

2530059

Registered provider: Hexagon Care Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and managed by a private company. It provides care for up to two children with social and emotional difficulties. There were two children living at the home at the time of inspection.

The registered manager was appointed in July 2019.

Inspection dates: 28 February and 1 March 2023

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

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

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

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

Date of last inspection: 2 March 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
02/03/2022	Full	Good
12/02/2020	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children build positive relationships with staff who are focused on helping them to achieve in every area of their lives. Children make progress from their starting points. For one child, their progress is excellent. Another child described the home as 'perfect'. Children live in a welcoming home, supported by adults who care about them. This helps the children to feel valued.

Children's views are actively sought and acted on and consultation with the children threads throughout their care. The manager and staff advocate on children's behalf to ensure that their plans reflect the children's individual needs and wishes. For example, one of the children has the bespoke plan for moving on that they wanted.

When a child moves into, or on from, the home, this is carefully planned by the manager and staff team. The care taken in this area was praised by professionals who spoke with the inspector. Every effort is made by staff to ensure that children are supported with change. As a result, children's anxieties, fears and worries reduce.

When children move in, they are provided with most of the information that they need about the home in a child-friendly format. This helps them to understand what living in the home will be like. However, this information does not include details about the complaints process or advocacy support. This is a missed opportunity to ensure that children are provided with all the information and guidance they need in from one source.

Children's learning is supported and, if there are obstacles, staff are proactive in identifying alternative resources that help children to achieve. Learning extends beyond school, and staff ensure that children have opportunities to gain life skills. For example, children are learning how to budget, swim, drive and to apply for a job. These skills will benefit children throughout their lives.

Children's health needs are met. Staff work alongside the in-house clinician and other specialist services to support children to understand and express their feelings.

Children access a huge range of activities and hobbies. These include trips and holidays abroad. One of the children has recently been wild camping and also attended a home match for their favourite football team. Memories of these experiences are captured in photographs displayed throughout the home.

The home is mostly comfortable and well furnished. The children's bedrooms are welcoming and reflect their tastes and interests. The conservatory has been developed and is used as an additional relaxation area. However, the inspector found that the manager had not identified or taken swift action to address some

minor repairs around the home. This detracts from the overall appearance of the home.

It was noted during the inspection that some staff have a tendency to differentiate between bathrooms. For example, there is a bathroom for staff and one for the children. There was no clear rationale for this practice. Furthermore, this makes the environment less homely for children.

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

Children do not go missing from care and there have been no incidents where they have been held by staff. This indicates that children are happy, making progress and are settled in their home.

If a child has an accident, they are provided with prompt medical attention and emotional support. However, not all incident records are of good quality. For example, some of the language used is unhelpful, and some records, such as body maps, do not consistently capture the date or time the incident occurred, or when the child was checked for an injury. This means that the manager is not fully assured that the information is accurate.

Children have up-to-date risk assessments. Staff know and follow plans that help children to be safe. Children are supported to understand potential risks, such as those associated with the internet. Staff take steps to ensure that children are not exposed to online harm.

Consequences are very rarely used because staff prefer to use a restorative approach with children. However, when a consequence is deemed necessary, the record made by staff is not of a consistent quality. For example, on one occasion, the length of time that a restriction was to be in place for a child was not specified. This is potentially confusing for the child and also undermines the manager's ability to evaluate if the consequence was proportionate.

There are clear and consistent boundaries which help children to feel safe. As children are working towards independence, they are supported to take age-appropriate risks.

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

There are some weaknesses in the effectiveness of leadership and management that require improvement. There are shortfalls in the manager's monitoring of the home, such as the shortfalls identified in this inspection that have been overlooked. This means that the manager has missed opportunities to implement improvements quickly and effectively.

Monthly meetings with the in-house clinician alongside regular team meetings ensure that staff provide consistent, nurturing care to the children. Tasks are

allocated to each member of staff to complete before the next meeting. The start date, however, is not recorded. This means that the manager cannot identify if tasks have been completed within prompt timescales.

Handovers are detailed and this means that staff are aware of any changes to children's needs or plans. This is supported by a daily task sheet which is used to delegate work across the staff team. However, as noted, the manager has not maintained an effective system to monitor the maintenance of the home. This has led to repairs not being detected or addressed promptly.

Reflective supervision of staff takes place regularly, and this is more frequent for new staff. However, supervision records vary in quality. For example, how the manager has addressed staff practice or conducted concerns is not fully recorded. This means that the manager cannot demonstrate how the shortfalls have been addressed, or that the correct procedures have been followed to improve staff practice.

When children spend time with their family, a detailed record is made which helps the manager to evaluate how family dynamics impact on children. On one occasion, this had not been completed in a timely manner, resulting in a delay in the full account being available to the child, staff and stakeholders.

The inspectors identified that, on at least one occasion, staff were directed to misrepresent the amount of topical medication that was being used on a child. This had no impact on the child, as the amount being used was within the parameters of the recommended dosage. However, this it is not consistent with good, transparent practice.

Staff are positive about the support that they receive, and their practice reflects the model of care on which the home is based. There is a consistent view across staff that 'children come first'.

The staff have a detailed knowledge of the children, which helps them to provide individualised care. Staff receive mandatory and bespoke training to ensure that they have the skills and the knowledge to meet each child's needs.

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 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) and (2)(h)) Specifically: The registered person must ensure that records completed are accurate, up to date and fully capture the necessary information. This includes records of consequences, case records, medication records and body maps. The registered person must develop a system to identify that when tasks allocated to staff have not been completed in timescales, these are identified and addressed quickly. The registered person must ensure that monitoring systems are in place for the ongoing maintenance of the home. The registered person must ensure that records of staff performance and conduct clearly identify any issues and demonstrate what steps have been taken to address them.	2 May 2023

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that the children's guide helps children to understand how to make a complaint about the home in line with the home's

complaints procedure, the details of the children's commissioner, and how children can access advocacy support. This should be available to children in an accessible format. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 24, paragraph 4.22)

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 Ltd

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

Responsible individual: George Sumner

Registered manager: James Smith

Inspectors

Laura Grundy, Social Care Inspector
Jacqueline Malcolm, Social Care Inspector

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