

1241776

Registered provider: Hexagon Care Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately run children's home is registered for four children who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Inspection dates: 11 to 12 July 2017

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: First inspection since registration

Overall judgement at last inspection: Not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection:

None

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because:

- The staff team follows missing from home procedures well. They actively search for young people when missing, visiting family and friends to locate them.
- Young people successfully follow individual independence programmes. This helps them develop their life skills and prepares them for the transition to adulthood.
- Staff understand and implement safeguarding policies well.
- Staff have warm and established relationships with young people. This means that young people develop their relationships with others.
- Incidents of physical restraint are low due to the positive approach of staff. This helps young people to calm and experience less emotional upset.
- Young people are confident in sharing their wishes and feelings.

The children's home's areas for development:

- There are some areas for development. These include making sure that effective challenge is given to the local authority and other professionals. This relates to decisions made about young people and the quality of care that young people receive. The registered manager needs to consider in more detail the areas of strength and weakness within the quality of care review and the necessary actions to improve outcomes for young people.

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to meet the Care Standards Act 2000, 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 ensure that if the registered person considers, or staff consider, a placing authority's or a relevant person's performance or response to be inadequate in relation to their role, challenge the placing authority or the relevant person to seek to ensure that each child's needs are met in accordance with the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 5 (c))	31/08/2017

Recommendations

- The registered person is responsible for deciding what each review should focus on, based on the specific circumstances of the home at that particular time and any areas of high risk to the children that the home is designed to care for, such as missing or exploitation. They will also consider what information or data recorded in the home will form part of the evidence base for their analysis and conclusions. There is no expectation that the registered person will review the home against every part of the Quality Standards every six months – registered persons should use their professional judgement to decide which factors to focus on. The review should enable the registered person to identify areas of strength and possible weakness in the home's care, which will be captured in the written report. The report should clearly identify any actions required for the next 6 months of delivery within the home and how those actions will be addressed. The whole review process and the resulting report should be used as a tool for continuous improvement in the home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.4)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The home has recently been registered. Two of the young people living at the home have recently arrived and are settling in. The manager ensures that young people have a positive transition into the home. Young people are encouraged to visit the home and to stay for tea visits. Young people receive welcome packs and are given warmth and reassurance from staff. This helps young people to feel less anxious about their move and helps them to unwind. Young people receive good-quality care from well-trained and experienced staff. Staff work in close partnership with social workers, teachers, police and parents. These unified working relationships mean that staff are able to manage young people's complex behaviours and meet their needs.

The home is a large, newly decorated detached house in a quiet area. The house has bright walls, modern furnishings and feels really welcoming. Young people have personalised and decorated their rooms. Young people take pride in their home and look after it well. This means that the home environment is respected by young people and enables them to feel that they belong.

The young person's guide is creative, well written and user friendly. This helps young people to feel at ease and alleviates some of the worries that they may have about their new home. Key-work sessions take place regularly and are well structured. They focus on targeted areas for improvement in line with local authority care plans. As a result, young people are helped to make progress with issues affecting them, such as appropriate relationships, family contact, going missing and emotional anxiety.

Young people's files are well organised, and placement plans clearly identify aims and objectives set to enable progress. This helps staff and young people to work towards longer-term placement aims. The registered manager has considerable focus on the achievements that young people make and offers a range of rewards and praise to celebrate these. This allows young people to feel proud of their progress and encourages more positive behaviours. Young people have individual books that record their achievements and memories with colourful photographs and drawings. This helps young people to build relationships with staff and provides them with a sense of belonging.

Staff have good relationships with young people's families and friends. Staff maintain regular communication with them. Young people receive appropriate emotional and practical support to stay in contact with people who matter to them. As a result, young people maintain their family links, which adds to their sense of emotional stability and sense of identity. Young people are encouraged to have visits from family and friends. This helps young people to feel comforted and more relaxed in their home. One young person told the inspector, 'I like the home. I have been helped with my independence. Staff listen to me and, yeah, I like it. There is nothing major that I do not like. Nothing that has caused me a problem or that worries me, yeah, I feel safe.' Another young person told the inspector, 'I have no issues, there is nothing that I wish to complain about or that I do not like.'

