

SC424897

Registered provider: Clover Childcare Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately owned home provides care for up to seven children. The home offers therapeutic care to children with complex health needs and children who may have experienced social and emotional difficulties. Children may have a history of insecure attachments and may have experienced the breakdown of numerous placements in foster care or children's homes.

The provider operates an on-site school, which is registered with the Department for Education. The inspector only inspected the social care provision at this setting.

The manager registered with Ofsted in December 2022.

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 February 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: 1 February 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
01/02/2023	Full	Good
09/06/2021	Full	Outstanding
06/02/2020	Full	Outstanding
18/12/2018	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

At the time of this inspection, six children were living at the home. Two children have moved out and two children have moved in since the last inspection. One child lives in another building in the grounds, which is part of the registered home.

Children have good relationships with the staff. Children seek out staff to play games with them and spend time with them relaxing or doing activities in the community. Staff have playful, warm and nurturing interactions with children. An independent reviewing officer said, '[Name of child] receives great care. Staff know [name of child] really well; they are completely committed to them.' This helps children to feel cared for and settled at the home.

All children are in full-time education. One child attends a mainstream school and receives the right support to help them engage with education. Five children attend the on-site alternative education setting, which better supports their needs. Children's education needs are regularly reviewed and they are making good progress at school.

Staff help children to have enjoyable, new experiences. Children regularly spend time at the beach and the trampoline park or out on bike rides with staff. Children benefit from participating in enriching activities with their friends and developing their social skills. Children who have not been confident to socialise and join youth groups are now regularly attending local clubs in line with their interests. This helps to build children's identity and self-esteem.

Children lead active and healthy lifestyles. They spend a lot of time in the rural local area playing outside. They attend sports clubs and other fitness activities. Staff provide home-cooked meals and children enjoy learning to cook. One child struggles to eat a varied diet. Staff are supporting the child to try different food groups, but this is not well recorded in the child's records.

Staff are helping children to spend time with their families. Children have improved relationships with their families and see them more regularly than they were before. However, one child's record is not clear about their family relationships and how they can spend time with family members.

Children have positive experiences living at the home. They are making good progress and learning to try new things. A social worker said, '[The home] is a fantastic home. The staff have done a wonderful job with the child. The child is unrecognisable.' Children are making happy memories and having new experiences. However, staff have not kept up-to-date memory books for all children to help them remember some of their special experiences and treasured memories while living in the home.

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

Children are safer because of the support that they receive from staff. Children have displayed behaviour that challenges staff but, over time, the frequency of this has reduced. Staff help children to understand their difficult feelings and emotions. Children are learning about positive behaviour and new ways to interact that are more helpful. Staff support children to respond in different ways when their peers are unkind to them. Several social workers and independent reviewing officers said that they have recognised a positive change in their children's behaviour because of the staff's support.

Children rarely go missing from the home. One child has gone missing from the home since the last inspection. Staff responded quickly to this and involved the local police to help look for them. Staff took effective action to help return the child to the home and to keep them safe.

Staff use detailed support plans to help them to understand children's behaviour. This helps staff to respond to children in line with the home's model of care.

Children receive additional therapeutic support from professionals from within the organisation. This includes life-story work with children. Children are helped by trained staff to make sense of some of their family relationships through sensitive exploration of their life experiences. Children are helped to better understand themselves through this detailed work. A social worker said that they value the extra effort that staff put into this work, which helps children to understand their identity.

Staff have needed to restrain children to keep them safe. The frequency of these incidents has reduced. Staff are spoken with after the event and children are also spoken with to help them understand why they needed to be held. Staff help children to repair relationships after holds. However, on two occasions, holds have not been proportionate. Leaders and managers took effective action to investigate these concerns. Staff have undertaken additional training. The manager has good oversight of the records, which helps to keep children safer.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is managed by a registered, permanent manager. She is enrolled on a relevant level 5 qualification. The manager is described by staff as 'approachable and open' and is a supportive and respected member of the team. The manager is open to learning and demonstrates this through practice development from insights offered by the independent person and other internal audits. This has helped the manager to increase the effectiveness of their oversight, even at times of change at the home.

The staff work well together at times of change to reduce disruption to children. There have been several staff changes since the last inspection. However, the

manager and staff have worked together to minimise any disruption to children's relationships with staff. In particular, the manager remains an active part of the home and this has provided children with continuity. All children have good relationships with her and she is a central, supportive figure for staff and children.

The manager works closely with social workers, education professionals and children's families to help plan effective care for children. These close relationships are helping children to spend more time with their families. A child who had not spent time with their parent for over three years is now beginning to see them. Children benefit from the manager's sensitive and caring approach to their individual needs.

Staff receive regular and reflective supervision sessions. Staff who are new to the home receive additional supervision sessions to help them to learn about the children and the home's policies and procedures. Staff said that leaders have 'supported them in every way'. Staff demonstrate their knowledge of children through informed and reflective conversations in staff team meetings.

Staff receive good induction training and support as well as training in the home's model of care. Staff said that the model of care helps them to understand children's needs and behaviours and gives them the skills to talk to children about their difficult feelings. However, when children's vulnerabilities have changed, the manager has not identified additional training to help staff to understand some children's specific behaviour needs.

The home's statement of purpose is up to date and there is a relevant location risk assessment. However, the location risk assessment does not include feedback from local partner agencies to help the manager and staff to understand local area knowledge.

The three requirements and the recommendation from the last inspection have been met.

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff can access appropriate facilities and resources to support their training needs. In particular, the registered person should ensure that staff have additional appropriate training to meet the changing developmental needs of individual children in their care. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.11)
- The registered person should ensure that staff encourage children to take a proactive role in looking after their day-to-day health and well-being. In particular, ensure that staff help children to monitor their eating habits to encourage a healthy balanced diet. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 34, paragraph 7.10)
- The registered person should ensure that children's arrangements to see their families are detailed in their records and provide clarity for staff about children's important family relationships. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 22, paragraph 4.7)
- The registered person should ensure that staff keep, and encourage children to keep, appropriate memorabilia of the time children spend living at the home and help children to record significant life events. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.5)
- The registered person should review the appropriateness and suitability of the location and premises of the home at least once a year and use the knowledge of, and feedback from, local partner agencies. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 64, paragraph 15.1)

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: SC424897

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Clover Childcare Services Limited

Responsible individual: Daniel Knight

Registered manager: Katie O'Malley

Inspector

Rebecca Hannell, Social Care Inspector

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