

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 for up to three children who are not able to live at their family home.

The manager registered with Ofsted in October 2019.

At the time of this inspection, two children were living at the home.

Inspection dates: 30 and 31 July 2024

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: 30 October 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
30/10/2023	Full	Good
14/03/2023	Full	Good
17/08/2021	Full	Good
23/10/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children receive care and support that is individualised to meet their known and emerging needs. The manager works in partnership with placing social workers and other professionals involved in the care and support of each child. This contributes to children feeling happy, safe and secure. The diversity of the staff team also supports children to settle at the home well, knowing staff understand their cultural needs. One child said, 'I was worried about moving into a children's home, but the staff understand my culture and this really helped me to settle in well.'

Placing social workers speak highly of the effective communication, which contributes to consistency of care for each child.

Children are consulted and involved in their care and support and are encouraged to contribute to their individual care plans. This helps them to understand their current and future plans.

Staff understand the importance of promoting education and general life skills. When a child is not engaging in education, staff offer additional support to make sure the education placement is right for each child. For example, staff have helped one child who has reached school leaving age to apply for a course in construction which is due to start in September. To support this further, staff have already bought the accompanying skills book and are helping the child to understand what the course will entail.

All children are registered with healthcare professionals and supported to attend healthcare appointments. When additional specialist healthcare support is required, the manager makes appropriate referrals via the correct channels. Emotional and mental healthcare needs of children are further supported via child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS). The manager and staff work in partnership with CAMHS risk management plans and care plans to further support children's emotional and mental health effectively.

Children are encouraged to take part in activities in the home and in the community. Staff encourage children to try different activities to widen their experiences.

Children are enabled to develop skills to help them with their future independence. These are in line with their age and understanding. For example, one child has started to plan, budget and prepare some basic meals in preparation for moving on to semi-independent living.

Children are supported to move on from the home in a planned and supportive way. This includes when a child's placement has to end due to any safeguarding concerns. The manager works in partnership with other professionals to identify an appropriate

alternative placement and helps to prepare the child for their move. This means children have a good understanding of their new home and the reason for them moving.

Staff understand and fully support children to maintain positive relationships with family and friends, in accordance with their individual plans.

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

Children can identify a member of staff they trust and can speak to about anything that is causing them concern. Both children say they feel safe and know that staff will take necessary action to further promote their safety.

Children have detailed risk management plans in place. These clearly identify the measures staff take to minimise risks. Staff encourage children to take age-appropriate risks. This helps children to develop skills and confidence in the home and community. Staff work in close partnership with other agencies who are involved in safeguarding children, including CAMHS. This enables comprehensive risk management strategies to be discussed and shared. This helps to support children when in crisis and to minimise risk of harm.

The managers and the staff team have a clear understanding of risks that children face when they go missing from the home. However, there has been an increase in missing-from-home incidents for one child, as their wish is to be nearer their own home. Staff ensure they follow all agreed protocols, searching known areas the child may gravitate to and continuing to make contact via phone and with known friendship groups. Detailed records of incidents of children going missing are maintained to show the actions taken by staff to support children's safe return home. Children are offered independent return home interviews to discuss any possible reasons that may have led to them going missing. This enables the manager and staff to develop and implement additional positive strategies to offer support and ideas to minimise this potential risk.

The home has a behaviour management policy in place. Children are encouraged and supported to develop appropriate behaviours, with anti-social or inappropriate behaviours challenged. Overall, staff manage behaviours well. However, on one occasion, the police were called to help to manage a child's behaviour which had escalated. The manager recognises that the incident could have been managed better, in line with the child's individual behaviour plan, and has recently implemented additional training for staff. He continues to monitor the effectiveness of this.

Children have access to a computer. Staff have a good understanding of online safety. They undertake training to update their skills and knowledge to enable them to support children to understand how to use the internet safely.

The manager understands when a child's placement at the home is not working for them, or when their behaviours and risks require additional specialist intervention. He works in partnership with other agencies tasked with safeguarding to find alternative support to meet the child's needs and to keep them safe.

Recruitment and selection processes are in line with safer recruitment guidance. This further contributes to the safety of children.

The home is maintained to a good standard. Children are encouraged and supported to personalise their own bedrooms and contribute their views about the general decor of the home. For example, children recently said they would like one of the lounges in the home to be a cinema and relaxation room. Work to arrange this is currently being completed. The home has two bathrooms for children. However, one bathroom requires updating to make it appropriate for children to use. This work has been delayed and there is no clear timescale for this to be completed. A recommendation is made regarding this.

Health and safety concerns are addressed appropriately, and all children and staff are aware of the procedures to follow in the event of a fire. Staff make sure visitors to the home are also aware of these procedures.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is experienced and holds relevant qualifications to fulfil his role effectively. He has high aspirations for children and his practice is exceptionally child-centred. He advocates strongly for children to help ensure they receive consistent care and support and liaises with professionals to further contribute to children receiving appropriate and consistent support to meet their individual needs. This ethos and practice is followed by the staff team. This means children receive care and support to meet their individual needs.

Since the last inspection, three new members of staff have been recruited and their integration into the existing staff team has been positive, both for the team and the children. The diversity of the staff team enables children to have positive role models.

Staff have regular team meetings and benefit from practice-related supervision. This helps staff to reflect on their performance and practice. Staff receive relevant training that enables them to meet the specific needs of children effectively.

The manager undertakes regular monitoring of the home and makes good use of external independent monitoring. This helps him understand the strengths of the home and areas for further development.

The manager ensures any significant safeguarding concerns are formally notified to the regulator as required by regulation. This includes action taken by the manager and staff, enabling additional oversight of how children are safeguarded.

Since the last inspection, the manager has met three of the four requirements made. These included making sure all references for staff are in place before they start work at the home, offering a wider range of activities to children and strengthening monitoring systems in relation to any consequences given. One requirement has been partially met,

in relation to staff supporting children to manage behaviours in accordance with the behaviour management policy and ensuring staff follow agreed de-escalation techniques appropriately. This requirement is restated.

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

Statutory requirement

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to meet the Care Standards Act 2000, The 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 registered person must prepare and implement a policy ("the behaviour management policy") which sets out— the measures of control, discipline and restraint which may be used in relation to children in the home. The registered person must ensure that— within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes— details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure; the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure. (Regulation 35 (1)(b) (3)(a)(v)(vii)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that staff follow the home's policy on de-escalating behaviour. This requirement is restated.	1 October 2024

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that the condition of the home is maintained to a high standard throughout, in particular, improving the bathroom. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

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: 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: Rebecca Doherty

Registered manager: Marcus Phipps

Inspector

Sarah Oldham, Social Care Inspector

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