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

Managers ensure that staff understand and follow safeguarding processes. During this inspection, several staff members shared knowledge about dealing with safeguarding concerns promptly and professionally. This means that staff are able to prioritise the safety of young people. Detailed risk assessments and behaviour management plans enable staff to manage young people's risk-taking behaviours well, including missing episodes, alcohol misuse and the use of mobile devices or the internet. This means that young people are safeguarded as staff minimise the level of harm that they are exposed to.

One young person has been missing a considerable number of times since her arrival. The managers and staff team are proactive in searching for her, repeatedly visiting her relatives' and boyfriends' addresses. Staff promptly follow procedures to report her missing and work tirelessly to ensure her safe return.

Incidents of physical restraint are low. This is because staff are experienced in using distraction techniques, humour and talking approaches to ensure that situations do not escalate to aggression. This means that the number of episodes involving emotional and physical harm are significantly reduced. This demonstrates appropriate responses to young people and helps them to develop suitable responses to others. When physical restraint is used it is as a last resort, and incidents are thoroughly recorded. Reflection consistently takes place with young people after an incident. This helps them to avoid similar situations in the future and gives them the opportunity to share what is worrying them with staff.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager has extensive experience and the necessary qualifications for the role. She is passionate and committed to providing a high quality of care to young people. Staff receive regular, good-quality supervision from managers that enables them to reflect on and develop their practice. This allows them to ensure that a safe and consistent level of care is delivered to young people. The registered manager ensures that regular team meetings are held to consider shortfalls in practice. She considers how to improve ways of working to develop and improve the quality of care provided. Young people are able to attend for part of these meetings, should they wish. This means that young people feel that they are respected and they experience a sense of belonging. This helps them to feel part of their home and develops their confidence.

Impact assessments for new young people highlight risk factors relating to each young person. The manager clearly evaluates and analyses whether a placement is suitable. However, she needs to ensure that effective challenge is made if she feels that a young person's placement is not suitable. For example, the registered manager's assessment for one young person highlighted concerns about whether the placement was

appropriate. Despite this, the young person moved in. During the inspection, the registered manager did not challenge a rushed decision made by a social worker assertively enough. This led to a young person experiencing upheaval in her daily routine and missing a day of school. In addition, more challenge needs to be given by the staff and managers about the day-to-day care that young people receive. These shortfalls could mean that young people's needs are not properly met and that decisions are made without considering the view of staff and managers. This could affect the longevity of young people's placements and could cause them confusion.

Staff recruitment processes are robust. Managers verify references, qualifications and check that all necessary disclosure and barring checks are in place. This means that young people receive care from appropriately checked adults. New staff receive a thorough induction, and a good range of appropriate training is provided. This means that staff have the skills and knowledge to meet the complex needs of young people. The staff speak very positively about their managers. One staff member told the inspector, 'I feel really supported, I have good supervision and it is regular, every two weeks as I am in a new role. I really like working here. There is good training and I feel the registered manager listens to me, I feel confident to speak up should I need to.'

The registered manager has completed a thorough and well-evaluated assessment of the location of the home. This means that potential risks within the surrounding area are identified and actions to minimise the risks are well recorded. This helps to keep young people safe and enables staff to respond promptly to potential situations. Feedback from professionals about the care that young people receive is positive. A social worker told the inspector, 'I think I have a good partnership in place with staff, they are really good, and I cannot fault them. They support necessary referrals for the young person and do all they can. I have nothing of concern to say about them.'

The statement of purpose sufficiently reflects the aims and objectives of the service. The manager ensures close scrutiny and oversight of the staff to ensure that safe, high-quality care is maintained. However, the approach currently used by the registered manager does not enable her to sufficiently evaluate the quality of care provided by the service. The registered manager is unable to identify clearly the strengths and weaknesses of the home. The registered manager does not use recognised patterns or trends to create suitable action plans that will support continuous improvements.

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: 1241776

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Hexagon Care Services Limited

Registered provider address: 1 Tustin Court, Port Way, Ashton On Ribble, Preston
PR2 2YQ

Responsible individual: Mark Dunn

Registered manager: Johann Deeming

Inspector

Anna Gravelle, social care inspector

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