

1221357

Registered provider: Hexagon Care Services Limited

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is 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 emotional difficulties.

There is a manager in post and her application is in progress.

Inspection date: 28 March 2023

Date of last inspection: 12 October 2022

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Information about this inspection

At these inspections, the inspector evaluated:

- the care of children
- the safety of children
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers.

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children, using the social care common inspection framework. This assurance 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'.

Findings from the inspection

We did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance inspection.

The care of children

Children have good relationships with the staff who care for them. Staff invest time in children, they listen to them, protect them and promote their welfare. The children can name trusted adults they can speak to if they have any worries. As a result, children can develop a sense of permanence and belonging. One child commented, 'The home feels like a family home, I really like it'.

There are two children who do not currently attend school. One child actively takes part in educational activities within the home. This helps to maintain structure and routine in their daily life. However, another child refuses to take part in educational activities in the home and on many occasions will refuse to get out of bed. The manager's and staff's response to this has not been proactive, and potential barriers to education have not fully been considered or identified. As a result, this has reduced the child's learning and social development opportunities.

There have been occasions when children have needed additional support with their emotional health and well-being. The manager and staff have ensured that appropriate referrals have been submitted to the relevant support agencies. As a result, children are actively engaging with specialist support services.

The safety of children

Children's incidents are decreasing. The use of physical holds has not been necessary and missing-from-care incidents have significantly reduced. Staff use effective de-escalation strategies that are individualised to children. These are fully embedded within each child's individualised support plans. All incidents are recorded in detail and are effectively reviewed by the manager.

There have been occasions when children have displayed self-injurious behaviour. The records of these incidents are detailed and evidence the action that staff have taken to support children. Risks are effectively managed by staff, and children are kept safe.

There are individual and up-to-date risk management plans in place to support children. These plans have recently been updated since the last inspection. As a result, the plans now address the vulnerabilities for each child effectively and provide staff with strategies to mitigate risks. However, these strategies are not always directive.

Staff working in the home are clear about procedures for responding to concerns about the safety of a child. The staff and manager have completed relevant training to support their knowledge and understanding.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers

Since the last inspection, there have been some changes to the management team. There is now a new manager in post, who is experienced and qualified. The manager makes good use of internal monitoring tools, and this helps her to maintain a good level of oversight of the home.

Staff and managers have received regular, effective supervision. Records of supervision sessions are detailed and evidence that staff have been provided with the opportunity to reflect on their practice, children's experiences and their individual needs. Appraisals and performance reviews have also been completed. These are purposeful and supportive in nature. Records are detailed and evidence that children's views are also taken into consideration, as well of those of other professionals.

The manager ensures that there are clear and individual plans in place to support children. The plans are detailed and contain relevant information from children's education plans, including their local authority plans.

There is a full, stable and consistent staff team working in the home. All staff have completed their mandatory training. Most staff are qualified or are working towards their qualification. As a result, children are cared for by experienced staff and are provided with continuity of care.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/10/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
23/11/2021	Full	Good
05/03/2020	Interim	Improved effectiveness
18/06/2019	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
<p>The education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>support each child's learning and development, including helping the child to develop independent study skills and, where appropriate, helping the child to complete independent study;</p> <p>understand the barriers to learning that each child may face and take appropriate action to help the child to overcome any such barriers;</p> <p>promote opportunities for each child to learn informally;</p> <p>help each child who is above compulsory school age to participate in further education, training or employment and to prepare for future care, education or employment.</p> <p>(Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(ii)(iii)(v)(ix))</p> <p>In particular, the registered provider must ensure that when children are not in education, there is clear structure and routine in place at the home to support independent study. The registered person should also ensure that all potential barriers to learning are considered and identified.</p> <p>In particular, the registered provider must also ensure that when there are concerns around lack of education, that these are appropriately challenged with the virtual school.</p>	28 April 2023

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. Specifically, the registered person should ensure that risk assessments are clear, directive and up to date. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)
- The registered person should ensure that consultation takes place with the placing authority so that the provider can be assured that day-to-day risks can be assessed and managed in relation to children's mobile phone use, including access to the internet, apps and social media. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 1221357

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Hexagon Care Services Limited

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

Responsible individual: Caroline Holmes

Registered manager: Post Vacant

Inspector

Kimmy Feeley, Social Care Inspector

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