

# SC415347

Registered provider: Hillcrest Children's Services (2) Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

The privately owned home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to four children and young people who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

**Inspection dates:** 11 to 12 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:** 11 January 2017

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** Improved effectiveness

### Enforcement action since last inspection:

None.

## Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because:

- Young people make significant progress in respect of their behavioural, social and emotional development.
- Young people are engaged in education and training, and are making steady progress.
- Enthusiastic and motivated staff develop relationships with young people, which are based on mutual trust and respect.
- Staff provide young people with the skills, knowledge and opportunities to keep themselves safe.
- Young people are able to identify staff who they feel understand them and care about them.
- Links between staff and the clinical therapist are good, and help to ensure that there is a collaborative approach to understanding and addressing young people's emotional health needs.
- Staff receive good support through regular supervision and training. This contributes to the staff's clear commitment and dedication to young people.

The children's home's areas for development:

- Some parts of the home require decoration to ensure that young people experience a homely and well-maintained environment.
- Risk assessments are not always clear enough. They do not consistently reflect the changing needs of young people and provide staff with guidance on how to manage risk.
- In some instances, case records, including placement plans, do not reflect the personalised care that young people require.

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/01/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
15/08/2016	Full	Requires improvement
21/10/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
12/05/2015	Full	Good

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

### Recommendations

- Ensure that staff provide young people with a nurturing and supportive environment which is homely and well maintained ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9). Specifically, maintenance and decoration is required in the kitchen, bathroom and hallway
- Ensure that staff continually and actively assess the risk to each child, and the arrangements in place to protect them ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5). Specifically, where there are safeguarding concerns for a young person, staff should review risk assessments and include details of the steps the home will take to manage any risks on a day-to-day basis.
- Ensure that staff understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. Case records must be kept up to date ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4). Specifically, placement plans should support staff to understand young people's individual needs.

### Inspection judgements

#### Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Staff are intuitive and proactive, and provide tailored care to meet the individual needs of young people. A social worker told the inspector, 'I have been impressed with the placement. He has made really good progress.' The support that young people receive from staff ensures that they progress in all aspect of their lives, including their emotional, behavioural and educational development.'

Staff work hard to develop relationships with young people and show that they care. For example, staff take an interest in the things that are important to young people, such as music and sport. Furthermore, staff offer affection to young people through hugs and handshakes. A young person told the inspector, '[The registered manager] is a nice guy, he wants to help, he wants to talk to you, and he takes an interest in me. This is definitely a good home.' Young people are surrounded by adults who they recognise care about them, which helps to provide them with a sense of belonging and security.

Staff demonstrate a good understanding of young people's physical and emotional health needs. Staff take every opportunity to consider and respond to young people's emotional health needs. Staff encourage young people to talk about what is causing them to be anxious or upset. A social worker told the inspector, 'The placement is clearly having a positive impact on his emotional well-being.' Staff support young people to become more emotionally resilient.'

Staff have been successful in enabling young people to access education. Staff work closely with education partners to ensure that young people receive the support that they need both in and out of school. For example, when young people are struggling in school, staff go into the school so that they are available to offer reassurance to young people when they need it most. A headteacher told the inspector, 'The pupils from that home always have good attendance, they always do their homework, we always know when there have been incidents or if there have been problems at home.'

In some instances, case records, including young people's placement plans, lack detail and do not provide staff with clear guidance on how best to support young people. Despite this, staff have a good understanding of young people's needs and they are successful in tailoring the support they offer to young people. For example, staff recognise that one young person needs a clear structure and needs to know what he will be doing throughout the day. Simple steps, such as planning an activity for when the young person comes home from school, provide the young person with the reassurance he needs, reducing his feelings of anxiety.

Young people benefit from a pleasant and welcoming home environment. However, despite some recent decoration, parts of the home are beginning to look tired and in need of maintenance. In particular, the kitchen, one of the young people's bathrooms and the landing area are in need of attention.

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

Staff use their positive relationships with young people to promote positive behaviour. Staff use every opportunity to give young people praise and encouragement. Staff are consistent in their approach, and provide young people with clear boundaries. A social worker told the inspector, 'His behaviour has changed dramatically while he has been there.'

Young people who have previously self-harmed, gone missing or had a pattern of aggressive behaviour no longer display such behaviours. This is because young people feel safe, have a sense of belonging and have learned to regulate their emotions better.

Staff understand young people's vulnerabilities well and as a result take the necessary steps to keep young people safe. For example, restrictions on free time and internet access reduce the risk of child sexual exploitation. Staff use key-work sessions to provide young people with the knowledge to keep themselves safe. When the time is right, staff gradually reduce the restrictions in place, to give young people opportunities to show they can make safe choices.

Despite this, risk assessments are not always clear. In some instances, risk assessments do not assist staff in understanding how best to keep young people safe. The impact of this is minimised due to the staff's working knowledge of young people's needs. However, the quality of risk assessments weakens the registered manager's ability to

review the ongoing effectiveness of strategies for managing risk.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good**

The registered manager has been in post since April 2016, and is suitably qualified.

The registered manager uses a range of monitoring systems to review the quality of care that young people receive. As a result, he has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the home. The registered manager strives to provide excellent care for all young people. Staff share this motivation. The tailored care that young people receive helps them to make good progress in respect of their behaviour and emotional well-being.

Staff feel well supported by the registered manager, and describe him as being approachable and helpful. Staff consistently receive supervision, and are able to access a range of training opportunities. This includes bespoke training from the provider's clinical team that enables staff to understand the link between trauma and behaviour'

Staff are good at communicating with partner agencies, including local authorities, police and the clinical team. A social worker said, 'There has been some good joined-up working, great communication.' This ensures a collaborative approach to meeting the needs of young people.

### **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:** SC415347

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** Hillcrest Children's Services (2) Limited

**Registered provider address:** Hillcrest Children's Services (2) Limited, Turnpike Gate House, Alcester Health, Alcester, Warwickshire B49 5JG

**Responsible individual:** Jarrod Elcock

**Registered manager:** Kevin Brammer

## Inspector

Paul Robinson: social care inspector

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