

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC412687
Inspector	Louise Redfern
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Social Care Services (Clayton) Limited
Registered person address	31 Shaw Road STOCKPORT Cheshire SK4 4AG

Responsible individual	Stephen Marx Davitt
Registered manager	Katherine Yarker
Date of last inspection	12/02/2014

Inspection date	24/09/2014
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Previous inspection	good progress
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

This inspection	
Overall effectiveness	good
Outcomes for children and young people	good
Quality of care	good
Keeping children and young people safe	good
Leadership and management	good

Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	good
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Young people make good progress living at the home. They enjoy good outcomes in terms of their health and education. Staff actively promote a healthy lifestyle by providing a good range of food choices and support young people to engage in activities in the community. This has resulted in young people being actively involved in local youth clubs and attending a local church. As a result, young people develop links in the local area, while maintaining a clear attachment to their family and community. Young people are developing their independence skills at a pace appropriate to their individual levels of understanding.

Positive relationships between young people and staff and staff and families and professionals assist young people with their behaviour and emotional well-being. Young people say, 'it's a good home, I like it here, I am glad I am back at school. I want to do well and get on.' This promotes positive outcomes for young people living in the home. Since the last inspection young people have been supported to return to live with their family.

Young people say they feel safe in the home. Staff understand safe working practices and any identified shortfalls are addressed promptly by management. Management arrangements are very strong within the home. The Registered Manager and staff are committed to maintaining high standards and sustaining

improvements within the home.

Recommendations have been raised to ensure the Registered Manager obtains a management qualification, a policy is in place around the use of door alarms, impact risk assessments are completed on each young person admitted to the home and supervision records are improved. These shortfalls do not have an impact on the safety and welfare young people living in the home.

Full report

Information about this children's home

This home is privately owned and registered to provide care and accommodation for up to three young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/02/2014	Interim	good progress
17/07/2013	Full	good
20/02/2013	Interim	good progress
03/10/2012	Full	good

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

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the service should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure where electronic devices are used to monitor children there is a written policy in place that sets out how they should be used (NMS 10.5)
- ensure that the home only provides accommodation to children whose assessed needs they can reasonably meet, this is in relation to impact risk assessments (NMS. 11.2)
- ensure that the Registered Manager obtains a relevant management qualification (NMS 14.3)
- ensure a written record is kept by the home detailing the time, date and length of each supervision. The record is signed by the supervisor for each member of staff at the end of the supervision. (NMS 19.5)

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for children and young people **good**

Young people make good progress living in the home. This is because they are cared for by staff who are child focused and skilled at making positive attachments which enhance young people's trust, self-worth and confidence. Staff show a strong sense of commitment to young people, providing them with a caring and nurturing environment with clear expectations for behaviour. As a result, young people feel valued and respected as individuals and are beginning to find a sense of stability in their lives. Young people say, 'it's a good home, I am listened to and the staff are all sound.'

Given their starting points on admission to the home, young people enjoy good outcomes. Young people's educational attendance and achievement is good. Young people enjoy healthy diets and take regular exercise through activities and play. Staff ensure young people are registered with healthcare services and routine check-ups are up to date. Good links with healthcare specialists have been established. For example, links with the local looked after children's nurses are in place to ensure continuity of health plans.

Young people are involved in a range of community activities that ensure they make a positive contribution to their local and wider community. One young person has maintained their links with a local church and church youth group since the last inspection. This has enabled friendships to be sustained independent of staff and the home.

Young people enjoy regular contact with their family and are encouraged to develop age appropriate friendships in the locality of the home. Young people said they are pleased with these arrangements. A social worker commented, 'the increase in family contact, due to the locality of the home is really promoting X's sense of identity. This means X is making good progress in settling into the placement, I am really pleased it's working.'

Preparation for independence is managed at a pace suited to young people's needs, age and understanding. This includes helping young people to think about the impact of their choices and decisions as well as gaining practical skills.

Quality of care **good**

Staff work to develop and maintain positive relationships with young people. These relationships underpin the culture and ethos of the home and are used effectively to provide a caring and supportive environment for young people to live in. Young

people have remained stable in placement, despite a number of changes to the group living at the home. This is because of the consistent and dedicated staff team and the established relationships with young people in place.

Staff understand young people's local authority placement plans and are keen to ensure their needs are met in the home. Young people's internal placement plans are individualised, which helps them to build self-esteem, grow in confidence and address challenging behaviours. Young people are encouraged to contribute to their care planning. They are involved in discussions about their risk assessment management plans and internal placement plans on a regular basis. This leads to young people developing a sense of personal responsibility for their behaviour.

Staff provide lots of opportunities for daily one-to-one discussions, key work sessions and young people's meetings. They provide good support to young people, enabling them to contribute to planning meetings and formal reviews. This ensures young people are actively involved in making decisions about their lives and contribute to the daily running of the home. The home has a comprehensive complaints procedure in place. Complaints are fully investigated and actioned. As a result, young people feel they are listened to and feel confident in raising their concerns.

Staff consistently challenge barriers to ensure the full participation of young people in education. As a result, young people have excellent attendance at school and are making good progress. One educational professional commented, 'X's attendance is 100%. Communication is excellent between home and school. This has meant that X is now at school full time, which is a fantastic achievement. X's attainment and progress is very pleasing.'

