

2663174

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 run by a private provider. It offers care for up to three children who may have social and emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in July 2023. The registered manager could not be present during the inspection but did, however, speak with the inspectors and was present when the judgement was given.

At the time of the inspection, three children were living in this home.

Inspection dates: 14 and 15 August 2024

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: 14 November 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/11/2023	Full	Good
04/10/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Two children were spoken with during the inspection, and the third child was observed interacting with staff.

Children are supported by the staff to develop meaningful and secure relationships with the adults who are caring for them. The staff achieve this through spending time with the children and getting to know the children's likes, dislikes, worries, dreams and ambitions. In addition, the staff have a good understanding of the children's individual communication needs, and they respect and consistently support these. This approach ensures that all the children in the home have a voice. All children were observed to have meaningful interactions with staff, and two children reported being happy living in the home.

The children receive care from staff who have a good understanding of the children's individual needs and vulnerabilities. The children's bespoke care plans are detailed and are informed by a comprehensive therapeutic assessment process. This helps the staff to tailor their approach to caring for the children accordingly and assists the children in making good progress from their starting points.

The staff support the children to make progress with their education. For two children, a variety of education provisions have been explored and the children are both in full-time education, with one of the children having recently sat their GCSE exams. For one child, the staff strongly advocated on the child's behalf and a forest school is being explored as a way of supporting the child's interest in nature and encouraging them to take part in education.

Children's health needs are recognised by the staff, and action is taken to improve health. This has supported one child to begin eating socially and has resulted in the child gaining a healthy amount of weight since moving into the home. Children have access to universal health services and specialist services to promote their physical and emotional health. When children find it difficult to attend health appointments, the staff use a variety of methods to reduce children's anxiety towards health professionals and health appointments. This has resulted in one child successfully visiting the opticians.

The staff enable children to maintain their relationships with family and friends. This means that the children get to spend valuable time with the people they love and who are important to them.

The staff and managers create a strong culture of equality, diversity and inclusion in the home and empower the children to explore and embrace their own identities as well as celebrating the identities of others. Managers and staff have created educational materials for children to learn about other people's identities, including religious festivals and sexuality. In addition, key events such as Eid and Pride have been promoted and

celebrated within the home. Where this is beneficial for children within the home, this learning is shared within the wider organisation.

The children are supported by the staff to know how to make a formal complaint about the care they received. The complaints process is clearly outlined in the children's guide, which is child-friendly and easy for children to understand. The children have access to complaints cards, which are located away from the staff office. This allows the children to raise a concern in a discreet and anonymous way.

The home is spacious, clean, safe and decorated to a high standard. There are numerous photos of events the children have attended displayed with pride within the home and the children's bedrooms are highly personalised. This will help to promote a sense of belonging for the children and help them to feel respected and valued.

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

The staff have a good understanding of the children's needs and vulnerabilities and what is required to keep the children safe and reduce the risk of harm. The individual plans for children accurately capture the children's risks and vulnerabilities. The children's risk assessments and behaviour support plans are clear and easy to understand. Moreover, due to the strength of the relationships that the children have with the staff, the children are confident to talk to the staff about any concerns they may have.

The staff have regular conversations with the children that align with their needs and vulnerabilities in order to help the children make safer decisions. This has seen a reduction in missing-from-home episodes for one child and also a reduction in their self-harm.

When children go missing from the home, they receive a well-coordinated response from the staff. The staff actively search for the child and seek the support of the child's friends and family as well as external professionals to secure the safe return of the child home.

The staff understand what the children need to support their behaviour and work hard to create a calm home environment. On the occasions where a child has been held by staff, this is done as a last resort to keep the child and others safe, with the least restrictive hold being used. Following a child being held, the staff talk with the child about the events leading up to the hold. This helps the staff and child to reflect and learn. This approach has seen a reduction for one child with regard to the number of times the staff have held them.

Positive behaviour is promoted and modelled by the staff in the home, there is provision of structured routines and boundaries for the children and there are incentives for the children which are meaningful to the child. Consequences are very rarely used in the home.

When children report concerns about staff who work in the home, these concerns are

listened to and taken seriously. Safeguarding procedures are followed, and appropriate agencies are notified. Allegations made by children about staff are handled fairly and quickly. Following an allegation being investigated, where it is safe for the staff member to return to work at the home, restorative work takes place between the child and the staff member to promote learning and repair relationships.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is managed by a suitably qualified registered manager, who is supported by an experienced management team. Leaders and managers have a unified vision that is ambitious and empowers the children living in the home to reach their potential.

The home is suitably staffed and there are enough permanent staff to meet the needs of the children living in the home. The staff team has experienced some changes since the last inspection as new staff have joined the team. Leaders and managers ensure that new staff are appropriately vetted through safer recruitment processes. In addition, leaders and managers support new staff with their development through a comprehensive induction and training programme. This ensures that staff gain the required skills and experience to meet the needs of the children living at the home.

The staff report that they feel supported by leaders and managers and that the home is a great place to work. Leaders and managers use supervision as a development tool for staff, and this allows time for staff to reflect on practice and training, and to discuss the needs of children.

Leaders and managers have made improvements since the last inspection when evaluating the suitability of the home for a child. In the case of the child who has most recently moved into the home, all relevant information about the child's needs and vulnerabilities were gathered and balanced against the needs and vulnerabilities of the children already living in the home. The registered manager's evaluation of the suitability of the home for the child was thorough and well considered. This has supported all the children to be settled in the home.

The professionals and majority of family members spoken with state their confidence in the ability of the leaders and staff to help and protect children and provide them with a range of opportunities that support them to make progress in all areas of their lives.

Leaders and managers value external scrutiny and monitoring. They have responded appropriately to the shortfalls identified at the last inspection. The independent person attends the home every month. While the reports identify whether the independent person is satisfied that the children living in the home are effectively safeguarded and their well-being promoted, they do not consistently seek feedback from the children, their families, staff and a range of professionals. This shortfall does not allow leaders and managers or Ofsted to understand fully the experiences of the children in the home.

Case records are reflective of children's everyday lives. However, important records, such as incident reports and those relating to allegations about staff, do not always contain

relevant details such as dates, the context of the incident and the designation of staff involved. This shortfall does not help children to understand how they have been helped by staff and it weakens transparency.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that any individual appointed to carry out visits to the home as an independent person must make a rigorous and impartial assessment of the home's arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children in the home's care. This particularly relates to ensuring that visits by an independent person consistently include consultation with children, external professionals, family members and staff. ('Guide to Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.5)
- The registered person must ensure that the home's records on each child represent a significant contribution to their life history. They must be written in a way that enables the child to understand their time at the home and how and when staff have helped them. This particularly relates to ensuring that key reports are clear and include all relevant information, such as dates, full details of the event and the delegation of the staff member involved. This promotes transparency and helps children to understand how they have been helped. ('Guide to Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.5)

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: 2663174

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: Sylvia Lowe

Registered manager: Donna Vo-Brown

Inspectors

Shirin Khan, Social Care Inspector
Vikki Thwaites, Social Care Inspector

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