

SC412687

Registered provider: Social Care Services (Clayton) Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is registered to provide care and accommodation for three young people who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The home is part of an independent company.

Inspection dates: 21 to 22 September 2017

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: 6 March 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because:

- Staff work very closely with a range of professionals to promote good outcomes for young people.
- Overall, young people experience positive, trusting relationships with staff that enable them to benefit from the support provided.
- Staff work proactively and positively with young people's families to ensure that important attachments are maintained.
- Staff receive good levels of support and supervision to ensure that they can meet the needs of the young people.
- From their initial starting points, educational attendance has significantly improved for some young people. One young person has recently secured employment.
- Young people's safety is promoted. Staff encourage young people to engage with a range of professionals to help them understand the risks of drug and alcohol misuse and offending behaviour.
- The staff team is stable, which helps them to promote a consistent level of care.
- The registered manager has a good understanding of the weaknesses of the home and is fully committed to its continued improvement.

The children's home's areas for development:

- There are some repeated issues in the quality of records, including the missing from home records and the workforce development plan.
- Physical intervention records and sanction records are not sufficiently detailed.
- The staff would benefit from training in self-harm and sexual harmful behaviour to meet the needs of the current group of young people.
- The registered manager recognises the need to further develop the home's quality assurance systems.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
06/03/2017	Full	Good
17/01/2017	Full	Inadequate
01/03/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
15/12/2015	Full	Good

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should have a workforce plan. The plan should be updated to include any new training and qualifications completed by staff while working at the home, and used to record the ongoing training and continuing professional development needs of staff. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.8)
- Records must be kept detailing all individual incidents when young people go missing from home. This is with specific reference to a detailed record of what actions staff have taken and also when return interviews have been carried out and by whom. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.31)
- Ensure that any sanctions used to address poor behaviour are restorative in nature, to help children recognise the impact of their behaviour on themselves, other children and the staff caring for them and the wider community. In some cases, it will be important for children to make reparation in some form to anyone hurt by their behaviour and the staff in the home should be skilled to support the child to understand this and carry it out. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.38)
- Records of restraint must be kept and should enable the registered person and staff to review the use of control, discipline and restraint to identify effective practice and respond promptly where any issues or trends of concern emerge. The review should provide the opportunity for amending practice to ensure it meets the needs of each child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 49, paragraph 9.59)
- The registered person should support staff to be ambitious for every child in the home and gain skills and experience that enable them to actively support each child to achieve their potential. To ensure that staff understand and can meet each child's needs, in line with their responsibilities. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 52, paragraph 10.5)
- The registered person should actively seek independent scrutiny of the home and make best use of information from independent and internal monitoring (including under Regulation 44 and 45) to ensure continuous improvement. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The overall experiences and progress of young people are good. Since the last inspection, two young people have remained very settled and there has only been one new admission to the home. Young people benefit from good-quality care and enjoy mostly positive relationships with the staff and each other. A committed staff team provides the young people with a consistent level of care. One young person said, 'I get on with all the staff here. I like that I get to see the same staff every day. They are easy to talk to and be around.'

Young people are registered with doctors, dentists and opticians, and they access these services when required. Staff support the young people to attend their health appointments in line with their individual needs. The staff also promote and support young people to maintain good standards of personal care. This includes some young people completing direct work on topics such as good dental hygiene and a healthy body. Staff support young people to access additional services when they engage in behaviour that may have an impact on their health, for example drugs and alcohol services. However, despite the proactive response from the staff, some young people continue to engage in these harmful behaviours.

Young people benefit from living in an environment where their education is highly valued and promoted. Two young people benefit from regular attendance at school. One young person has received numerous awards from school, including the most improved student in mathematics. The young person spoke positively about their school and their favourite subjects. One young person had attended a job interview. They had successfully secured full-time work. However, one young person is in need of a personal education plan to help the staff track his progress and achievements.

The young people are clearly valued by the staff and most young people said that they feel listened to. Key-work sessions ensure that young people are fully involved in decisions about their life. However, the registered manager acknowledged it has been more of a challenge to get the young people to meet regularly as a group.

The staff team supports young people involved with the youth justice system. For example, they encouraged a young person to engage in a summer arts programme run by the youth offending service. There are a number of photographs showing the young person engaging in various activities during the programme. This was clearly a positive experience for them.

Staff support young people to take part in a wide range of community-based activities. Some young people enjoy going to the youth club, while others prefer being at home and playing on their games console. Young people make friends and enjoy socialising with their friends away from the home. Friends are also welcome at the home. A social worker said, '[Name of young person] has a settled friendship group and is very open about who his friends are.' A young person told the inspector that he likes to spend his

pocket money buying DVDs.

