

1236771

Registered provider: Hexagon Care Services Limited

Interim inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately owned home provides short-term care and accommodation for up to four young people who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The primary purpose of the service is to assess whether young people can return to the care of their families.

Inspection date: 10 January 2018

Judgement at last inspection: Good

Date of last inspection: 4 October 2017

Enforcement action since last inspection: None

This inspection

The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection

This home was judged good at the last full inspection.
At the interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has sustained effectiveness.

The home provides young people with short-term care while their needs and permanent living arrangements are assessed by the responsible local authority. Since the last inspection, staff have supported two young people to move on to foster care and long-term residential care. Both young people's moves from the home were carefully planned and staff made sure that both young people met their new carers before they moved on, which helped them to settle into their new homes.

Likewise, staff have successfully introduced two young people into the home. The young people confirmed that staff made them feel welcome when they moved into the home. The team's nurturing approach is helping young people to develop positive relationships with their staff and to settle into their temporary living arrangements. However, recent unavoidable staff changes have compromised the continuity of care provided to young

people. Three members of staff have left in the past two months. The registered and senior managers have taken swift action to recruit new staff and they are confident that they will establish a full and stable team soon. Furthermore, recruitment practice is robust. All staff are rigorously vetted before they start to work at the home.

Improvements have been made in the planning for young people's education. All young people have access to full-time education from the point of them moving in. The manager now makes sure that arrangements and funding for young people's education are agreed with the placing authority from the onset of the placement. These improvements are promoting young people's learning and development, which, in turn, enhances their future life chances and career opportunities.

Young people's safety improves when they move into the home. In particular, incidents of young people going missing from home significantly decrease. Additionally, the associated risks of going missing, such as child sexual exploitation, drug use and offending behaviour, also decrease because staff know where the young people are and they provide young people with appropriate supervision, support and guidance.

In the main, staff are good at managing young people's behaviour. The registered manager has recently attended a restorative practice training course, which she intends to roll out to the team. Once this practice is embedded, young people will benefit from staff teaching them how to repair and rebuild healthy relationships following any difficult situations, behaviour or conflict.

All staff, including casual staff, receive ongoing training to equip them with the relevant knowledge and skills to fulfil their roles successfully. Behaviour management training, for example, ensures that staff are confident to tackle difficult situations and de-escalate potentially harmful behaviour. As a result, the use of restraint is rare at the home. However, restraint records can improve. Some records do not reflect the manager's debrief with the staff involved in the restraint or detail the practice issues identified, for example, how staff can prevent similar situations from reoccurring in the future.

Young people are fully aware of the complaints procedure and they are not afraid to raise their concerns. However, not all complaints are managed or recorded appropriately. The manager had not been made aware of two recent complaints that had been made by young people. This caused a delay in getting their concerns dealt with in a timely way. Furthermore, some complaint records do not detail the action taken or the outcome of the complaint. Improvements can be made to the home's complaint process to make sure that complaints are dealt with swiftly.

Young people do not receive consistent support from the team to prepare and enable them to meaningfully engage at important meetings, such as placement planning meetings. On one occasion, a young person felt unable to voice her wishes and feelings at meetings where significant decisions are made about their care and future. Such shortfalls can undermine young people's meaningful participation in care planning.

On occasion, the daily routines and practice at the home do not uphold young people's

right to privacy and confidentiality. Some young people's personal information, including their parents' contact details, was displayed on the office wall. When this was raised with the registered manager, she acknowledged the potential safeguarding risks, which are also associated with this practice.

Improvements can be made to the home's independent monitoring. The visitor does not seek the views of stakeholders, for example social workers, parents, relatives or schools, to inform the assessment of quality of care provided. As a result, opportunities are missed to involve all relevant parties in the development of the service.

Since the last inspection, the manager has successfully registered with Ofsted. She demonstrates enthusiasm and capacity for developing the service and has satisfactorily addressed all of the recommendations raised at the last inspection. She has a good understanding of the home's strengths and she has a clear plan in place to continue to develop and improve the service. Her priority is to establish a full and stable team to enhance continuity of care.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/10/2017	Full	Good
14/03/2017	Full	Requires improvement

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, 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 establish a procedure for considering complaints made by or on behalf of children. The registered person must ensure that a record is made of any complaint, the action taken in response, and the outcome of any investigation. (Regulation 39(1)(3))	16/02/2018

Recommendations

- The registered person and the home's staff should be familiar with the care planning process for looked-after children and must assist children to prepare for meetings in relation to this. Staff should play an important role in these meetings, including supporting the child and enabling a clear understanding to be reached about the child's views, wishes, feelings and expectations for their future. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 23, paragraph 4.14) In particular, staff should enable young people to engage in their care planning meetings in a meaningful way.
- Records of restraint must be kept and should enable the registered person and staff to review the use of control, discipline and restraint to identify effective practice and respond promptly where any issues or trends of concern emerge. The review should provide the opportunity for amending practice to ensure that it meets the needs of each child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 49, paragraph 9.59) In particular, record staff's debrief meetings and any practice issues that are identified.
- All children's case records (regulation 36) must be kept up to date and stored securely whilst they remain in the home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.3) In particular, ensure that young people's personal details and information are kept confidential.
- Any individual appointed to carry out visits to the home as an independent person must make a rigorous and impartial assessment of the home's arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children in the home's care. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.5) In particular, make sure that the independent person seeks stakeholders' views to inform their assessment.

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.

This inspection focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

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: 1236771

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Hexagon Care Services Limited

Registered provider address: Unit 1 Tustin Court, Riversway, Preston PR2 2YQ

Responsible individual: Louise Whitby

Registered manager: Colette McCully

Inspector

Marina Tully, social care inspector

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