

SC415347

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

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a private company that runs several children's homes across the country. This home provides care for up to four children who have been affected by adverse childhood experiences that have led to associated trauma and complex behaviours.

The manager registered with Ofsted in May 2020. She is completing her management qualification.

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 June 2023

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 good

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

Date of last inspection: 19 October 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
19/10/2022	Full	Good
14/07/2021	Full	Good
23/10/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good
13/06/2018	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the last inspection, one child has moved into the home and two children have left. There are currently three children living in the home.

Children living in the home have made good progress. They say that they have positive relationships with staff. Staff understand children's needs and personalities and use this knowledge to build caring, trusting relationships with them. When asked to describe living in the home, one child said, 'It's a wonderful place, that's all I can say.'

Staff have high expectations for children and support them to achieve positive outcomes. Most children have good school attendance. When children find this difficult, staff support them with work at home and work collaboratively with other professionals to help the child return to school as soon as possible. One child has excelled in their education and is about to start university, which is an excellent achievement.

Staff and children recognise the progress that children make while living at the home. One child said, 'I am a different person now than I was two years ago. You wouldn't recognise me. I was shy and would not get involved but now my confidence has grown, and I am more independent.' This was also recognised by staff, who have enjoyed seeing the child flourish.

Staff support children's independence through appropriate tasks. Older children do their own shopping, help with the cooking and take responsibility for their own bedrooms. Younger children also contribute by helping in the kitchen or taking the bin out. This helps children to build skills needed as they prepare to move on to adult life.

Staff regularly gather children's views about the home. They have regular meetings with children and use individual discussions to help children reflect on areas of their lives. All children contribute to the decoration of their bedrooms. They can also have input into the meals provided and the activities they do.

Staff support children's health needs. Children attend regular appointments and medical advice is sought quickly if staff have concerns. Staff and children have access to clinical support, which helps to support children's emotional needs. Medication is safely administered, and there are risk assessments in place when children self-administer their medication.

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

Children say they feel safe and well cared for. They know who to talk to if they have worries and feel confident that staff will listen to them.

Staff manage risks well. There are clear plans in place which identify risk factors and staff have a good knowledge of each child's individual vulnerabilities. The manager has good oversight of incidents, and all risk assessments are updated to ensure that they contain current information. This helps staff to manage risk and keep children safe.

Staff use individual discussions with children to help them understand risks. One child has been supported to understand the risks around mobile phones and the internet. Staff also work with external agencies, including the police, to keep children safe from exploitation.

Staff use rewards and consequences appropriately. The number of rewards far outweighs the number of consequences. Rewards are individual to each child and focus on what will be meaningful to them. One child had a party for finishing their exams and another received a 'star of the month' award for 'engaging well in activities and being an absolute pleasure'. Consequences are rare, but when they are used, they are proportionate.

Staff have a good knowledge of safeguarding and understand how to raise concerns. Staff pass on important information if they feel a child may be at risk of harm. Allegations are managed well, with comprehensive investigations and appropriate follow-up action. Managers undertaking investigations have completed the necessary training to carry them out competently. This means that any concerns are addressed comprehensively to keep children safe from harm.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is managed by an experienced registered manager who has worked at the home for several years. She has a clear vision for the home and wants the children to achieve the best possible outcomes.

Staff receive training that prepares them for their roles. In addition to mandatory training, they complete courses linked to the needs of the children living at the home. The manager can request further training to help staff to support children. Team meetings are used to improve practice and embed the knowledge gained from training courses. Supervisions include scenario questions to understand the knowledge and skills of the staff team in regard to safeguarding.

The manager completes comprehensive assessments before accepting new children into the home. The needs of the current children and the experience of staff are both considered. Thorough transitions take place and children can meet staff and children before moving into the home. This approach helps children to feel positive about moving to the home.

Staff are happy working at the home. One staff member said working at the home was like being part of a big family. Staff were observed to have positive relationships

with each other and with managers. This positive team spirit helps to provide a happy environment for children to live in.

Recruitment practices are safe. All required checks are in place and staff have completed or are working towards the required qualifications within the compulsory timescales. This ensures that staff working in the home are safe and qualified to do so.

In contrast, although the manager is experienced, she has not achieved the required management qualification within the compulsory timescale. Delays were reported to have been out of her control.

The manager uses a range of monitoring tools to assess the quality of care in the home. However, it was unclear if regular medication audits had been completed.

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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, The 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>A person may only manage a children's home if—</p> <p>having regard to the size of the home, its statement of purpose, and the number and needs (including any needs arising from any disability) of the children—</p> <p>the person has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills to manage the home effectively and lead the care of children;</p> <p>For the purposes of paragraph (1)(b)(i), a person has the appropriate experience and qualification if the person has—</p> <p>by the relevant date, attained—</p> <p>the Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management for Residential Childcare (England) ("the Level 5 Diploma"); or a qualification which the registered provider considers to be equivalent to the Level 5 Diploma.</p> <p>The relevant date is—</p> <p>in the case of a person who starts managing a home after 1st April 2014, the date which falls 3 years after the date on which that person started managing a home; or in the case of a person who was managing a home on 1st April 2014, 1st April 2017.</p> <p>Regulation 28 (1)(b)(i) (2)(c)(i)(ii) (3)(a)(b))</p> <p>In particular, the provider should ensure that the manager achieves the appropriate qualification to perform their role within the required timescales.</p>	<p>9 August 2023</p>

Recommendation

- The registered person should make best use of information from independent and internal monitoring to ensure continuous improvement. They are responsible for proactively implementing lessons learned and sustaining good practice. In particular, the provider should ensure that medication audits take place as planned and that audits contain sufficient detail to understand any errors found. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24)

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: SC415347

Provision sub-type: Children's home

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

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

Responsible individual: Mark Duckers

Registered manager: Lisa Aspinall

Inspector

Vicky Smith, Social Care Inspector

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