

1241776

Registered provider: Hexagon Care Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home provides care for up to four children who have had adverse childhood experiences that have led to associated trauma and presenting complex behaviours. This home is privately owned.

The manager is suitably experienced and holds the relevant qualification. They have been in post since 1 April 2023 and have applied to register with Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 November 2023

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 16 August 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
16/08/2022	Full	Good
15/02/2022	Full	Good
18/02/2020	Full	Good
30/01/2019	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

Since the previous inspection, several children have moved on from the home. Overall, these children did not make good progress or have positive experiences. In addition, there have been several shortfalls in safeguarding practice that required improvement. A new manager has been in post for six months and there is also a new responsible individual. The current leaders and manager of the home have reflected on the learning from these children's experiences. They paused the service for six weeks. This allowed the staff team to reset, retrain and upskill. The new manager and the organisation's psychologist have reflected on children's experiences. They have identified learning outcomes and taken action to improve the service. However, improvements are in the early stages of being embedded in practice.

The new manager recognised that children were not receiving therapeutic care. This was not in line with the home's statement of purpose. Staff did not always recognise or adapt their approach to support children's behaviours. The care children received was not consistent and left children feeling frustrated. As a result, there was an increase in children's behaviours that challenged staff, which had an impact on other children and staff. This ultimately led to a breakdown in one child's placement. The manager has made changes to improve staff practice.

Two children have recently experienced positive moves into the home. Staff have helped children to settle in by personalising their bedrooms and ensuring that they have items familiar to them. The children are developing a positive relationship with each other, and they said they feel safe and happy living in the home. One child said staff are genuine, and they feel that they truly care for them.

Recently, the manager has implemented new systems to ensure that children have regular consultation about their experiences living in the home. However, it is not evidenced how this system supports evaluation of continuous improvement.

The home environment is well maintained, clean and decorated to a good standard. There is a friendly atmosphere in the home. Staff engage well with children. Children are helped to develop their independence skills such as cooking, travelling independently and doing their laundry.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

At times, managers have had poor oversight of safeguarding incidents. In one incident, staff did not have the skills to de-escalate a child's behaviour. As a result, the child was able to gain access to the home's cellar. Staff did not fully supervise the child, which compromised their safety. During this incident, the child began to

physically assault staff. The incident resulted in the child being physically restrained. The manager then evaluated the incident. However, they did not include pertinent information, which compromised senior management oversight. The new manager has since taken action to ensure that children are unable to gain access to the home's cellar.

Staff do not always respond to children's behaviour effectively. This is because not all staff understand children's needs. During one incident, staff did not respond in a timely manner to ensure that children were safe. The child had access to items described by staff as 'dangerous' or 'poisonous'. Despite this, there was a delay in staff removing these items from the child. This compromised the child's safety.

Staff do not always explore potential risks to children effectively. Risks for some children have increased during their time living in the home. For example, one child's use of cannabis increased and they began smoking in the home. The manager liaised with external agencies to identify support for the child. However, staff's responses to the child's behaviour were inconsistent. On one occasion, a member of staff provided the child with some of their own tobacco. This was during an incident when staff could not de-escalate the child's behaviours. There was also no consideration of the fire risks in regard to the child smoking in the home.

Children feel able to raise any concerns they have about their care. The manager is proactive and liaises with relevant professionals, such as the local authority designated officer. This ensures that there is independent oversight to keep children safe. However, managers do not always share with children the outcome of any investigation. In addition, they do not always share information with children in a child-friendly way.

Safeguarding incidents are not always recorded in a timely manner. The provider is in the process of installing a new recording system. This will help to ensure accuracy and prompt recording. This will assist the overall scrutiny of safeguarding practice in the home.

Overall, safeguarding practice is an improving picture. The new manager has reviewed the format of children's risk assessments and care plans. There are now clear plans in place for responding to behaviours that may present as a challenge to staff. The plans link to the home's model of care. There have been no safeguarding incidents since the two children now living in the home moved in.

