Inspector

Maria McGranaghan, social care inspector

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