

2580626

Registered provider: Hexagon Care Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a private company and cares for up to three children who may have social or emotional difficulties.

The manager was registered in November 2021.

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 October 2022

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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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: 11 January 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/01/2022	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

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

The home provides a clean and spacious living area for children, with outdoor space for children to play in. Minor repair work is needed in the home and garden. The home does not present as welcoming, with little in the way of decorations or personalisation. This is recognised by those working in the home, and a number of staff commented that the home would benefit from 'feeling more homely'.

Children have made progress in terms of their emotional well-being. One family member commented, 'They understand [name of child] better than anyone else has.' However, there is no evidence of proactive work to support the children to understand or regulate their emotions. Staff show an understanding of the complex needs behind challenging behaviour and children reported positive relationships with staff.

Staff do not provide appropriate educational activities for children who are not attending school. Children have no education timetable to support their academic progress. Children do not have a clear routine or sleep pattern to support a successful future return to a school environment.

Children who have a plan for independent living are not supported to develop their independence skills. Staff do not appropriately assess the child's level of need or understanding, and do not provide structured activities to support the child to improve their skills. One child spoken to was unable to identify what work had been done to help them to develop their independent living skills. This does not enable children to develop the skills they need to be successful.

Children who move on from the home are not supported to do this in a planned way. Children have moved with no transition plan in place, and little evidence of preparation or support with the move. Children who are preparing to move to semi-independent living have no plan in place to support them to do this successfully.

Children are not supported to understand or celebrate their cultural heritage. When children do not have a positive view of their own culture, staff ignore their heritage so that they do not upset the child. This does not enable children to understand and celebrate their identity.

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

Children feel safe in the home. Risk assessments are detailed and show clear understanding of the needs of each individual child. Risk assessments show the effect that specific strategies may have for each child. While there is some indication

of how to prevent incidents arising, there are no clear actions for staff to take when an incident does occur.

Staff provide positive rewards when children do well and incentives to support children to achieve their goals. When children make poor choices, staff use consequences that help the child to learn better choices. However, the consequences given are not always followed through. This could cause children to lose trust in the adults around them and may reduce the likelihood that children will continue to engage with these consequences.

Children have independent time away from the home, based on their age and development. They know what time they are expected to be home at night. One child is allowed to stay with family for a few days at a time. However, when this child is out of the home, with family or in the community, no welfare checks are done to ensure that the child is safe and well. This means staff would be unaware if the child were at risk of harm.

Children receive direct work, but these sessions are in response to incidents rather than proactive opportunities to prepare children for challenges they may face. Children are not being taught how to keep themselves safe in relationships or in the community.

Maintenance issues in the home are not escalated appropriately. Repairs to damage are often left for weeks, and sometimes months, at a time. Repairs are added to a list to be completed, but there is no clear process for escalating concerns with the maintenance team.

Safer recruitment checks are completed before employing staff. Complaints and allegations are investigated. This ensures that those working in the home are safe to work with children. Staff know the company whistle-blowing policy and are confident in discussing safeguarding procedures.

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

The manager was registered in November 2021. The manager and deputy both work shifts with the children. While this helps the managers to maintain positive relationships with the children, it reduces the time they have to complete their managerial tasks.

The manager advocates for the children and communicates well with external professionals to meet the children's immediate needs. However, the manager does not challenge placing local authorities in a timely manner to ensure that children have relevant and updated documents. This means that staff may not always know the most up-to-date plans for children, and therefore are unable to support the children to understand their plans.

The registered person ensures that external monitoring takes place each month. Recommendations made by the independent person are not always actioned by the manager and sometimes have to be recommended multiple times before being addressed.

There has been a high level of staff turnover since the last inspection, with several new staff members being employed. While this has caused instability, there is now a complete staff team in place. Children said that they know all the staff members and feel that they have built positive relationships. Staff report a positive working environment in the home and feel that there has been a significant improvement in consistency across the team.

Staff are provided with adequate training opportunities and receive training based on the specific needs of the children. New staff receive good induction training. All staff receive regular supervision sessions and attend monthly team meetings. These offer a place to reflect on practice and discuss development needs, as well as the needs of the children. The quality of team meetings has improved significantly over the last few months.