The manager and staff have a good understanding of the children's needs and risks. They work closely with the organisation's psychologist, who provides them with guidance. This helps staff to respond to children with empathy and acceptance. As a result, children feel that staff genuinely care for them.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Since the previous inspection, there have been changes in the home's management team. The current manager was appointed in April 2023 and is awaiting her registration interview with Ofsted.

Leaders and managers are aware of the areas for development and have a development plan. The staff team is newly formed and there is a strong focus on staff development and training. However, some casual staff are not trained in all areas in the home's training programme.

The manager has shown good professional curiosity in relation to staff recruitment. They have taken appropriate action when there have been concerns about a member of staff's employment history.

Staff receive regular supervision, which also includes group supervisions. Shortfalls in staff practice are recognised and acted on through these meetings, for example, on one occasion a child raised an issue with how staff referred to her.

The manager has good monitoring systems in place with senior oversight. The manager has recently introduced their own weekly and monthly reviews. This gives her a robust oversight of daily practices and records, to strive for improvements.

Leaders and managers have reviewed the placements of the children who have left. Learning has been identified to improve the care children receive, including for those children currently living in the home. Managers now make child-centred decisions about children moving into the home. Children have pen pictures and are able to pick their own key workers.

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 children's views, wishes and feelings standard is that children receive care from staff who—</p> <p>take their views, wishes and feelings into account in relation to matters affecting the children's care and welfare and their lives.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>ensure that staff—</p> <p>help each child to express views, wishes and feelings;</p> <p>help each child to understand how the child's views, wishes and feelings have been taken into account and give the child reasons for decisions in relation to the child. (Regulation 7 (1)(c) (2)(a)(ii)(iii))</p> <p>In particular, the manager must ensure that children are adequately supported and kept informed following an allegation or complaint. In addition, that the outcome of their allegation or complaint is shared with them in a child-friendly way.</p>	17 January 2024
<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>	17 January 2024

<p>help each child to understand how to keep safe;</p> <p>have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm;</p> <p>understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person;</p> <p>take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and</p> <p>are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies;</p> <p>that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm;</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; and</p> <p>that the effectiveness of the home's child protection policies is monitored regularly.</p> <p>(Regulation 12 (1) (2) (a)(i)(ii)(iii)(v)(vi)(vii)(b)(d)(e))</p> <p>In particular, leaders and managers must ensure that staff have the knowledge, understanding and skills to respond effectively to children's behaviour which may present as a challenge for them. They must ensure that staff respond in a timely manner to situations where children may potentially be at risk of harm.</p> <p>In addition, the manager should ensure that the home environment is safe for all children living there. This includes the consideration of any fire risks, such as smoking in the home. They must take prompt measures to ensure that the home remains a safe environment for children.</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>17 January 2024</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. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a))</p> <p>In particular, leaders and managers must ensure that children are cared for in line with the home's statement of purpose.</p>	
<p>The registered person must prepare and implement a policy ("the behaviour management policy") which sets out—</p> <p>how appropriate behaviour is to be promoted in the children's home; and</p> <p>The registered person must keep the behaviour management policy under review and, where appropriate, revise it.</p> <p>The registered person must ensure that—</p> <p>within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes—</p> <p>the date, time and location of the use of the measure;</p> <p>within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")—</p> <p>has spoken to the user about the measure; and</p> <p>has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and</p> <p>within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (1)(a) (2) (3)(a)(iii)(b)(i)(ii)(c))</p> <p>In particular, leaders and managers should ensure that staff have the skills to respond effectively to children's behaviour. This includes ensuring that they speak to children following any incident in the home. Staff should take every opportunity to promote positive behaviours for children.</p>	<p>17 January 2024</p>

In addition, managers must ensure that staff maintain good-quality records of every incident which occurs in the home.	
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Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that casual staff also receive appropriate training to equip them with the skills to meet children's needs. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.11)
- The registered person should ensure that all records pertaining to the care of children, including any investigation of complaints, are stored securely. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 14.2)

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: 1241776

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Hexagon Care Services Limited

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

Responsible individual: Joanne Abram

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Sarah Berry, Social Care Inspector

Joanne Humphreys, Social Care Inspector

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