

2580626

Assurance visit

Information about this children's home

This is a privately owned children's home. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to three children who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

There is a registered manager in post who registered with Ofsted in May 2020.

Visit dates: 22 to 23 September 2020

Previous inspection date: Not previously inspected

Previous inspection judgement: Not previously inspected

Information about this visit

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), Ofsted suspended all routine inspections in March 2020. As part of a phased return to routine inspection, we are undertaking assurance visits to children's social care services that are inspected under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF).

At these visits, inspectors evaluate the extent to which:

- children are well cared for
- children are safe
- leaders and managers are exercising strong leadership.

This visit was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000, following the published guidance for assurance visits.

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills is leading Ofsted's work into how England's social care system has delivered child-centred practice and care within the context of the restrictions placed on society during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Findings from the visit

We identified the following serious and widespread concerns in relation to the care and protection of children at this assurance visit:

- The level and intensity of self-injurious behaviour are sharply increasing.
- Children's risk management plans are not updated and do not include clear strategies for staff to follow to manage presenting risk.
- Some staff do not have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet children's complex needs.
- The manager's monitoring and review systems are not robust.
- Staff use restraint methods that are not part of agreed holds, which is a safety concern for all involved.

The care of children

There are two children living at this home. While staff know the children well and children told inspectors that they like living at the home, one child's presenting self-harm is not suitably addressed by the team. Staff are not adequately trained or experienced to support a child with such a high level of self-injurious behaviour, which leaves the child at risk of harm and has led to frequent admissions to hospital for the child in question.

The care plans in place are not sufficient to help staff support and manage children's individual needs, including the risk of further serious self-injurious behaviour. Therefore, the current care planning arrangements do not support staff to effectively plan or deliver suitable childcare.

Staff support children to stay in touch with their families. One child told the inspector that relationships with his family have improved 'a lot'.

Staff understand children's educational needs. Staff are supporting children to attend a college course in line with their needs. Home learning is in place for one child and staff are trying various strategies to encourage him to engage with this.

The safety of children

Managers and staff do not use effective strategies to protect children from harm. The manager does not effectively assess the risk of harm for each child and does not make the necessary arrangements to reduce the risks to children.

Children's individual risk management plans are not updated and do not include all known risks and strategies to help staff manage presenting risks. For example, risks include a steep escalation in and constant re-occurrence of incidents of self-injurious behaviours. This means that children are not always protected from harm.

The staff are unable to manage the high level of self-injurious behaviour and therefore cannot ensure that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm.

Physical intervention is frequently used to keep children safe. However, on some occasions staff have used restraint methods that are not part of an agreed hold. This is a safety concern for all involved.

Leaders and managers

Leaders and managers fail to demonstrate that they inspire and lead a culture that helps children aspire to fulfil their potential. Managers are not leading and managing the home in a manner that is consistent with the aims outlined in the statement of purpose. For example, the home's statement of purpose outlines that, 'Hexagon aims to support all young people in achieving their potential and developing their skills and competencies needed to function independently in mainstream society.'

However, inspectors found that children are not achieving their full potential because staff are not effectively managing their individual needs. For example, staff cannot manage one child's self-injurious behaviour, and this has a negative impact on the other child living in the home. This means that the care being delivered does not meet the individual needs of the children or promote their safety and welfare.

There are gaps in staff experience, qualifications and skills which impede their ability to meet the needs of each child. This is specifically in relation to training in ligature, self-harm and first aid. This shortfall was identified when untrained waking night staff cared for two children, one of whom needed immediate staff attention if they presented with self-injurious behaviour such as ligature use.

There are gaps in the home's monitoring and review systems. This means that managers cannot identify and address shortfalls in practice to improve the quality of care provided to children.

The provider failed to demonstrate that they had carefully planned children's admissions in and through the children's home. Impact risk assessments do not robustly assess all known risk factors in respect of children. This means that the home's ability to meet prospective new residents' individual needs are not suitably assessed or tested at the point of the child's admission. For example, one child with a history of significant self-injurious behaviour was admitted to the home and managers did not robustly assess if the staff team was equipped to meet the child's individual and complex 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 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; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies; that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12(1)(2)(a)(i)(iii)(v)(vi)(vii)(b)) *	01/11/2020
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— lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose;	01/11/2020

ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home; demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on— use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13(1)(a)(b)(2)(a)(c)(f)(g)(h)) *	
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 children are admitted to the home only if their needs are within the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home's statement of purpose; that arrangements are in place to— ensure the effective induction of each child into the home; and manage and review the placement of each child in the home. (Regulation 14(1)(a)(b)(2)(a)(b)(i)(ii)(iii)) *	01/11/2020
The registered person must compile in relation to the children's home a statement ('the statement of purpose') which covers the matters listed in Schedule 1. The registered person must provide a copy of the statement of purpose to HMCI and make a copy of it available upon request to— a person who works at the home; a child, or a child for whom accommodation in the home is being considered; a child's placing authority; and in the case of a qualifying school, the secretary of state. The registered person must—	22/12/2020

keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16(1)(2)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e)(3)(a)(b))	
---	--

*These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 2580626

Registered provider: Hexagon Care Services Ltd

Registered provider address: Tustin Court, Riversway, Preston, Lancashire PR2 2YQ

Responsible individual: Louise Whitby

Registered manager: Jennifer Chrysanthou

Inspectors

Catherine Fargin, Social Care Inspector
Natalie Bennett, Social Care Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2020