

1269215

Hexagon Care Services Limited

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home provides care and accommodation for up to four children and young people.

The home is operated by a private company. The home specialises in working with children and young people who have social and emotional difficulties.

There is no registered manager at the home.

Inspection date: 1 August 2018

This monitoring visit

This is a new children's home that was registered with Ofsted on 2 February 2018. The purpose of this monitoring visit was to look at the increased number of notifications received by Ofsted, some of which are safeguarding concerns relating to the children living in the home. The inspector is aware that during this monitoring visit, serious allegations of a child protection nature were being investigated by the appropriate authorities.

Children are not safe at this home, because the staff do not consistently follow safeguarding procedures. A flowchart procedure for contacting professionals and the children's family has not been consistently followed, and different staff have contacted different individuals, causing confusion in responses to prevent some of the children's safeguarding situations from taking place.

The home does not have a registered manager. A person has recently been appointed to the role of manager. The responsible individual confirmed to the inspector that an application to register the new manager will be received by Ofsted soon. Following the previous registered manager's resignation and most staff leaving the home, there has been an overuse of agency staff and staff covering from other children's homes. This has had a negative impact on the children.

The children told the inspector that they were not happy in the home. This is because significant changes to staffing have taken place since their arrival in the home. The children told the inspector that two of the remaining staff genuinely care about them and that these staff are enthusiastic about supporting the children's

progress. The children reported that the other staff used from an agency or other homes within the organisation are not known to them and because of this, they find relationships are hard to form and they run away.

The children have gone missing from the home on a regular basis, and there is a lack of clear expectations regarding staff response to this behaviour. This does not support the children's safety. Although the home has clear procedures in place on children who go missing, there is a lack of effective action taken by the staff to mitigate the persistent pattern of the children's high-risk behaviour. Independent return home interviews for the children are not provided. This lessens any opportunities to seek information about the children's whereabouts and their reasons for being absent or going missing from the home.

Records indicate that not all staff have followed the children's risk assessments or missing from care and contact plans. Therefore, it is unclear whether the staff have an effective understanding to provide the children with safe care. Signatures in records are unrecognisable and the senior leaders failed to identify the names of the specific staff completing some records.

Children do not have individualised care plans that include their needs and strengths, as well as their desired outcomes. A placement plan specifically for the children is in the process of being developed. The senior leaders and the new manager have recently commenced work on an action plan. However, this is not fully implemented to improve the quality of the children's care in the home. The administrations systems which should be known by the staff are weak.

The responsible individual is in day-to-day charge of the home, supported by a senior leader in the organisation, a registered manager from another home and the new manager. This has significantly limited the inspector's ability to fully assess the risk posed to the children. This is because those currently running the home are new to this home and have only been in their current position for a short time.

The staffing records did not show if staff had received an induction into the home and the staff supervision records did not show consistent support of the staff from senior management.

Notifiable incidents, some of which are safeguarding concerns, have not been forwarded to Ofsted in line with the timescales specified by regulation. This prevents the regulator from having an overview of the issues in the home and any prompt action that the regulator considers necessary to take.

A social worker told the inspector that she feels that some good work has been completed with her child, who has good relationships with the only two permanent staff in the home. However, she says that there have been too many significant incidents which she feels were poorly managed, placing her child at risk. Planned transitions for all of the children have identified new placements which they will soon move into.

Following the completion of the planned transitions for all of the children, the home will not accommodate any more children until a full complement of staff is in place. These staffing arrangements are expected to be completed by 30 September 2018.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
Not applicable		

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

Statutory Requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person 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 must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
12: The protection of children standard In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff help each child to understand how to keep safe; and understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person. (Regulation 12 (2)(a)(ii)(v)) Specifically, in relation to supervision of children where their care and missing from care plan determines this to keep them safe.	31/08/2018
33: Employment of staff The registered person must ensure that each employee completes an appropriate induction. The registered person must ensure that all employees receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (1)(a)(4)(b))	31/08/2018
34: Policies for the protection of children The registered person must prepare and implement a policy ("the missing child policy") setting out— the steps taken, and to be taken, to prevent children from being absent without permission; and the procedures to be followed, and the roles and responsibilities of persons working at the home, in relation to a child who is, or has been, so absent. Before implementing, or making an amendment which the registered person considers to be substantive to, the missing child policy, the registered person must— consult, and take into account the views of, each relevant	31/08/2018

person; and have regard to any relevant local authority or police protocols on missing children. (Regulation 34 (4)(a)(b) and (5)(a)(b))	
36: Children's case records The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child; are kept up to date; and are signed and dated by the author of each entry. (Regulation 36 (1))	31/08/2018

Recommendations

- Ensure when a child returns to the home after being missing from care or away from the home without permission, the responsible local authority must provide an opportunity for the child to have an independent return home interview. Homes should take account of information provided by such interviews when assessing risks and putting arrangements in place to protect each child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.30)
- The registered person should have a system in place so that all serious events are notified, within 24 hours, to the appropriate people. The system should cover the action that should be followed if the event arises at the weekend or on a public holiday. Notification must include details of the action taken by the home's staff in response to the event. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 63, paragraph 14.13)

Information about this inspection

The home was registered with Ofsted on 2 February 2018. Following the home's registration, Ofsted received concerns about the quality of the children's care. And, there has been a significant increase in safeguarding notifications concerning the children's welfare.

The purpose of this visit was to monitor the action taken and the progress made by the children's home.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 1269215

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: Jeanette Swift

Registered manager: Vacant post

Inspector

Mark Kersh, social care inspector

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Store Street
Manchester
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