

1221357

Registered provider: Hexagon Care Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is one of a number owned and managed by a private organisation. The home provides a stable environment for young females who are unable to live with their families for a variety of reasons. It accommodates up to four young people.

Inspection dates: 18 to 19 June 2019

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **requires improvement to be 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: 21 January 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/01/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good
13/12/2017	Full	Good
25/01/2017	Full	Good

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 make arrangements for the handling, recording, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of medicines received into the children's home. (Regulation 23 (i))	19/07/2019
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The registered person may only— employ an individual to work at the children's home; if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). The requirements are that— the individual is of integrity and good character; the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform. (Regulation 32(1)(2)(a) and (3)(a)(b))	19/07/2019
The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure that staff— assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare. (Regulation 12(1) and (2)(a)(i)(iii)(iv))	19/07/2019

Recommendations

- Staff should be familiar with the home's policies on record keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective, and clear recording. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62,

paragraph 14.4)

- The registered person should ensure that staff can access appropriate facilities and resources to support their training needs and should understand the key role they play in the training and development of staff in the home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.11)
- The registered person should actively seek scrutiny of the home and make best use of information from internal monitoring to ensure continuous improvement. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24)
Specifically, routine internal monitoring systems should be established.
- The registered person should seek to ensure that the local authority regularly consults the child and the home about the child's relevant plans. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 57, paragraph 11.11)
Specifically, seek to ensure that pathway planning is started and that reviews are held in a timely manner.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Young people living in the home receive individualised care tailored to their support needs. All young people are attending an educational provision and are making steady progress. Staff understand the importance of education and promote young people's engagement and attendance. A social worker said, 'When [young person's name] first came to the home, she wasn't in school. They have turned this round and really promoted her education.'

Staff nurture young people's aspirations. One young person has a part-time job, and another aspires to a future career in baking. Young people have access to good information, advice, and guidance to help them to succeed.

Young people are building positive and warm relationships with staff. This is helping them to feel a sense of security. One social worker said, '[Young person's name]'s personal presentation, self-care skills and overall demeanour have significantly improved over the last few months and I would definitely credit staff with this, who have persistently and patiently worked with her, engaging her in numerous make-up and makeover sessions, which she clearly enjoys.'

Young people are given the opportunity and support to try new experiences. This helps them to learn, develop and grow. One young person has recently been on a train for the first time and others are planning trips away with staff for the summer holidays. Memory books are being created to capture special times and record young people's journey since arriving at the home.

Staff encourage young people to take part in community projects. For example, one young person is knitting blankets for the local hospital neo-natal unit. Young people are supported to access leisure and community activities, for example Rangers, and one young person is completing her silver Duke of Edinburgh's Award. This is building their self-esteem and confidence.

The home environment is comfortable and welcoming. Young people take pride in their bedrooms and are encouraged to personalise them. They have created artwork to decorate their rooms and communal areas. A young person said, 'I like everything about [name of children's home]. It feels like my home.'

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

Young people's placements are stable, and their behaviours are more settled. Staff consistently use rewards to reinforce positive behaviours. This is successful and has meant that staff have not used physical interventions or sanctions to support behaviour management. Young people enjoy choosing rewards that are meaningful to them and this has maximised their impact. A social worker said, '[Young person's name] feels safe at the home and is, in the main, settled and happy with staff and her placement.'

Staff have introduced regular activities to engage young people and this has meant that risk-taking behaviours, such as going missing from home, have greatly reduced. One parent said, 'She has grown up a lot. She has stopped taking drugs now and is going to school. I can't praise them enough for what they have done for my daughter.'

Risk assessments are in place but do not adequately cover all known risks to safeguard young people. For example, one young person has a history of self-harm that is not covered in her risk assessment. Another young person has a safe word which she uses to inform staff that she is in a low mood. The word is not documented in her care plan, which means that staff may not be able to respond to her needs.

Staff do not always identify risk appropriately. On one occasion, this meant that they did not respond adequately to a safeguarding incident. This exposed the young person to a significant risk of harm. The management team recognised this and addressed it swiftly.

A shortfall in the recording of administration of medication was identified during the inspection and a requirement has been made to address this. There were also some gaps in the employment history of newly recruited staff and a further requirement has been made regarding this.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The newly appointed manager has had a positive impact in a short period of time. She has refreshed and refocused the home and has a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. However, there is no regular system of internal monitoring checks. This is important to ensure that shortfalls are addressed and the service continues to improve.

Staff have responded well to the new manager and morale is high. One member of staff said, 'I like that now we have a manager that we can go to if we need any help. I feel they have the children's best interests at heart.'

Young people benefit from a consistent permanent staff team. Greater staff retention means that young people can build positive and trusting relationships over time. This helps them to invest and engage with the placement.

Staff benefit from regular supervision which allows them to reflect on their practice. All staff have received an induction and have access to regular training opportunities. However, additional training is required to support staff's understanding and responses to young people's needs, for example self-harm and loss and bereavement training.

There are good working relationships with families and professionals. A social worker said, 'I have found the staff to be excellent. They communicate effectively on a regular basis and provide vital and important information about every aspect of [young person's name]'s care on a consistent basis.'

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: 1221357

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Hexagon Care Services Limited

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

Responsible individual: Jeanette Swift

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Sophie Thomson, social care inspector

Mandy Williams, social care inspector

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