

1221357

Registered provider: Hexagon Care Services Limited

Full 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.

The manager was registered with Ofsted in June 2023.

At the time of the inspection four children were living in the home. They all spoke to the inspector about their experiences living in the home.

Inspection dates: 26 and 27 July 2023

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 12 October 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

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

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children benefit from sensitive and nurturing care from staff who know them well. Staff take time to understand the children. This enables them to develop meaningful and trusting relationships with the children.

The home is a warm and welcoming environment for children. It is decorated and furnished to a high standard. Children's interests and photos are reflected throughout the home and their achievements are celebrated. The manager has been proactive in creating spaces both internally and externally for children to relax in. This helps children to develop a sense of belonging and pride in the home.

Children move into and out of the home in a well-planned and sensitive way. Careful consideration is given to how children's needs can be met safely alongside children already living in the home. The team seeks the views of carers, parents and other professionals in order to ensure that children's needs are well understood prior to them moving in. Children experience individualised introductions into the home. This helps children to settle and to feel welcome.

Transitions out of the home are planned. When children move on from the home, they are welcomed back for meals, when appropriate, and are able to seek support from the team as required. Consequently, children are able to benefit from ongoing support into adulthood.

Children are helped to develop age-appropriate life-skills. There are clear programmes in place to support children in preparation for their independence. Children are encouraged to develop further skills, such as budgeting, cooking and learning to drive.

Children are encouraged to attend school on a regular basis. Staff help children to explore employment, education and training opportunities. Some children are undertaking apprenticeships and others are in paid employment. One child does not attend mainstream education and has recently engaged in basic home tuition from an external provider. However, the child's routines and sleep patterns do not support a successful return to a school environment. This limits their educational opportunities.

Children are supported to have valuable time with their families. Careful consideration is given to keeping children safe during family time. Some families visit the home and know the staff and manager well. This helps family members to be confident that their children are being looked after well.

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

Children say that they feel safe in the home. They know that staff take time to listen to them and help them to understand their emotions. Staff are skilled in using the home's therapeutic model of care, which helps them to provide a nurturing environment for children. They use de-escalation strategies effectively in order to help children to manage their emotions. There have not been any incidents of staff needing to hold children to keep them safe.

Children's risk management plans are detailed. An initial baseline risk plan is completed when children move into the home, and this is then developed to ensure that children's current and emerging risks are identified. Plans also include clear strategies for staff to follow.

Children rarely go missing from care. On occasions when children do go missing from care, staff are proactive in following agreed missing-from-care procedures. Staff undertake individual sessions following periods of children going missing from care so that children are given the opportunity to talk about the reasons for their absence. Despite being requested and appropriately escalated, feedback from children's independent return home interviews has not always been received. This reduces opportunities for the team to have comprehensive oversight of the issues affecting children.

Children benefit from direct conversations about issues that are important to them. This helps them to make safer choices. The manager has recently introduced a new way to record direct work sessions to demonstrate children's progress. These are not yet embedded into practice.

Staff are vigilant to risks for children. However, bedroom searches that are conducted due to safeguarding or welfare concerns are not always discussed with the child afterwards. This is something that the manager has taken action to address.

Staff understand their responsibilities in safeguarding children. Staff new to the home complete a detailed induction. All staff have access to ongoing training opportunities to meet children's needs. This includes risk management, safer caring and internet safety. The members of the team also have access to whole-team safeguarding updates to ensure that they understand children's vulnerabilities and risks.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is a positive role model. She provides strong leadership and guidance to the team. She is child centred in her approach to providing care for children and ensures that children are at the centre of staff practice. Staff say that they love coming to work. They feel well supported and are able to approach the manager with any concerns.

The manager has good oversight of the team's training needs. She has developed a culture where staff are committed to their ongoing learning. Staff benefit from regular and effective practice-based supervisions and team meetings. These support their ongoing learning and development. Senior staff also meet regularly to review the progress children make. This helps to inform future work with children.

The manager has a clear vision for the development of the home. She uses internal and external monitoring systems effectively in order to develop a good understanding of the home's strengths and weaknesses. This enables her to take effective action when required.

Changes to recording systems, introduced since the last inspection, mean that records are detailed. Children's plans are regularly reviewed to reflect their individual needs.

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>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; and</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)(viii))</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 study. The registered person should also ensure that all potential barriers to learning are considered and identified.</p>	30 September 2023

Recommendation

- A child's bedroom should not generally be entered without their permission, though it may be necessary to establish routines to allow for rooms to be cleaned regularly. Usually, rooms should only be searched if the child has been informed or asked for their permission. Immediate searching may be necessary where

there are reasonable grounds for believing that there is a risk to the child's or another person's safety or well-being. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 16, paragraph 3.20)

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 Limited

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

Responsible individual: Caroline Holmes

Registered manager: Christina Duffy

Inspector

Colin Jones, Social Care Inspector

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