

1275966

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

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately owned home is registered to accommodate up to six children with social and/or emotional difficulties.

The registered manager left the home in September 2020 and the post has been vacant since this time. The home has recently appointed a new home manager.

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

Ofsted last visited this setting on 19 August 2020 to carry out a monitoring visit inspection. This report is published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection dates: 8 to 9 June 2021

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

How well children and young people are helped and protected **good**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **requires improvement to be good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 2 December 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
02/12/2019	Full	Good
06/08/2019	Full	Inadequate
05/03/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

There are six children living at the home. The home has a modern feel and is decorated and furnished to a high standard. Children take pride in their bedrooms and are encouraged to personalise them with different themes in line with their wishes. Children's achievements and memorable experiences are proudly displayed throughout the home which helps to create a homely atmosphere.

Staff forge strong relationships with children. These relationships have played a vital part in supporting children throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result of these positive relationships, children have grown to trust staff.

All children have excellent school attendance and are achieving academic success.

Staff offer children praise and show appropriate levels of physical affection. This helps children to develop meaningful and nurturing relationships with staff. However, staff occasionally miss an opportunity to support children to explore their emotions. For example, when one child shared his feelings about a family member, staff did not explore this further with him. This compromises the child's ability to feel confident that staff will act on their concerns.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, staff have been creative to ensure that all children continue to benefit from a range of social and recreational activities. For example, children have been encouraged and supported to go on walks in the countryside, to participate in movie nights, and to use the home's garden facilities. As a result, children have had the opportunities to thrive physically and socially.

Staff work well with health professionals to ensure that children have access to the right support and advice in relation to their physical and emotional health. As a result, children's health needs are continually met.

Despite children's positive progress, staff do not always hold other professionals to account. For example, staff have not raised concerns that two children's statutory plans have not been regularly reviewed.

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

Managers ensure that staff who work in the home are vetted thoroughly before they work with children. As a result, children are kept safe.

Children rarely go missing from the home. When they do, staff act quickly by following the missing-from-care protocol and by working closely in partnership with the local authority, local services and the police.

There have been incidents when staff have needed to intervene to safeguard children. These incidents are well managed and well documented.

Managers and staff make sure that children live in a home that provides a high level of physical safety and security. For example, staff and managers regularly encourage children to take part in fire drills to ensure that they know what to do in an emergency. However, managers do not always ensure that risk assessments are regularly reviewed and accurately reflect the level of risk that children can face. For example, staff do not have clear guidance and advice in relation to specific risks of physical aggression. This leaves staff without all the necessary information that they need to reach an informed decision.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

Nine members of staff are due to leave soon. This change in staffing has the potential to have a significant impact on children receiving continuity of care and on decisions about some children's care plans. To reduce the impact on children, managers have triggered a recruitment campaign.

Managers do not ensure that staff help and support children to maintain their possessions to an acceptable standard. This does not help children to learn to value their personal belongings.

Most staff hold a level 3 diploma in residential childcare. However, there are gaps in some staff receiving their refresher training. This has the potential to compromise staff in being able to update their knowledge in their care of children.

Not all members of staff receive regular practice-related and reflective supervision. For example, one new member of staff has not received supervision in line with the home's statement of purpose. This creates a missed opportunity to help the member of staff to discuss their performance and to develop their practice.

Managers and staff do not always promote equality and diversity. Discussions around topics such as children's differences and characteristics, cultural background, religion, disability, and racial origin are not encouraged and promoted. For example, the ethnicity of two children has not been recognised and celebrated, despite the fact both children have been living at the home for some time. This creates a missed opportunity to help children to understand more about equality and diversity.

Managers do not always use monitoring and review systems to help with their oversight of the home. For example, the home's location risk assessment needs to be brought up to date to reflect changes in the home's use of electronic surveillance. This oversight has the potential to place unnecessary surveillance on children.

Staff and managers have developed positive working relationships with children's families and feedback about staff is positive.

Managers have taken sufficient action to address the requirements raised at the last inspection.

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—</p> <p>mutual respect and trust.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>understand how children's previous experiences and present emotions can be communicated through behaviour and have the competence and skills to interpret these and develop positive relationships with children. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(2)(a)(ix))</p> <p>This particularly refers to staff helping children to explore their emotions.</p>	9 July 2021
<p>The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>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>help each child to understand how to keep safe;</p> <p>that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(a)(i)(ii)(d))</p>	9 July 2021

<p>This particularly refers to staff:</p> <p>ensuring that risk assessments are kept up to date;</p> <p>helping and supporting children to maintain their possessions to an acceptable standard.</p>	
<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—</p> <p>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and</p> <p>promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose;</p> <p>ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child;</p> <p>ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child;</p> <p>ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child.</p> <p>understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home;</p> <p>use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of the care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b)(2)(a)(c)(d)(e)(f)(h))</p> <p>This specifically relates to:</p> <p>the registered manager ensuring that the workforce provides continuity of care to each child;</p> <p>the registered manager uses monitoring systems effectively;</p> <p>the registered manager promotes equality and diversity;</p>	<p>9 July 2021</p>

the registered manager ensuring that staff are able to receive all their refresher training to enable them to keep their skills and knowledge up to date.	
<p>The registered person must ensure that all employees—</p> <p>undertake appropriate continuing professional development;</p> <p>receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience employees. (Regulation 33 (4)(a)(b))</p> <p>This specifically relates to the registered manager ensuring that all staff receive regular reflective supervision.</p>	9 July 2021

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff ensure that recommendations from children's care plans are actioned. ('Guide to the children's home regulations including the quality standards', page 56, paragraph 11.3)
- The registered person should ensure that the monitoring and surveillance of children must reviewed. ('Guide to children's home regulations including the quality standards', page 19, paragraph 3.36)

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people, 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: 1275966

Provision sub-type: Children's home

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

Registered provider address: Atria, Spa Road, Bolton BL1 4AG

Responsible individual: Laura Duckers

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Patrick McIntosh, Social Care Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2021