Young people's health needs are well managed. Detailed health plans clearly outline the support young people require, including the involvement of routine and specialist healthcare services. Young people are supported to access these services. Records of appointments are maintained and staff constantly monitor young people's health. This ensures known appointments are attended and staff are aware of, and able to respond to any known or emerging health needs. Strong links with health professionals are established and maintained. For example, links with the local looked after children's nurses are in place. This ensures continuity of health plans, particularly when young people move into the home.

Young people are encouraged to engage in purposeful and age appropriate leisure activities. Staff are quick to identify young people's interests and hobbies and ensure young people are able to build and maintain friendships in the community. As a result, young people have the opportunity to develop their individual talents and skills, grow in confidence and become more socially adept.

The home is appropriately located, designed and maintained to a good standard. The Registered Manager and staff monitor both the interior and exterior of the home to ensure young people live in a well-maintained environment.

Keeping children and young people safe good

Young people report that they feel safe and can talk to an adult when they are concerned. Young people say bullying is not currently an issue in the home. However, on those occasions when bullying has occurred, this has been imaginatively and sensitively addressed by the staff team. Young people have designed anti-bullying posters and t-shirts which are displayed around the home; these acts as reminders for young people to behave appropriately.

Staff are well trained in safeguarding and the home has extensive policies and procedures in place which underpin effective practice. There was a shortfall identified at inspection in that there is no policy in place regarding the use of door alarms. However, young people and staff have a clear understanding of why and how they are used in the home. One young person commented, 'they are there to keep us safe when the staff go to bed.'

Admissions to the home are generally well planned. However, this is not supported by an impact risk assessment process to ensure that the needs of potential new admissions do not have a direct impact to an unacceptable degree on the home's existing young people. Whilst acknowledging that current young people appear to be appropriately placed without conflicting needs, records detailing the assessment and decision-making process were not available for inspection.

Robust systems are in place for managing young people's absence. Staff respond immediately should a young person go missing and follow specific, individualised plans which are in place for young people. Staff are proactive in attempting to retrieve young people quickly, which helps to reduce the number of incidents and helps to keep young people safe. Young people are cared for appropriately on their return, allowing staff and other relevant professionals to explore reasons why young people absent themselves from the home. Young people living at the home are not at known risk of child sexual exploitation. The local police support officer commented, 'there is a very good relationship between the home and the police, we are always made aware of any issues and the manager is very receptive to us working with her and the young people. We have presented some work around 'stranger danger' to some of the young people in the home.'

Young people benefit from a structured environment that provides them with clear boundaries and behavioural expectations. Staff make good use of individually tailored incentives and rewards to encourage and reinforce positive behaviour. Young people's achievements, no matter how small, are celebrated and responses to negative behaviour are proportionate. Staff are trained in behaviour management and restraint. Staff effectively utilise their training in de-escalation to encourage young people to find alternative ways of managing their emotions and frustrations. As a result, challenging behaviour is managed effectively and there have been few

incidents of restraint since the last inspection. All incidents of physical restraints have been used appropriately and only as a last resort to keep young people safe.

New staff have been recruited since the last inspection. They have been checked and vetted through the organisation's thorough recruitment procedures. The Registered Manager takes an active role in recruitment, ensuring the safe recruitment of staff who are able to meet young people's needs.

Young people and staff are regularly involved in fire drills to ensure they know how to safely evacuate the building in the event of a fire. Staff undertake routine health and safety checks and fire equipment is regularly maintained. This ensures young people live in a physically safe environment that is free from hazards.

Leadership and management

good

The Registered Manager has been a Registered Manager since 2010 and has been in post at this home since 2012. She holds the NVQ Level 4 and is yet to achieve a specific management award. Despite a lack of formal management qualification the Registered Manager effectively manages the home and ensures leadership focuses on ensuring the staff team provide nurturing and individual care to young people in the home. No requirements or recommendations were raised at the previous inspection.

The Registered Manager provides effective leadership and guidance for staff to ensure the service continues to develop and improve. They have an understanding of the home's strengths and areas for development. The provider and the Registered Manager effectively monitor all aspects of the service, including quality of care and outcomes for young people. Consultation with young people and stakeholders is part of the monitoring processes.

Young people, their families and social workers are clear about and complimentary of the services and support the home provides. The statement of purpose clearly sets out the home's aims and objectives. The home sits well within the local community, appropriate neighbourhood relationships are maintained by young people, staff and the Registered Manager.

The staff team are a small team, there is a good balance of experience within the team with all of the staff either holding a level three childcare qualification or working towards qualification. Rotas are generally well planned to ensure young people receive adequate support to meet their needs.

Staff benefit from regular training to meet the needs of young people living at the home. Staff report that they feel well supported by the Registered Manager. However, despite receiving regular supervision, the records do not consistently record the time, date, and length. The records are not being signed by both the supervisor and supervisee at the end of each supervision. This has no impact on

young people.

Young people's written records are securely stored, managed confidentially and provide a comprehensive picture of young people's needs, development and progress

What inspection judgements mean

Judgement	Description
Outstanding	A service of exceptional quality that significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Good	A service of high quality that exceeds minimum requirements.
Adequate	A service that only meets minimum requirements.
Inadequate	A service that does not meet minimum requirements.

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service and to consider how well it complies with the relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the framework of inspection for children's homes.