

1241776

Registered provider: Hexagon Care Services Limited

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 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.

Inspection dates: 16 and 17 August 2022

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 15 February 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
15/02/2022	Full	Good
18/02/2020	Full	Good
30/01/2019	Full	Outstanding
05/03/2018	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Four children live in this home. They have mixed views about living there. Some children told the inspectors that they do not like living in the home and would prefer to live with a family. In contrast, one child said that they feel happy and safe living in the home. Another child has lived in the home for three years and is very settled.

The atmosphere is calm and relaxed. The home has recently undergone redecoration and refurbishment. The children chose new colour schemes and new furniture. However, the furniture in some children's bedrooms needs replacing. External doors have sensors on which activate when they are opened throughout the day. This detracts from an otherwise homely environment. During the inspection, the responsible individual took action to remove the sensors.

Staff form positive relationships with children. Children are able to identify staff who they can trust. They feel comfortable talking to staff if they have any worries or concerns. Children know how to make a complaint and feel comfortable to do so. This enhances their sense of feeling listened to and that their views are valid. In addition, children feel confident that staff will take the right action to keep them safe.

Children engage in education. Staff support one child to attend their school, which is a long distance away from the home. This promotes consistency and contributes to a positive learning experience for them. This child is on track to achieve their GCSEs. Staff also support children to make sensible choices about their further education. As a result, children are confident and have aspiration for their futures.

The registered manager escalates concerns about the performance of placing authorities when necessary. For example, there has been a delay in the care planning for one child who is approaching adulthood. Managers have gone above and beyond to try to ensure that there is a plan in place. The registered manager is able to maintain good working relationships with professionals. Professionals say that the registered manager is a good advocate for children and that they focus on improving outcomes for children.

Children have opportunities to engage in a range of activities, such as going to the theatre or out for a meal. This enhances children's social skills while they have fun. Staff also facilitate activities for children with their family members. As a result, children keep in touch with people who are important to them. This helps them to develop a positive sense of their identity.

The registered manager involves children in their care planning. This helps children to understand that boundaries and rules are in place to keep them safe. However, children say that some staff are not consistent. This means that children can sometimes feel unhappy or frustrated.

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

Overall, staff respond well to safeguarding concerns. They have a good understanding of the risks to children and the action they need to take to safeguard them. Staff work well with professionals such as social workers and the police. As a result, they understand and, in the main, manage risk effectively.

However, staff do not always respond to children's behaviours effectively. On occasion, staff's responses to children's behaviour have not been in line with the home's model of care as outlined in the home's statement of purpose. Staff have used blaming language such as 'selfish', or threatened children with consequences, which have caused children's behaviour to escalate further. On another occasion, following an incident when staff struggled to manage a child's behaviour, staff gave the child a sharp knife to cut some fruit, albeit under close supervision. The child later refused to return the knife to staff. The child ran out of the home and climbed over a gate with the knife in their hand. Staff were unable to de-escalate this situation and called the police. Staff did not thoroughly consider the risks associated with this activity. This compromised the safety of the child and others in the home.

Staff take appropriate action when children go missing. There are clear plans in place for staff to follow in the event that this occurs. However, in one incident, a child was able to be away from the home unnoticed for several hours. Staff did not show professional curiosity about this child's whereabouts. In addition, the registered manager failed to thoroughly investigate this incident. This was a missed opportunity to improve safeguarding practice in the home.

Staff help children to recognise risk and risky situations. Staff are proactive in helping children to understand how to keep safe in the community. However, there was an incident when two children from the home went missing together. During this incident, one child was subject to sexual exploitation. The effectiveness of the work with children around their safety is, therefore, questionable. Nevertheless, staff encourage children to think for themselves and to make safe choices.

The registered manager reports any allegations to the appropriate professionals without delay. Children feel confident that staff will take the right action to keep them safe.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home has a dedicated and organised registered manager. She leads by example, showing warmth and care for the children. The registered manager knows the children well. All children identified the manager as someone they trust and who they can talk to.

Staff are very positive about the manager and the support they receive. The registered manager undertakes regular and reflective supervision with staff. They reflect on any incidents which may have occurred in the home. This encourages staff to identify ways in which they can improve their practice. This improves children's lived experiences.

The home's statement of purpose outlines the ethos of the home and the outcomes it intends to achieve. It states that there are sensors on children's bedroom doors and that this is to 'assist staff with the movements' of children. However, the document does not clearly explain if the sensors are risk assessed. Therefore, children may be subject to unnecessary restrictions. The sensors are currently deactivated.

Staff do not all have the necessary skills or the ability to implement the home's model of care. As a result, children may receive inconsistent responses. The registered manager recognises this and there is a training plan in place to upskill the staff team, particularly in relation to the home's therapeutic approach. Nevertheless, staff receive a wide range of training opportunities to develop their skills, improving the quality of care children receive.

Recording practice in the home is good. Children's plans are reflective of their needs. The registered manager has good oversight of plans. There is a highly effective approach to joint working in children's best interests. The registered manager actively challenges the placing authority when there is missing information, or when children require specialist support to meet their needs effectively.

The registered manager has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the home. They have good monitoring and review systems in place. They use them to evaluate the quality of care provided to children. This supports ongoing development plans for the home to improve children's experiences. However, the quality of care report does not effectively evaluate consultation with children.

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 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— 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; help each child to understand how to keep safe; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; 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)(i)(ii)(iii)(v)(vi)(b)) The registered person should ensure that staff have the skills and knowledge to recognise when children may be at risk of harm. In addition, ensure staff are more curious about children's whereabouts when they are not in the home.	12 October 2022
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that—	12 October 2022

helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— 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; ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(c)(h)) The registered person should ensure that children are cared for in line with the home’s statement of purpose. In addition, they should also ensure that staff receive training pertinent to the needs of children they intend to care for. The registered person should also ensure that when significant incidents occur in the home during which shortfalls in staff practice are identified, that they review, identify and disseminate any learning to promote continuous improvement in the care children receive.	
The registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ("a quality of care review") at least once every 6 months. In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating— the feedback and opinions of children about the children’s home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it; and any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children. (Regulation 45 (1) (2)(b)(c)) The registered person should ensure that the feedback and opinions of children are clear in the quality of care review report. In addition, that the report illustrates the action taken	12 October 2022

to ensure continuous improvement to the quality of care children receive.	
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Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that improvements are made to provide children with a more homely environment. In particular, ensure that any damaged furniture in children's bedrooms is removed and replaced. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.7)

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, Lancashire PR2 2YQ

Responsible individual: Mark Dunn

Registered manager: Rebecca Hatfield

Inspectors

Sarah Berry, Social Care Inspector

Sonia Sullivan, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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