

SC415347

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

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A private company that operates a number of children's homes across the country owns this home. This home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to four children and young people who have social and/or emotional difficulties.

The manager was registered with Ofsted on 26 July 2016. He holds a level 5 qualification in leadership and management.

Inspection dates: 13 to 14 June 2018

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
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The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: 16 March 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: improved effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
16/03/2018	Interim	Improved effectiveness
11/09/2017	Full	Good
11/01/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
15/08/2016	Full	Requires improvement

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Young people make exceptional, sustained progress in key areas of their life. This is because of the close relationships that they have with staff and the consistent, individualised support that they receive from them. Consequently, young people's life chances are significantly enhanced.

Young people are extremely positive about the care that they receive. One young person spoke about a member of staff and stated, 'He is absolutely fantastic, he spends time with me and believes what I tell him. I nominated him for staff member of the month and he got it! I think he should get it again this month.' Professionals also talk extremely positively about the excellent relationships between staff and young people. A pastoral lead from school said, 'When staff collect young people from school, they greet them positively and demonstrate warmth and pride to each young person. They are proud of what young people achieve and offer care which is equal to that of a child and a good parent.' A social worker said, 'It's a fantastic home, absolutely fantastic, the best home I have ever worked with. They really understand [the young person], they get him and what he is about.'

Despite facing significant challenges, young people's self-esteem and confidence improve significantly. Consequently, they make excellent progress socially and emotionally and have high aspirations for their future. Training in therapeutic approaches and a robust understanding of attachment theory underpin staff practice. Regular consultations with a clinical psychologist are used well and are effective in improving staff practice in the home. A social worker said, 'The staff are knowledgeable and friendly. The interactions observed are very positive and it is evident that staff are supported by a therapist. This is evident in the way they engage with the young people and how they understand the reasons behind some behaviours. They have the capacity to see beyond the behaviour.'

Staff sensitively support and encourage young people with their identity and have skilfully supported one young person with issues around their gender identity and sexuality. Staff have demonstrated an ability to seek specialised help when this has been necessary and have undertaken research to meet the needs of the young people they care for. Staff and young people have an inclusive attitude and celebrate diversity. Young people are encouraged to display flags celebrating their identity. As a result of this work, young people have a greater tolerance to each other and there is no bullying within the home.

Staff also help young people to prepare for their increasing independence. They carefully balance the risk this poses with opportunities for young people to improve their skills. Two young people are currently making plans to move into independent living, having made significant progress. This is because of the direct work undertaken with young people, which prepares them for adult life.

Young people are making good progress with their education and employment. Staff are

ambitious for young people and have offered them extensive support to ensure that their individual needs are met. When young people are unable to attend school, staff are proactive in securing an alternative provision. At times, this has required a tenacious challenge to the local authority.

Young people's views are central to the running of the home. Staff consult young people in all aspects of their care and support them to take increasing control of the decisions that affect them. Young people confirmed that staff listen to them. This ensures that young people feel that their views are valued and provides them with a degree of control. The registered manager ensures that young people receive feedback about any requests that they make.

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

Young people are safe and said that they feel safe. As a result of the close and nurturing relationships that young people have with staff, they feel able to share their worries and concerns. Staff are confident and skilled when managing allegations or disclosures and ensure that the appropriate agencies are notified. Consequently, young people feel supported and are protected.

Key work is undertaken with young people to address their individual needs. As a result, young people make excellent progress. For example, one young person has learned to express their feelings and, consequently, he has not self-harmed for over six months. A social worker stated, 'He is a different young man, he is able to express his feelings and emotions, and this is huge. He has learned to think about the consequences of his behaviour and the impact that this has on others. As he has been shown empathy, this is a skill that he has learned himself.'

Staff and young people work together to develop strategies to help keep young people safe. Because of this, young people become safer. They make safer choices and risks reduce in all areas of their lives. Young people do not go missing. One grandparent stated, 'He has made exceptional progress. He is a different child.'

Young people's behaviour and relationships with each other have improved. Staff set clear and consistent boundaries. Staff and young people work together to complete plans. These plans identify triggers that make young people feel angry or upset and outline techniques that they can use when they begin to feel like this. These plans also provide clear guidance for staff about how they should support young people. Consequently, young people feel secure. This work is underpinned by a clinical psychologist who helps staff to reflect on the strategies that they employ. Staff welcome this opportunity and use it effectively to ensure that their practice is informed by a solid evidence base.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

A suitably qualified and experienced registered manager leads the staff team. He is supported by an experienced deputy manager. Together they are furthering their knowledge and are undertaking a diploma in therapeutic childcare. This work will be disseminated to the staff team to develop practice and understanding about the needs of young people who have experienced complex trauma.

The registered manager keeps young people at the heart of all he does. He is inspirational and ambitious for young people and ensures that this ethos permeates across the entire staff team. A grandparent stated, 'The registered manager has turned the home around. He is just superb. He puts the children first at all times.'

Staff are positive about the support that they receive from the registered manager and the deputy manager. Supervision sessions are regular and of high quality. They help staff to generate ideas and reflect on their practice. New staff are robustly vetted and are supported through a clear, effective induction process. This ensures that young people receive high-quality care.

The majority of staff hold the required level 3 diploma or a suitable equivalent. A small number are currently working to achieve this, and plans are in place to ensure that they complete this within the required timescales. Staff are also provided with a wide range of training that informs their practice and meets young people's individual and diverse needs.

Management oversight and monitoring processes are effective and innovative. For example, the registered manager has developed a system to monitor why staff leave, to ensure that young people are provided with a stable workforce. As a result, the registered manager has a good insight into the home's strengths and areas of development. He is proactive in addressing shortfalls. The statement of purpose accurately reflects the services offered by the home and is clear about the support offered to young people.

The registered manager and the deputy manager have excellent relationships with partner agencies. An example of this is that the local police community support officer visits the home each fortnight and spends time with young people updating them about any risks that may have arisen in the local area. The registered manager is also training to become a facilitator in restorative justice and is passionate about young people in care not being criminalised. Young people and staff benefit from having a registered manager who strives to improve the lives of those he works with.

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) Ltd

Registered provider address: Turnpike Gate House, Alcester Heath, Alcester,
Warwickshire B49 5JG

Responsible individual: Jarrod Elcock

Registered manager: Kevin Brammer

Inspector

Annemarie Parker, social care inspector

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