

2530059

Registered provider: Hexagon Care Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is operated by a private company. The home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to two children or young people who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

This is the home's first inspection since registration in July 2019.

Inspection dates: 12 to 13 February 2020

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: not applicable

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
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N/A		
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Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The children and young people have settled well into their new home. They are making good progress relative to their starting points. Their achievements are considerable, given their histories and early life experiences. Their achievements include building positive relationships with the staff, speaking more to staff about their feelings, being able to regulate their emotions more effectively, improvements in their personal presentation and attending education.

The case records are detailed and well organised. There is clear evidence of the progress that the children and young people are making.

The children and young people respond well to the nurturing, persistent and consistent care that the staff provide. Over time, the staff have built strong, trusting relationships with the children and young people. The staff advocate for them, ensuring that the children and young people's best interests are prioritised. As a result, the children and young people experience stability and enjoy secure attachments to adults that they can rely on. An independent reviewing officer said: 'The staff have helped to stabilise [name of child] in a short space of time. They have a good understanding of his needs.'

Like good parents, the staff are motivated in terms of seeking out opportunities and finding the right education placements. The staff use direct conversations with the children and young people to address the barriers to learning, such as behaviour, attitude, negotiation, compromise and commitment. This has brought early success. The children and young people are now attending education after previous absences. A young person said, 'I'm enjoying school. I'm doing okay.'

The children and young people's health needs are well met, and they attend all regular check-ups. The home's therapeutic approach gives the children and young people routine access to psychological support that they willingly attend. This supports the children and young people's emotional well-being and mental health immensely.

The children and young people learn life skills appropriate to their age. A young person said, 'I help to cook tea regularly, and clean my bedroom.'

The staff work hard to support the children and young people to have positive relationships with their families. When the children and young people find this a challenge, the staff provide suitable support and mediate to maintain constructive and regular contact.

The children and young people are well supported to be part of the local community, for example accessing local museums, sports clubs, theatre and support groups.

The home is well maintained, warm and welcoming. The children and young people's bedrooms are very personalised. However, the temperature in the conservatory is sometimes too low. The garden and garage areas would benefit from development to provide additional space for the children and young people to use.

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

The children and young people benefit from high staffing levels that provide them with constant support and supervision. The delivery of structured daily and weekly routines helps the children and young people enormously. It assists in helping them to feel secure in their home environment. They know what is happening and what is planned for them.

The children and young people benefit from open discussions and direct work on how to keep themselves safe, including the dangers of going missing. Missing-from-home incidents are rare. The staff demonstrate an awareness of the procedures to follow if a child or young person goes missing from the home.

Safeguarding concerns are suitably reported to the appropriate professionals, using the relevant procedures. There have been no incidents of bullying in the home.

Positive behaviour is promoted through individualised behaviour strategies. These strategies are consistently implemented by the staff, which results in noticeable improvements for those children and young people who present challenging behaviour. Consequently, the number of incidents requiring physical intervention to protect the children and young people is low. The children and young people respond well to the restorative approach to negative behaviour. However, the recording system for physical interventions does not always fully meet all the requirements of the regulations. The registered or authorised person has not directly spoken to the child or young person about the measure within five days of the event.

The staff know each child and young person well. They are clear about the individual vulnerabilities and the specific risks posed for each child and young person. The staff also use specific strategies and actions that are set out in written risk assessments. These assist in protecting and keeping the children and young people safer.

The location risk assessment contains suitable information. However, it identifies a potential community risk which has not been reviewed since July 2019. Up-to-date information is required to support safeguarding decision-making, in particular in the event of the children and young people spending time in the community without supervision.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home's manager is ambitious and has high expectations for the children and young people; his enthusiasm is infectious and descends to the whole staff team. The manager is passionate and challenges the practice of others when it affects the children and young people. For example, a school did not have a good enough safety plan in place for a young person. The manager immediately requested a meeting with the school and the social worker to highlight the concern. This resulted in a more robust safety plan being created.

In-depth consultation and planning occur as part of any decision-making process to match a child or young person to the home. The manager meets with each child and young person, their previous carers and social worker. This means the children and young people living at the home are more likely to be well matched. This comprehensive admissions process provides the staff with a wealth of information and a great understanding of each child and young person. This is a notable strength of the home.

A therapeutic team supports the staff to care for the children and young people. This is a key area feature of the home. A therapeutic culture is currently being developed in the staff's practice. The manager has a robust plan to further embed the therapeutic ethos and approach.

The home has strong working relationships with education placements, health services and other professionals. Through feedback, professionals have given praise about the difference the home is making to the children and young people's lives.

The staff reported that they are well supported by the manager. They benefit from regular supervision and training. All staff receive induction and mandatory training. There is a supportive culture in the staff team that also influences the children and young people. Compassion and understanding are shown by the staff, children and young people alike. A parent said, 'They are professional and caring staff; they keep children safe. We are fortunate that [name of child] has a place there.'

The manager is fully aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the home. There are thorough monitoring systems in place that ensure that the effective review of the quality of care takes place. Any detected deficit is quickly addressed. This new home has made good progress since opening in July 2019.

Though there is a core of established staff, there have been several staff changes in a short period of time. This could impact negatively on the children and young people making strong attachments. This is not in line with the therapeutic approach set out in the home's statement of purpose.

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, the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards'. The registered persons must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The registered person must review the appropriateness and suitability of the location of the premises used for the purposes of the children's home at least once in each calendar year taking into account the requirement in regulation 12(2)(c) (the protection of children standard). (Regulation 46 (1)(2)) In particular, ensure that potential risks are identified and monitored. Update information at regular intervals to assist in managing the risks effectively.	28/04/2020
The registered person must ensure that— within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which— within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(c))	28/04/2020

Recommendations

- For children's homes to be nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of their children, they will, in most cases, be homely, domestic environments. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

In particular, ensure that the conservatory has sufficient heating to provide a comfortable temperature to aid its use. Develop the identified garage space and a further private meeting space. Make further adaptations to the back garden to provide the children and young people with additional on-site facilities to meet their needs.
- Staffing structures should promote continuity of care from the child's perspective. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.15)

In particular, ensure that there is a consistent staff team which provides the stability to reflect the ethos of the home and the statement of purpose.

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: 2530059

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Hexagon Care Services Limited

Registered provider address: 1 Tustin Court, Port Way, Ashton-on-Ribble,
Preston PR2 2YQ

Responsible individual: Jason Hall

Registered manager: James Smith

Inspectors

Debbie Foster, social care inspector

Aaron Mcloughlin, social care inspector

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