

1236771

Registered provider: Hexagon Care Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately owned home cares for up to three children between the ages of 11 and 17 years. The home's purpose is to provide care and accommodation for children who experience social, emotional and behavioural difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted on 20 December 2018.

Inspection dates: 24 to 25 September 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: 27 November 2018

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
27/11/2018	Full	Requires improvement to be good
10/01/2018	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
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, 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
<p>The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and positive responses to other children and adults. (Regulation 11 (1)(b)(c))</p> <p>In particular, staff should consistently challenge young people when they use offensive language.</p>	25/10/2019
<p>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—</p> <p>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;</p> <p>take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and</p> <p>are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(a)(i)(vi)(vii))</p> <p>In particular, report all safeguarding concerns to the relevant professionals in a timely way. Undertake room checks, when necessary. Consider the risks identified in the local area assessment to inform all placement decisions.</p>	25/10/2019
<p>The registered person may only use devices for the monitoring or surveillance of children if the child's placing authority consents in writing to the monitoring or surveillance; and the monitoring or surveillance is no more intrusive than necessary, having regard to the child's need for privacy.</p>	25/10/2019

(Regulation 24 (1)(b)(d)) In particular, this refers to the use of door alarms.	
The registered person must operate a disciplinary procedure which, in particular, provides that the failure on the part of an employee to report an incident of abuse, or suspected abuse, whether past or present, in relation to a child to the appropriate person is a ground on which disciplinary proceedings may be instituted. (Regulation 33 (2)(b))	25/10/2019
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation. (Regulation 40 (4)(a))	25/10/2019

Recommendation

- Ensure that restraints are rigorously reviewed and provide the opportunity for amending practice to ensure that it promotes the child's welfare and needs. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 49, paragraph 9.59)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Young people make noticeable progress from their starting points. The manager and staff team have a good understanding of the young people's needs and provide them with personalised care and support.

Young people like their home and their staff team. This is reflected in a young person's comments, 'I feel safe and happy here. I have done so much since I moved here. I feel listened to.'

The young people benefit from developing positive relationships with a consistent and friendly team. Young people who have moved on from the home often keep in touch, demonstrating the positive impact that the staff have on young people's lives and experiences.

The manager and staff work diligently with the young people's social workers, parents and relatives. Since the last inspection, they have successfully supported two young

people to return to the care of their families. The staff team members understand how important families are to young people and they are skilled at establishing positive working relationships with them. An aunt said, 'The staff are brilliant. They have worked hard with [name of young person], and they always keep me updated.'

The staff promote young people's physical and emotional health well. With the staff's support and encouragement, young people engage with counselling services, and their emotional well-being improves.

Young people benefit from staff's guidance and support on a range of important matters, such as sexual health, healthy living and developing skills to live independently. As a result, young people are better prepared for their future and independence. However, the staff team's efforts to help young people to develop socially acceptable behaviour are being undermined by some staff who fail to challenge young people when they use offensive language.

The home uses door alarms to help staff to monitor young people's whereabouts. However, the manager does not keep their use under review to avoid any unnecessary intrusion on young people's privacy. Furthermore, no written consent has been obtained from placing authorities for their use.

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

Although young people's safety improves from their starting points, safeguarding practice is not yet good because some staff do not consistently follow safeguarding procedures.

On one occasion, the staff failed to swiftly inform the police and placing authority when a young person was assaulted in the community. This delayed a police investigation into the incident and potentially placed other young people at risk. Furthermore, the staff did not follow the company's safeguarding procedures.

The manager does not ensure that all serious concerns raised about staff are shared with the designated officer. Similarly, the manager did not notify Ofsted of a potential child sexual exploitation concern in a timely way. Shortfalls in reporting safeguarding incidents undermine external monitoring of the home's safeguarding practice and weaken partnership working.

The staff provide young people with emotional support and medical care when they self-harm. However, safety measures in this area could improve. For example, checks in young people's bedrooms could be undertaken, to ensure that any potentially harmful objects are removed.

Notwithstanding this, the staff are skilled at developing positive relationships with young people, which is helping the young people to reduce some high-risk behaviours, such as physical aggression and causing damage in the home. With the staff's support

and guidance, young people learn how to deal with their difficult emotions in a safer way, which is making the home a safer and calmer place in which to live.

The staff are skilled at managing challenging behaviour. As a result, the use of physical restraint is rare. However, the manager's review of physical interventions continues to lack rigour.

Individualised risk assessments provide staff with clear direction when young people go missing from home. The staff's detailed recordings demonstrate that they consistently follow statutory guidance and local missing from home protocols. Furthermore, the manager takes appropriate steps to escalate any additional concerns, such as potential child exploitation.

The home and local area are routinely assessed for potential risks and hazards. Regular monitoring of the home and the local community ensures that the home remains a safe place for young people to live in. However, the manager does not always consider the potential risks identified in the local area assessment, for example child sexual exploitation, to inform placement decisions.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is led by a suitably qualified and experienced registered manager. He is visible in the home and he leads his team by example.

The staff feel valued and they spoke positively about the support that they receive from the manager. Regular professional supervision, performance appraisals and access to a range of relevant training opportunities enable staff to meet young people's needs.

The manager makes good use of external monitoring systems and takes swift action when recommendations for improvements are made. Similarly, although some aspects of safeguarding practice remain a concern, suitable action has been taken to address most of the requirements and recommendations raised at the last inspection.

The manager and staff keep clear and comprehensive records, which clearly demonstrate young people's progress and life journeys. Furthermore, regular team meetings and good communication keep staff updated about young people's plans and changes in the home.

The manager knows the strengths of the service, demonstrating a commitment to staff's ongoing learning and development. However, his response to managing staff's performance and, on occasion, unsafe practice is variable. For example, there appear to be inconsistencies in initiating action when staff fail to follow safeguarding procedures.

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: 1236771

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Hexagon Care Services Limited

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

Responsible individual: Louise Whitby

Registered manager: Robert Allen

Inspector

Marina Tully, social care inspector

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