Family contact is extremely well supported. Staff have formed good relationships with young people's families. This enables them to work in a proactive and planned way, particularly when the plan is for a young person to return to the family home. This ensures that young people maintain their sense of identity and belonging.

Dependent upon their age, young people are supported to develop a number of self-care and practical skills. They are encouraged to keep their bedrooms tidy, assist with their laundry and help with the shopping. When a young person reaches the age of 16, they begin a more formal programme of independence planning. This enables young people to prepare for independent living. This increases their confidence in their own skills and abilities.

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

The young people spoken to say that they feel safe in the home, and the staff work hard to promote their welfare and safety. Staff have undertaken direct work to help the young people understand the importance of keeping themselves safe, particularly when they spend time away from the home. There has been one incident of bullying. The records show that this was dealt with appropriately.

Staff are proactive in identifying young people's risks and vulnerabilities. Risk assessments clearly recognise the risk factors for each young person and the strategies in place for staff to follow. Staff review assessments regularly to ensure that they are up to date and continue to keep young people safe from harm. The staff understand the risks that the internet can pose for young people. When staff became aware that a young person was accessing unsuitable sites, they alerted the appropriate agencies in a timely way. This promotes the welfare and safety of young people.

Staff have a good understanding of missing from home protocols and are consistent in applying these. When a young person goes missing from the home, staff attempt to contact and look for them. The missing from home records have improved to ensure that sufficient detail is included about the episode of going missing and the actions of staff. Young people have access to an independent person following an episode of being missing from home. However, the home does not maintain a record of these visits. This limits the staff's ability to identify any concerns or action needed to reduce the going missing behaviour.

The young people spoken to said that there are clear expectations of behaviour. At times, boundaries can be tested, particularly as a young person comes to terms with living away from their family. Positive behaviour is promoted through the use of rewards and praise. Sanctions are imposed when negative behaviours occur. However, these are not always fair and proportionate. For example, on one occasion a young person was placed on supervised spends for a period of four weeks. The registered manager recognised that the length of time is not reasonable, and made plans to review all measures used.

Physical interventions are kept to a minimum as staff use positive behaviour management techniques to de-escalate challenging situations. The registered manager and his deputy monitor the records to ensure that staff adhere to safe practice. However, the current system for monitoring and evaluating physical interventions does not ensure transparency. For example, when the registered manager has been involved in a restraint, an independent overview has not taken place. This means that the registered manager is evaluating his own practice. This has the potential to compromise the welfare and safety of the young people.

Staff spoken to during this inspection demonstrated a clear understanding of safeguarding procedures and what action they should take in the event of a safeguarding concern. All young people know how to make a complaint should they have any concerns about the way that they are being looked after. There have been two complaints made by young people since the last inspection. Records show that these have been addressed and the young people were satisfied with the outcome.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is managed by a suitably qualified and experienced manager. The registered manager and staff work proactively and positively with other agencies to ensure that young people receive the right help and support. The registered manager has a clear understanding of the progress that young people make. He can demonstrate the positive impact that living at the home is having on young people's progress and life chances.

Staff spoken to during the inspection said that the registered manager provides effective leadership to the staff team. Staff feel well supported in their roles and have access to regular team meetings and supervision. Staff confirm that they feel able to openly challenge or share any concerns they may have. At the last inspection, a recommendation was made in relation to the home having a workforce development plan in place. The registered manager has not addressed this. Therefore, the recommendation is repeated.

The home is adequately resourced and the registered manager has ensured that the staff team is able to meet the aims and objectives of the statement of purpose. There are sufficient numbers of staff to meet the needs of the young people. The home does not use agency staff. Any shortfalls in the rota are covered by the staff team or staff from other homes within the organisation. This ensures continuity of care for the young people.

Currently, less than half of the staff team members hold a suitable childcare qualification. Five staff members are working to achieve the qualification. All staff receive training in order to meet the needs of the young people. Training includes safeguarding, therapeutic crisis intervention and ligature training. However, staff have not had any training in self-harmful or sexually harmful behaviour. Therefore, the registered manager cannot be assured that all staff are fully equipped to meet the needs of the current group of young people.

The registered manager has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the home. However, a lack of evaluation about the quality of care means that improvements are not clearly identified or acted upon. The registered manager has undertaken a six-monthly review of the quality of care. However, this does not show the action needed for continuous development over the next six months.

The registered manager has addressed the majority of the shortfalls identified at the last inspection. The location risk assessment has been updated, specifically in relation to child sexual exploitation.

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: SC412687

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: John Hindley

Inspector

Michelle Bacon: social care inspector

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