

SC412687

Registered provider: Social Care Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is a privately run children's home. The home provides care and accommodation for up to three children who are not able to live at home.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since October 2019.

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

Inspection dates: 17 August 2021

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	good
---	------

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

Date of last inspection: 23 October 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
23/10/2019	Full	Good
23/01/2019	Full	Good
21/09/2017	Full	Good
06/03/2017	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Two children live in this home. Three children have lived in this home since the last full inspection in October 2019. One child has successfully moved into semi-independence. The staff supported a long transition for him, to ensure that he could familiarise himself with the area and so that he felt confident to move at his own pace.

In the safer area location assessment, the manager has identified risks that are associated with the home's proximity to a main road and nearby bodies of water. Therefore, he was able to ask the child's social worker additional questions to ensure that the area was safe for the child. However, the manager did not look at the compatibility of the new child with the current child living in the home. Therefore, he was not aware that they would be a suitable match. This has not had an adverse impact on the children's safety.

Children are supported to attend and engage in education regularly. They have completed home schooling throughout the COVID-19 restrictions. The children know how important education is and respond well to the education incentives in place. One child said, 'I love school and I am learning to play the ukulele.' Another child said, 'I did not like school, but I am doing really well now. This is because staff have supported me. I want to be an electrical engineer, so I am working hard towards this.'

Staff help the children to adopt healthy lifestyles by encouraging them to eat a healthy diet and to engage in physical exercise. Children are supported with their individual health needs and they have good access to local health services when they need them.

Children benefit from engaging in a wide range of individual and group activities that broaden their experiences and social interaction. This helps them to build relationships with the staff and their peers. A family member said, 'The great thing about this home is that the children have limited time on the internet and their consoles. This means they are out having fun as children should be.'

Staff support the children to develop and maintain good relationships with their families. The manager and staff value parents' views and these contribute to the care planning for the children. As a result, parents and family members feel involved in their child's care.

Children can regularly share their views about the home. They take part in key-work sessions and these conversations inform their plans and how they would like to be cared for. An outstanding feature of the home is how the manager informs and responds to the children. For example, a child-friendly newspaper article announces

the children's meetings and this is displayed in the playroom. After the meeting, the manager lets the children know the outcome of their meeting through headlines in the same format.

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

Children said that they feel safe at this home. They are confident that they could talk to staff if they were worried or had a concern. Staff have undertaken key-work sessions with the children to make sure that they understand the risks when using the internet.

There have been no safeguarding concerns to report to safeguarding agencies. Staff demonstrated that they knew the procedure to follow if a concern was to arise. All staff have received safeguarding training and additional supportive training, including child sexual exploitation, county lines and safer recruitment, which is refreshed regularly. This means that they have the knowledge to support children and can identify early signs of involvement.

Known or emerging risks are identified in the children's care plans. Therefore, staff have a clear understanding of the children's vulnerabilities. However, the same triggers, strategies and actions are used to cover all the risks. This does not ensure that staff have clear direction to minimise the risks individually or that staff can give a consistent response.

Since the last inspection in October 2019, there have been no episodes of children going missing from the home or of physical intervention. Staff receive regular training in these areas and demonstrated to the inspector their knowledge and what action they would take if an incident was to occur.

There is a positive approach to behaviour management. This has resulted in children significantly reducing their negative behaviour. Daily incentives encourage the children to attend school and to be involved in the day-to-day running of the home. In addition, staff recognise the children's achievements and this promotes good behaviour. Children receive certificates for being kind to each other, for helping staff and for exceptional behaviour. They can work towards rewards such as personal items or trips out. For example, the children have earned a trip to a theme park and they are excited about this.

Children live in a physically safe environment where good health and safety procedures protect them. Staff carry out regular checks around the home. The children and staff frequently practise how to leave the home safely in case of a fire.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager has a good range of experience to care for the children and staff. He is qualified and has two senior staff who support him in his role. Most of the

staff team have a relevant childcare qualification. The staff also benefit from a wealth of training and development opportunities to support their continuing professional development. This means that staff have the skills and knowledge to care for children well. Due to the COVID-19 restrictions, most of the training has been completed online. However, there are face-to-face training events scheduled for the coming year.

The manager has high aspirations for the children living at the home and ensures that they are provided with a high quality of care. The children, a family member and professionals spoken to as part of this inspection were complimentary about the manager's skills, knowledge and ability to work closely with them. The manager advocates for the children and often challenges other agencies to make sure that children receive the best care and support.

The manager provides the staff with regular and effective supervision sessions that enable them to reflect on their practice. These are in addition to monthly team meetings, where staff can share their knowledge and discuss the children in depth. As a result, staff said that they feel supported, valued and motivated. One member of staff said, 'The support we get is fantastic. I have learned so much. I am due to leave soon to follow a different career, but I am in two minds because it is so good here.'

Generally, the children's records are up to date and staff have a good understanding of the children's needs, experiences and progress. However, some records have not been signed by the author, social worker or staff. This does not ensure that there is good oversight of the records or that all parties agree with the plans. In addition, records that are kept in the home show the progress that children are making but there is little information on how this progress is achieved. Therefore, this does not show the child's journey throughout their stay at the home.

The home's statement of purpose, development plan and workforce plan are up to date. However, the statement of purpose has not been sent to Ofsted after it has been reviewed. This reduces the regulator's oversight of the home.

Generally, the internal and external monitoring of the home is good. However, the independent visitor's report lacks evaluation. For example, every month the visitor notes that there have been no safeguarding concerns, episodes of children going missing from the home or restraints for a significant time. But he has not explored staff's understanding or knowledge in these areas, to ensure that they would know what to do if an incident was to occur.

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should send a copy of the Statement of Purpose to Ofsted when it has been reviewed. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 14, paragraph 3.5)
- The registered person should continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. Specifically, ensure that staff have clear guidance on the action to take if an incident was to occur. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)
- The registered person should make best use of information from independent monitoring. In particular, ensure that regulation 44 reports are evaluative. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24)
- The registered person should fully consider the impact that a new placement will have on the existing group of children. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 56, paragraph 11.4)
- The registered person should ensure that case records are signed and dated by the author of each entry. Further to this, they should ensure that staff sign the documents that require a signature. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.3)
- The registered person should understand that the home's records on each child represent a significant contribution to the child's life history. Specifically, ensure that the steps taken by staff to secure good progress and outcomes are clearly recorded within the child's documents. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.5)

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 'The guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards'.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC412687

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: Stephen Davitt

Registered manager: Marcus Phipps

Inspector

Pam Nuckley, Social Care Regulatory Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk>

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2021