

1277497

Registered provider: Hopscotch Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to four young people who may have social, emotional or behavioural needs.

There is a manager in post who has been registered since June 2018.

Inspection dates: 7 to 8 October 2019

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

requires improvement to be good

How well children and young people are helped and protected

requires improvement to be good

The effectiveness of leaders and managers

requires improvement to be good

The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 13 November 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
13/11/2018	Full	Good

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 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. (Regulation 12(1)(2)(a)(i))	22/11/2019
The leadership and management standard The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13(1)(a)(b)(2)(h))	22/11/2019
The care planning standard 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. (Regulation 14(1)(a)(b))	22/11/2019
Fitness of workers The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The registered person may only— employ an individual to work at the children's home; or if an individual is employed by a person other than the	22/11/2019

registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home, if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). The requirements are that— - the individual is of integrity and good character; - the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform; - the individual is mentally and physically fit for the purposes of the work that the individual is to perform; and - full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32(1)(2)(a)(b)(3)(a)(b)(c)(d))	
Notification of a serious event The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— - a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation; - an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious; - there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there; - a child protection enquiry involving a child— - is instigated; or - concludes (in which case, the notification must include the outcome of the child protection enquiry); or - there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40(a)(b)(c)(d)(i)(ii)(e))	22/11/2019

Recommendations

- Children's care plans should reflect that they are receiving care which meets their needs and promotes their welfare, taking into account of the child's gender, religion, ethnicity, cultural and linguistic background, sexual identity, mental health, any disability, their assessed needs, previous experiences and any relevant plans. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 14, paragraph 3.2)
- The registered person must specify the procedures to be followed and the roles and responsibilities of staff when a child is missing from care or away from the home without permission and how staff should support the child on return to the home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards',

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

Young people's progress is mixed. Young people who currently live in the home are well settled and are experiencing positive outcomes. However, two young people's placements have broken down, which has resulted in them being required to leave the home with little planning or preparation.

Young people say that they like living in the home and speak highly of staff. One young person commented, 'It is really good here. I have never lived anywhere for this long and I really want to stay.'

Staff know young people well and have a good understanding of their care needs. However, some young people's care plans lack clear information about specific aspects of their care. For example, young people's healthcare needs, including those with diagnosed conditions, are not always clearly described. This means that young people are at risk of receiving inconsistent or ineffective care.

Managers and staff are highly supportive of young people's education. Two young people, who have experienced significant disruption and had not been to school for some time prior to their admission, are now in full-time education and achieving good attendance. There is evidence that managers advocate strongly for young people, to ensure that they have appropriate provision in place.

Staff support young people to maintain contact with families, sometimes travelling significant distances to facilitate contact. An external professional said that in his opinion, staff had gone 'above and beyond' in facilitating some very complex contact arrangements for one young person. Supporting young people to maintain important relationships promotes their emotional well-being.

Young people are encouraged to engage in a range of activities. Their interests and talents are recognised and supported. One young person spoke enthusiastically about his photography hobby. He commented that staff ensured that he had the necessary equipment and regularly took him out to the beach so that he could take seascape pictures, which are his favourite. He said, 'I don't think I would have discovered photography if I hadn't come to live here.'

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

There are shortfalls in the risk assessment and risk management process. In some cases, risks are not clearly identified. In other examples, risks are identified but there is no clear guidance for staff about how to manage them. This means that staff may not be

aware of the steps they need to take to protect young people from harm.

There have been occasions where young people have been missing from the home. In all cases, missing episodes have been of short duration and no young person has been missing from the home overnight. However, missing from care protocols require improvement. Presently, protocols are not individualised and fail to provide important information, such as known information about where young people may go when they are missing or known concerns or risks relevant to individual young people.

Staff understand young people's behaviours and have the skills to de-escalate most challenging situations. As a result, the number of incidents of physical intervention that take place in the home are not excessive. Improvements have been made to the recording and monitoring of physical interventions. However, some records of sanctions issued to young people for inappropriate behaviours lack clarity and are not properly monitored to ensure that they are proportionate or effective.

Some shortfalls were identified in relation to the recruitment of new staff. For example, there were significant discrepancies between information provided by a staff member during their application and two of their references. Despite records stating that the references had been verified, the discrepancies had not been identified. This means that potential concerns about the staff member's previous conduct were not followed up effectively. Thorough recruitment procedures are an integral aspect of safeguarding and therefore must be followed.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

There is a manager in post who has been registered since June 2018. The registered manager is due to move on to another role within the organisation and a new manager has been appointed. The management handover has been well planned to ensure that it is effective.

Young people, staff and external stakeholders express satisfaction with the quality of care. One professional said, 'I find that they have a very positive, non-judgemental approach towards young people,' and described managers and staff as helpful and professional.

When considering whether to admit new young people, managers have failed to make effective use of impact risk assessments. In one example, risks relating to the care of a prospective resident were not fully assessed prior to his admission. In addition, there was a failure to carefully assess the potential impact of the new young person on those already living in the home. Without careful impact risk assessment, young people are at risk of negative impact from inappropriate admissions.

Staff feel that they are well supported and speak positively about the home's leadership. There is a training programme in place, which helps to ensure that all staff have the appropriate knowledge and skills to support young people safely and effectively. There has been some turnover of staff, which has had an impact on the ratio of qualified staff.

However, steps have been taken to ensure that all new staff are supported to attain nationally recognised qualifications.

Internal monitoring could be used more effectively to ensure that shortfalls and areas for development are identified. Shortfalls in areas such as recruitment were found during this inspection, but had not been previously identified by the manager. Furthermore, requirements in relation to risk management and the notification of significant incidents were raised in the last inspection of the home and have not been met. This demonstrates that the home has failed to take the necessary steps to ensure that young people benefit from an improving service.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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: 1277497

Provision sub-type: children's home

Registered provider: Hopscotch Care Limited

Registered provider address: 19 Lancaster Road, Carnforth LA5 9LD

Responsible individual: Richard Witt

Registered manager: Janette Woods

Inspector

Marie Cordingley, social care inspector

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