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 person(s) must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff— seek to secure the input and services required to meet each child's needs; if the registered person considers, or staff consider, a placing authority's or a relevant person's performance or response to be inadequate in relation to their role, challenge the placing authority or the relevant person to seek to ensure that each child's needs are met in accordance with the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 5 (b)(c)) Specifically, ensure that when children's documents are missing, this is escalated quickly.	14 December 2022
The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff— help each child to develop resilience and skills that prepare the child to return home, to live in a new placement or to live independently as an adult. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(vi)) Specifically, ensure that children who have a plan for semi-independent living arrangements are supported to develop their independent living skills.	14 December 2022

The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— understand the children’s home’s overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; use this understanding to deliver care that meets children’s needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff— protect and promote each child’s welfare; treat each child with dignity and respect; provide personalised care that meets each child’s needs, as recorded in the child’s relevant plans, taking account of the child’s background. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(ii)(iii)(iv)) Specifically, ensure that a child’s cultural heritage is explored, and any discriminative or racial comments are addressed with other children living in the home.	14 December 2022
The education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— help each child to achieve the child’s education and training targets, as recorded in the child’s relevant plans; support each child’s learning and development, including helping the child to develop independent study skills and, where appropriate, helping the child to complete independent study; understand the barriers to learning that each child may face and take appropriate action to help the child to overcome any such barriers;	14 December 2022

help each child to understand the importance and value of education, learning, training and employment; promote opportunities for each child to learn informally; help a child who is excluded from school, or who is of compulsory school age but not attending school, to access educational and training support throughout the period of exclusion or non-attendance and to return to school as soon as possible; help each child who is above compulsory school age to participate in further education, training or employment and to prepare for future care, education or employment; that each child has access to appropriate equipment, facilities and resources to support the child's learning. (Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(viii)(ix)(b)) Specifically, ensure that when children are not attending education, they follow a good educational routine and are supported to complete educational activities while not in school.	
The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on— mutual respect and trust; an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and positive responses to other children and adults. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— meet each child's behavioural and emotional needs, as set out in the child's relevant plans; help each child to develop socially aware behaviour; encourage each child to take responsibility for the child's behaviour, in accordance with the child's age and understanding;	14 December 2022

help each child to develop and practise skills to resolve conflicts positively and without harm to anyone; communicate to each child expectations about the child's behaviour and ensure that the child understands those expectations in accordance with the child's age and understanding; help each child to understand, in a way that is appropriate according to the child's age and understanding, personal, sexual and social relationships, and how those relationships can be supportive or harmful; help each child to develop the understanding and skills to recognise or withdraw from a damaging, exploitative or harmful relationship; strive to gain each child's respect and trust; are provided with supervision and support to enable them to understand and manage their own feelings and responses to the behaviour and emotions of children, and to help children to do the same. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(x)) Specifically, ensure that each child's behaviour management plan shows specific steps for staff to take should an incident occur, and ensure that restorative consequences are followed through.	
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;	14 December 2022

understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(v)) Specifically, ensure that staff take reasonable steps to check on children's welfare when they are out of the home.	
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)) Specifically, ensure that recommendations made by independent monitoring services are actioned in a timely manner.	14 December 2022
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. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that arrangements are in place to— plan for, and help, each child to prepare to leave the home or to move into adult care in a way that is consistent with arrangements agreed with the child's placing authority. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(iii)) Specifically, ensure that each child has a transition plan that supports them to move on from the home.	14 December 2022

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that children have a safe environment to live in and maintenance issues are escalated appropriately. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 33, paragraph 7.3)
- The registered person should ensure that all children receive proactive direct work to help them understand how to keep themselves safe. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.7)
- The registered person should ensure that children live in a warm and welcoming environment with a homely feel. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should ensure that there is a clear education timetable in the home when a child is not in full-time education. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 28, paragraph 5.15)

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: 2580626

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: Louise Whitby

Registered manager: Marisa Quinn

Inspectors

Aislinn Cooper, Social Care Inspector
Pam Nuckley, Social Care Inspector

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