

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 owned and operated by a private organisation. It provides care for up to four children who may have social and emotional needs. There are currently three children living in the home.

The manager registered with Ofsted in December 2020.

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 February 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: 26 January 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
26/01/2022	Full	Good
13/08/2019	Full	Good
08/11/2018	Full	Good
17/10/2017	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children benefit from good-quality care that is competently delivered by the staff team. They settle into a caring and nurturing home where their needs are well managed and monitored. This high-quality care means that children make good progress in all areas of their development.

Children receive support from staff to understand the plans in place when moving into the home. They receive a welcome gift and a child-friendly children's guide. The children's guide helps children to understand what life will be like at the home. Children who have lived in the home for a long time know that staff are committed to them. This supports children to develop trusting relationships with staff. As a result, children invest in the home and respond well to the care that they receive.

Children's healthcare is prioritised. They are supported to attend medical appointments. Children receive help when they struggle with their emotional well-being. Children trust staff and talk to them about their concerns. Staff work closely with the in-house therapist to ensure that plans are in place for children from the start of their placement. They put in place strategies suggested by the therapy team to promote the children's emotional well-being.

Children's achievements are celebrated, regardless of how small these may appear to be. Milestones, such as learning to ride a bicycle, are captured and recognised. Children have opportunities to play and access activities both at home and in the local community. Photos of children enjoying these activities are proudly displayed around the home. This provides clear evidence of children's experiences and makes for a child-friendly and homely environment.

Children's educational needs are met. Staff have established a learning culture in the home for the children. Staff read bedtime stories to children. This improves children's confidence in their own reading. There is strong collaboration with the children's school, which is on the same site as the home. This ensures that care staff and teaching staff are aligned in supporting the children's education.

Children are supported to see their families in line with their care plans. Relationships with children are maintained when they leave the home. Staff help children to develop some independent living skills. However, there is no structure to evaluate the effectiveness of this work. This does not give assurances that children will be able to live independently in the future.

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

Staff are confident and have a clear understanding of what safeguarding means and the processes that need to be followed to protect children. There are clear risk assessments in place that are well written, understood by staff and reviewed by

managers. However, for one child, the risk management plan followed by staff is not reflected in the local authority documents. This failure does not ensure that the actions taken by staff are fair, proportionate and lawful.

Children rarely go missing from the home. On occasions when children have gone missing, staff follow missing-from-care procedures. They conduct local searches in the community, and work closely with the police and with social workers. Return home interviews are completed. Staff use reflection to support the children to understand the risks of going missing from the home.

Individual focused work with children around their vulnerabilities and risks help them to learn self-protection strategies. Children who have previously self-harmed no longer do this. This is due to the support and positive affirmations given by staff. In addition, staff provide children with the tools to communicate their feelings in a different way. As a result, children develop a positive self-image and better coping mechanisms.

Physical restraints are rarely used. They are only used as a last resort to stop children from hurting themselves or others. The use of this measure of control is always reviewed by managers to make sure that this is necessary and proportionate. Staff also reflect on alternative ways to help children manage their emotions. This enables staff and children to think about ways to prevent such events happening again.

Leaders and managers follow safer recruitment procedures. They ensure that all staff are appropriately checked and vetted before they work with the children. Effective recruitment is supported by a good-quality induction programme. All new staff have completed mandatory training, which includes safeguarding courses. All of these measures help to ensure that children are safeguarded effectively.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is managed by a permanent manager who is ambitious for the staff team to offer excellent care to children. He is supported by a deputy manager and together, they have a clear vision for the home. They have worked hard to build a staff team that is committed to the children and the ethos of the home. The staff team works with the larger team around the child. This ensures that the therapeutic, nurturing approach is in line with what the children need. This collaborative approach helps the children to make progress.

The home is appropriately staffed. The staff have all been at the home for a considerable period of time. They told the inspector that they are well supported by managers and enjoy their roles. Staff receive regular supervision sessions and actively take part in team meetings. This ensures that the staff work consistently together.

All staff have completed their mandatory training. In addition, they receive training linked to the specific needs of the children living in the home, such as self-harm.

This means that the staff are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to develop their practice. As a result, children are cared for by a staff team whose members are confident to provide good-quality care.

Managers use monitoring tools to help track the children's progress and development. They have a good understanding of the individual children's needs. However, some of the recordings in the children's case notes do not reflect this.

There are regular visits to the home by an independent person, which provides effective external oversight of the running of the home. Where weaknesses are identified, managers use this as a learning opportunity. This means that managers demonstrate a desire to improve practice. This helps to ensure that children achieve positive outcomes.

Professionals speak positively about the home and the support provided to children, noting the stability and progress achieved. They report that communication is efficient. Effective working relationships between the home and other professionals ensure that children are better safeguarded.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Statutory requirement

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
The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that each child's relevant plans are followed. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that the actions taken by staff to safeguard children are supported by the relevant local authority statutory plans and documents.	15 April 2023

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff help each child to prepare for any moves from the home, whether they are returning home, moving to another placement or adult care, or to live independently. This includes supporting the child to develop practical skills such as budgeting and independent travel. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 17, paragraph 3.27)
- The registered person should ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. Staff should record information on individual children in a non-stigmatising way that distinguishes between fact, opinion and third-party information. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

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 Ltd

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

Responsible individual: Louise Whitby

Registered manager: Neil Gillson

Inspectors

Evelyn Chafota, Social Care Inspector

Gina Lightfoot, Social Care Inspector

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