

2534684

Hillcrest Children's Services Ltd

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately owned children's home provides care and accommodation for up to five children who have social, emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The aim, as given in the statement of purpose, is to provide a therapeutic 52-week-a-year home, school, assessment and treatment centre for children who present challenging behaviour.

The home and manager were registered with Ofsted on 2 October 2019.

Inspection date: 9 December 2019

This monitoring visit

Ofsted registered this home on 2 October 2019. Two serious incidents were notified to Ofsted that raised concerns about the admissions planning, the ability of the staff to manage challenging behaviour, the training of staff to support children with additional needs and potentially unnecessary police involvement. Other concerns included the staff's understanding of the role of the designated officer for safeguarding in the event of an allegation about a member of staff. One incident resulted in a child being arrested by the police and the breakdown of the placement.

The registered manager has an impact assessment procedure to use before children move in, but she does not fully use it. For example, there was a known historical risk to younger children by a child currently living in the home. Children had a poor experience when a trial overnight visit took place. The registered manager did not use the procedure to demonstrate her decision-making to go ahead with the child moving in, despite the known risk and unsuccessful sleepover.

The organisation's psychologist and compliance manager assessed the reasons for the failure of the placement. They did not consider the quality of the impact assessment, the unsuccessful overnight trial or the child's processing characteristics due to autism spectrum disorder. Their review did not consider the registered manager's own assessment of the placement breakdown and their findings were not

shared with the registered manager until many weeks after the incident.

The analysis of the placement breakdown lacked cohesion between professionals. For example, the registered manager had concluded there was not enough initial information from the placing authority, but there was no oversight from the responsible individual as to whether this was evident. One conclusion was that 'the home is newly established, and the team are building theoretical knowledge and understanding the electronic recording system'. However, there was no timeframe for when or how the staff would gain suitable knowledge and if other children could move in during the interim.

The home is not operating in accordance with its statement of purpose, with regards to its description of being an assessment and treatment centre. For one child, it was not clear what the plans were to assess the child's needs on admission.

Staff are trained in the home's behaviour management techniques but still resorted to calling the police for support in managing an incident. The registered manager has reviewed the incident and concluded there were alternatives to police involvement. She has clear plans to address this with staff within a suitable timeframe.

Staff are trained in the specific needs of the children who may move into the home, such as autism. It is too early to judge how they apply this in practice, given the short duration and sudden ending of the placement.

The registered manager recognises the need to extend the staff team's understanding of other safeguarding professionals' roles. She has arranged for the local authority designated officer responsible for safeguarding to attend a team meeting. Staff have expanded their knowledge on how to keep themselves safe when managing children with challenging behaviour.

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 care planning standard is that children receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b))	28/02/2020
<p>The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b)(2)(h))</p>	28/02/2020
The registered person must ensure that the home is at all times conducted in a manner which is consistent with its statement of purpose. (Regulation 16 (5))	28/02/2020

Information about this inspection

The inspector visited this home on 26 November 2019. He held discussions with the registered manager and staff during the site visit. He spoke with one social worker after the visit and had email contact with another. He also had email contact with the responsible individual. The inspector examined and took into account relevant documentation, including the organisation's compliance manager's assessment of the incidents and subsequent unplanned discharge of a child, that was submitted to Ofsted on 6 December 2019.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 2534684

Provision sub-type: children's home

Registered provider: Hillcrest Children's Services Ltd

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

Responsible individual: Clifford James

Registered manager: Oyinlola Ogundele

Inspector

Keith Riley, social care inspector

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