

# 1221357

Registered provider: Hexagon Care Services Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This children's home is one of a number owned and managed by a private company. It is registered to provide care for up to four children of single gender who may have social and/or emotional difficulties.

The registered manager has managed this home since March 2020.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021.

### Inspection dates: 23 to 24 November 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:** 5 March 2020

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** improved effectiveness

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>Inspection type</b>	<b>Inspection judgement</b>
05/03/2020	Interim	Improved effectiveness
18/06/2019	Full	Good
21/01/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good
13/12/2017	Full	Good

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good**

Children are making good progress from their individual starting points. They are supported by a consistent staff team. This helps them to form positive and trusting relationships with staff. One child said: 'If I was worried about anything, I would talk to any of the staff. I could trust staff.'

When children are admitted to the home, they are warmly welcomed. Children told the inspector that this helped them to settle in quickly and to feel at home. One child said: 'It took me no time at all to settle in. I was made to feel welcome and I like it here.'

Children enjoy spending time with staff and engaging in activities together. Staff have created memory books to capture special moments and new experiences. This is an important record of the child's time at the home.

Prior to coming to the home, some children were disengaged with education and struggled to attend. Staff have successfully supported children to return to full-time education. All children are engaged in education or training schemes and attendance is high. Some children have learned to travel independently to these settings. Children have clear aspirations for future careers and two children have secured paid employment.

Children are learning new skills that will support them to live more independently in the future. As a result, children have matured and grown in confidence. Staff are working with some children to support them to move into their own accommodation. Children told the inspector that they would like more assistance from staff about how to budget and pay bills. A recommendation is made to address this.

The home is spacious and has large communal areas for children to use. However, some issues were identified with the condition of the home. For example, the carpets in some children's bedrooms were worn and marked in places. In addition, some children lacked adequate storage for all their personal possessions. The senior manager acknowledged these issues during the inspection and took immediate steps to address this. A recommendation is made to secure continuous improvement.

Children's care plans are regularly updated but some contained incomplete and/or out-of-date information. One child's most recent local authority care plan was not available in the child's records. A requirement has been made to address the shortfalls in care planning.

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

Children are learning how to keep themselves safe, and as a result they are increasingly making safer decisions. For example, staff have worked effectively with one child to significantly reduce the number of times she went missing from care. This child was at high risk of exploitation when she went missing. The child continues to make significant progress, and because of the lowered risks she will be able to move to a placement with less staff supervision and support.

Staff are supporting children to form positive relationships with each other. Sometimes, arguments between children have resulted in them being verbally and/or physically aggressive to each other. However, staff have intervened effectively to keep children safe and have completed work with children to help them to mend their relationships.

Staff rarely use physical interventions to manage children's behaviours. When a physical intervention is used, children are always given the opportunity to talk about how this made them feel. Children are encouraged to reflect on their behaviours and talk about strategies that might help staff to support them when they feel angry or upset.

Staff use rewards and praise to reinforce positive behaviours. Consequences to address poor behaviour are not used often. However, consequences are not restorative in nature and this does not support the child to learn from the incident or recognise the impact of their behaviours. A recommendation is made to address this.

Some children's risk assessments and risk management plans do not contain up-to-date information. For example, some risk assessments have not been changed when risks to children have lowered. In addition, children's risk assessments do not always accurately record the measures in place to keep children safe. When significant incidents have happened, staff have responded effectively to safeguard children. However, following the incident, the manager has not always completed a risk assessment or updated the child's risk management plan. This does not support staff to respond consistently to future events. This has not led to widespread failings, but it is an area that needs improvement. The responsible individual put plans in place to address these shortfalls during the inspection.

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

The home is supporting children to achieve good outcomes. However, there are weaknesses in the leadership and management of the home. For example, some children's care plans and risk management plans require updating. In addition, records are not always well organised and accessible. The manager struggled to find some important documents during the inspection.

The manager alerts the appropriate safeguarding professionals when concerns are raised about a child's safety. There is multi-agency collaboration to keep children safe. However, internal record-keeping is not sufficiently robust and the outcomes of referrals are not always well documented.

The manager has not adopted a consistent approach to the monitoring of the performance of the home. This does not have a direct impact on the children, but the implementation of systems to monitor and review the quality of care would enable the manager to identify weaknesses and make continuous improvement.

Several staff have left the home since the last inspection. The manager has ensured that the vacancies have been covered by staff who were familiar to the children and no agency staff have been used. This has given children continuity of care and minimised the potential impact on children. However, by covering some of the shifts herself, the manager is compromising her capacity to undertake her role effectively. A requirement has been made to secure improvements in the leadership and management of the home.

Members of staff report that they feel supported by the management team and that morale is good. One member of staff said: 'The managers give me really good support. I know can go to them with any issues and they will support me.'

## 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.

<b>Requirement</b>	<b>Due date</b>
<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>(Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i))</p>	<p>31 December 2021</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 promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child;</p> <p>demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on—</p> <p>feedback on the experiences of children, including complaints received.</p> <p>(Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)(g)(ii))</p>	<p>31 December 2021</p>
<p>The care planning standard is that children—</p> <p>receive effectively planned care in or through the children’s home.</p>	<p>31 December 2021</p>

In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—

that each child's relevant plans are followed.  
(Regulation 14(1)(a) (2)(c))

## Recommendations

- The registered person should make improvements to the home to ensure that it is a clean, comfortable and homely environment for children to live in. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should ensure that each child is given practical support and advice to prepare them effectively for their move from the home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 57, paragraph 11.9)
- The registered person should ensure that any consequences used to address poor behaviour are restorative in nature. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.38)
- The registered person should ensure that staff undertake regular direct work with children that focuses on children's individual risks and vulnerabilities. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 43, paragraph 9.9)

## 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:** 1221357

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** Hexagon Care Services Ltd

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

**Responsible individual:** Jeanette Swift

**Registered manager:** Melanie Black

## Inspector

Sophie Thomson, 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](mailto: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](http://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](mailto: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](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2021