

1241776

Registered provider: Hexagon Care Services Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home provides care for up to four children, aged between 11 and 18 years, who have had adverse childhood experiences that have led to associated trauma and presenting complex behaviours. The home is privately owned.

The manager registered with Ofsted in January 2022.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021.

We last visited this setting on 28 January 2021 to carry out a monitoring visit. The report is published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection dates: 15 and 16 February 2022

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: 18 February 2020

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: good

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
18/02/2020	Full	Good
30/01/2019	Full	Outstanding
05/03/2018	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
11/07/2017	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Four children were living at the home at the time of inspection. Staff build positive relationships with children, and these have helped them to make progress. Children told the inspector that they enjoy living at the home and that they get on well with staff. They said they can talk to staff if they are worried and that they feel safe.

Children have made good progress in their education. One child had very low attendance at school when they moved to the home, and there had been significant behavioural issues at school. Since moving to the home, their attendance has increased significantly and their behaviour in school has improved. Their teacher said that they had excellent communication with staff and that this, as well as staff prioritising the child's education, had led to these improvements. When there have been challenges with children's education, staff have worked closely with schools, social workers and, when appropriate, children's families to find solutions. Good support for education has helped improve outcomes for children.

Managers undertake careful planning for children who move to the home. They work closely with social workers to consider children's needs and consider how these can be met by staff. Children are given information about the home before they move in and have the opportunity to have any questions they have answered. One child, who has recently moved to the home, told the inspector that they have been welcomed warmly by staff and had settled in well.

Children are helped to build and maintain relationships with their families. Staff take children long distances to see family members. When some of these relationships have been difficult for children, staff have provided them with good levels of support to manage their feelings about this. Good support for children to maintain such relationships helps children maintain a network of support beyond the home.

Children's views about the home are actively sought and responded to. Regular children's meetings cover a variety of topics, and staff use key-work sessions to discuss different issues with children. This means that children are able to input into the care that they receive.

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

Staff have a good understanding of most risks to children. They work alongside other relevant professionals to help risks to reduce. One child had a history of self-harm, but this has stopped in the time that they have lived at the home. Risk assessments provide clear strategies for staff to manage different risks. However, following one incident, risks in relation to exploitation were not appropriately identified for one child. While the child has support in place relating to this, specific risks stemming from this incident have not been addressed and are not included in their risk assessment.

Staff raise concerns with appropriate professionals if they feel children are at risk. There have been a number of concerns in relation to children's online safety. These concerns have been shared with police promptly. Plans have then been agreed between staff and external professionals to put additional safety measures in place for children. Good planning around identified risks helps children stay safe.

There have been a number of incidents when children have been reported missing. Staff respond to these appropriately and in line with children's plans. Staff proactively look for and try to contact children. Detailed records are kept which give a clear overview of steps taken. After children return, the manager is proactive in communicating with children's placing authorities to ensure that return home interviews are offered to children. Staff talk to children when they return to find out information about where they have been as well as to help them think about the potential risks they could be exposed to.

Staff provide children with clear and appropriate boundaries. They recognise positive behaviour, using praise and rewards to encourage it. Behavioural incidents are generally well managed, and there have not been any incidents of restraint for a significant period of time. When consequences are used, they are appropriate and focused on helping children learn from incidents. Staff are committed to children, with one child saying that no matter what happens, staff are still there to help them.

There has been one incident of a child making an allegation against staff. They did not wish to make a complaint, but the manager consulted with the local authority designated officer. However, after doing this, the manager did not ensure that the child's social worker spoke to them about the allegation. This meant that the child was not spoken to by someone independent of the home. Failure to follow appropriate safeguarding procedures has meant the allegation was not fully explored.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is suitably experienced and qualified to level 5. Despite being relatively new in post, she has a good understanding of the strengths of the service and has identified areas for development moving forward. Leaders and managers provide a visible presence, and this has enabled them to build positive relationships with both children and staff.

The manager has built excellent working relationships both with external professionals and children's families. All feedback received was positive, highlighting good levels of communication and how staff have supported children to make progress. One social worker said of the manager and staff, 'The way they conduct themselves in the professional network is exceptional.'

Managers actively advocate for children as well as helping them to access independent advocacy. The manager has appropriately challenged other professionals when needed. This helps to ensure that children's best interests are always at the forefront of the care that is being provided to them.

A good-quality programme of induction and training are in place for staff. This ensures that they have the skills needed to meet children's needs. Staff feel well supported by managers. They are provided with regular and good-quality supervision that gives consideration to how children's needs are being met. However, following on from one incident in which a staff member responded in an inappropriate way to a child, the manager failed to appropriately address this. This meant that reflection on the incident to support the staff member to respond to children's behaviour in more appropriate ways was not provided.

The manager has good systems in place for monitoring of the home. She has good oversight of incidents and children's plans. The internal quality of care review includes evaluation of the review period as well as actions to drive improvement moving forward. However, it does not include the detail of consultation that has been undertaken with children and external professionals. This limits the capacity of the review to fully consider the strengths and weaknesses of the home.

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
The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on— mutual respect and trust; an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and positive responses to other children and adults. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— are provided with supervision and support to enable them to understand and manage their own feelings and responses to the behaviour and emotions of children, and to help children to do the same. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(x)) In particular, ensure staff are supported to have the skills to always respond to children's behaviours in an appropriate manner.	14 March 2022
The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; and 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. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(iii)(b))	14 March 2022

In particular, ensure that risks to children are appropriately identified and that risk assessment are updated to reflect these.

In addition, ensure that allegations against staff are managed in line with instructions from the local authority designated officer.

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that the quality of care review meets all the aspects stipulated in Regulation 45. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 64, paragraph 15.2)

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 Ltd

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

Responsible individual: Mark Dunn

Registered manager: Rebecca Hatfield

Inspector

Joe Cox, Social Care Inspector

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