

1212704

Registered provider: Hexagon Care Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a private organisation. The home provides care for up to three children who may have social and emotional needs.

The home registered with Ofsted in September 2016 and the manager registered in December 2020.

There were two children living at the home at the time of this inspection.

Inspection dates: 5 and 6 March 2024

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: 7 February 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
07/02/2023	Full	Good
26/01/2022	Full	Good
13/08/2019	Full	Good
08/11/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children have positive relationships with the manager and staff. One child said that they feel safe and happy at the home. Children receive individualised care. The children's plans are understood and followed by staff. Consequently, children make good progress in all aspects of their lives.

The manager and staff ensure that children's views, wishes, and feelings are listened to and are central to their care planning. For example, one child requested to be able to care for pets in the home and one child wished for their bedroom to be decorated in the colour of their favourite football team. Both requests were honoured. This helps children to feel valued and have a sense of belonging.

Children make good progress in their education from their starting points. Both children regularly attend the onsite education provision. Staff work therapeutically with the children to overcome any barriers to learning and support and encourage their daily attendance. Opportunities are provided for the children to learn informally such as; working on their emotions, developing independence skills and problem solving skills. This demonstrates that children are supported to achieve their educational potential and are encouraged to have aspirations for the future.

Children are in good health and attend regular routine health appointments. However, on one occasion when a child required medical attention staff provided first aid, however, medical advice was not sought. This was a missed opportunity to ensure that the child did not require additional medical attention.

Children are supported to keep in touch and see people who are important to them. Staff have formed good relationships with the children's family members. This helps children to maintain their sense of identity and to maintain meaningful relationships with the people who are important to them.

Transitions for children moving on from the home are variable. Two children left the home in a carefully thought out planned way, one child successfully returned home and one child moved back to their local area. However, two children left the home in an unplanned way.

The manager advocates well for children and works closely with placing authorities when shortfalls arise to address and source the correct support to meet children's emerging needs.

The home is decorated and furnished to a good standard and is clean and tidy. The children have access to a large garden area. The home is maintained well and free from hazards.

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

The safety and welfare of children are at the centre of staff practice. This helps staff to keep children safe. Children's risk management and positive support plans address their vulnerabilities, include clear strategies for staff to follow and are reviewed regularly. This supports staff to understand the children's risk taking behaviours and take effective action to manage incidents.

One child identified a trusted adult in the home who they felt they could speak to should they have any concerns or worries. The child shared that they get on well with the staff and the manager and know how to make complaints. This helps the child to feel a sense of safety.

Staff receive training in safeguarding children and child protection. This covers numerous risks faced by the children in their care such as self-harm, online safety and managing crisis. However, staff would benefit from receiving training in substance misuse and sexually harmful behaviours to further strengthen their knowledge and care planning.

On occasion's two children have left the home without permission. Staff have followed missing from home protocols, worked with the police and actively searched for the children to ensure that they returned home safely. The children are offered an independent return home interview, however, not all of these have been completed within timescales. This is a missed opportunity to consider any triggers and strategies to manage the risk taking behaviour sooner.

Staff are trained in physical intervention and de-escalation techniques. Staff have held children on a number of occasions. Managers have reviewed the records relating to physical intervention. Physical interventions are proportionate and necessary to keep everyone safe. However, it is unclear when the interventions were recorded and on one occasion the manager failed to carry out a de-brief with the staff members after a hold. This does not support the manager to robustly analyse and evaluate staff practice or to identify any changes required to staff practice to reduce the number of holds in the future.

Children have been given consequences in response to their behaviour, however, this is not always restorative or effective in nature. The manager does not evaluate the consequence or speak to the member of staff who gave the consequence. This is a missed opportunity for the manager to review the effectiveness of consequences and take action to improve staff practice.

Incidents are managed well and all serious incidents are notified to Ofsted. This allows the regulator to have sufficient oversight and scrutiny. A therapist who works with the children said, 'I think staff do really care about the children and they want to do their best for them. They know the children well. It is quite rare that I will ask them something and they don't know the answer. They attune to the child and their needs.'

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is experienced and has a relevant childcare and management qualification. The manager and staff adopts a therapeutic approach to the care provided to children. Staff have high aspirations for the children, and they share a good sense of teamwork. One member of staff said, 'I, and those around me give their absolute best for the children in our care, and care for them as though they are family. Our model of care is put into practice every minute of every day, and it is evidenced by the progress the children make when they are with us.'

New staff receive a thorough induction that provides them with a detailed programme of training and guidance to support them in their new role. The manager and staff receive regular supervision and take part in regular team meetings. This enables them to reflect on their practice and adapt it when necessary to meet the needs of the children in their care.

Staff speak highly of the management team and say that they enjoy working at the home and feel valued and supported. One member of staff said, 'The team works closely and coherently with excellent leadership from the deputy and general managers. If I need support on my shift, I can turn to my supervisor who has worked with me closely on a one to one basis.'

The manager and deputy manager have had their practice appraised and targets, goals and actions set. However, the appraisal does not capture feedback from professionals working with the managers or the children who live in the home. This is a missed opportunity for further reflection on practice.

The management team gather feedback from professionals, children and staff to inform care planning and the development of the service. However, limited feedback is obtained from parents and family members, this is a missed opportunity to further strengthen the care provided.

The management team have good monitoring systems in place. This helps them to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the service. This means they are able to plan and take action to address any shortfalls. The manager reviews the quality of care on a six monthly basis. This gives a clear overview of the service and areas for development.

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 care planning standard is that children—</p> <p>receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and</p> <p>have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that children are admitted to the home only if their needs are within the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home's statement of purpose;</p> <p>that arrangements are in place to—</p> <p>plan for, and help, each child to prepare to leave the home or to move into adult care in a way that is consistent with arrangements agreed with the child's placing authority. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(iii))</p> <p>Specifically, the registered person must ensure that children receive effectively planned care by experienced and skilled staff to meet the needs of the children. Also, that children receive thought out planned moves in and out of the home.</p>	21 April 2024
<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 name of the child;</p> <p>details of the child's behaviour leading to the use of the measure;</p>	21 April 2024

the date, time and location of the use of the measure;

a description of the measure and its duration;

details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure;

the name of the person who used the measure ("the user"), and of any other person present when the measure was used;

the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and

a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result of the measure;

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")—

has spoken to the user about the measure; and

has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and

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 (3)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(b)(i)(ii)(c))

Specifically, the registered person must ensure that records of physical intervention and consequences are completed within timescales, staff de-briefs take place and consequences are reviewed.

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that children's health and well-being needs are met by seeking medical advice for children when required. ('Guide to the Children's Home Regulations, including the quality standards', page 33, paragraph 7.3)

- The registered person should ensure that when a child returns to the home after being missing from care or away from the home without permission, the responsible local authority provide an opportunity for the child to have an independent return home interview. ('Guide to the Children's Home Regulations, including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.30)
- The registered person should ensure that they develop effective working relationships with each child's parents or family members to gain feedback to inform the care planning and development of the service. ('Guide to the Children's Home Regulations, including the quality standards', page 52, paragraph 10.3)
- The registered person should ensure that staff appraisals include the views of other professionals who have worked with staff over the year, and the views of children who have been cared for at the home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.5)

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: 1212704

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: Robert Allen

Registered manager: Neil Gillson

Inspector

Julie Elder, Social Care Inspector

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