

2735269

Registered provider: Hexagon Care Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A private company owns and manages this children's home. It provides care for up to two children who may have social and emotional difficulties, or physical disabilities.

At the time of the inspection, two children were living at the home.

The manager registered with Ofsted in July 2023.

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 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	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 27 February 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
27/02/2024	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The children receive care from staff who know them well. The staff receive regular feedback from the clinical psychologist and therapist. This practice allows the staff to increase their knowledge and understanding of the children and learn how to improve the care they receive.

The children receive support to manage lifelong health conditions. They are registered with and attend their local GP, dentist and opticians. Regular health assessments and any treatment are prioritised by staff to help children to understand their own needs and receive the services they require.

The children enjoy meaningful time with family and friends that are important to them. The staff communicate well with parents and friends to support a positive experience. Additional support with travel arrangements is provided by the staff. Parents say that they are now able to enjoy time with their children.

The children are consulted regularly on those things that matter to them. The staff consider the barriers to participation and prepare the children for their meetings using story books. This gives the children a voice and a sense of control over the care they receive.

The children are encouraged to experience a diverse range of activities, regardless of their abilities. Children change their mind regularly and continue searching for things that they have a passion for. The children enjoy the arts and outdoor pursuits and take pride in sharing these interests with staff and visitors to the home.

The home uses a door alarm, which is linked to children's bedrooms. This was introduced as a safety measure shortly after the children were admitted. The use of the measure has not been reviewed in order to assess how proportionate or necessary it is to safeguard children.

The details of who to contact if a person needs to complain are not included in the statement of purpose. Children say they are confident in speaking to staff if they are unhappy about the care they receive but do not understand the complaints procedure to raise their concerns.

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

The children are safeguarded by a staff team whose members are proactive in their approach and keep the children engaged in positive activities. This promotes the children's feelings of safety and reduces their involvement in serious or concerning behaviours.

The staff instil a sense of responsibility in the children. Conflicts are de-escalated quickly to protect children's relationships with staff and each other. When children do not behave well staff will impose consequences which are linked to the incident or behaviour. This promotes the children's understanding of their own behaviour and its impact. As a result, children are learning to manage their own emotions and make better choices.

Risk assessments and safety plans are easy to read and give clear guidance on how to keep children safe. When new behaviours or risks develop, plans are updated quickly. This means that staff have access to the most up-to-date information about children and how to manage their risks.

The recording of information related to the administration of medication was not effective. This led to one child receiving two doses of their prescribed vitamins. The staff did not seek medical advice and staff relied on an internet search to inform their response. There was no impact on the child, but this poor practice does not promote the safety and well-being of children.

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

The home has a permanent and qualified registered manager. There have been a number of staffing changes over recent months. There is now a permanent staff team in place and they are supported through a comprehensive training offer to become skilled and knowledgeable. Safer recruitment processes are followed to assure leaders and managers that staff can provide safe care.

The registered manager's report on the quality of care provided does not consider the views of others. Although the children are consulted about things like activities, the manager has not taken into consideration their views on the quality of care they have received. Furthermore, there is no feedback from parents, professionals or staff in relation to this. This inhibits the manager's understanding of how children experience living in the home and what they think needs to improve.

Managers do not always use learning from practice to improve the experiences for children living in the home. Actions from incidents are not always effectively communicated with all staff so that they have a shared understanding of how to respond to the children's needs. There has been a number of new staff working in the home, and not all staff have a good understanding of the children's plans.

Statutory guidance and the organisation's procedures were not followed when an allegation of harm was received. A child made an allegation and the child's social worker asked the home to investigate without knowing the subject of that allegation. This meant that the child could have been asked to speak to the person about whom they had complained. However, this was quickly recognised and addressed by the manager, minimising the potential impact for the child. Ofsted were not informed about this allegation.

There are gaps within the supervision and induction process for new members of staff. The registered manager has not followed the organisations supervision policy. New staff have not received fortnightly supervision, sessions lack opportunities to reflect and induction plans have not been reviewed. This means that the manager does not have good oversight of the development needs and progress of the staff team.

Leaders and managers appropriately challenge the local authority when agreed plans and meeting minutes have not been received. Senior managers escalate to the commissioning team when there is a poor response from the placing authority. This was successful in obtaining care plans, review minutes and health assessments. This ensures that staff are working to the most up-to-date plans, as agreed by the local authority.

Professionals report positive and effective relationships with the manager and staff team. Professionals say that they receive regular updates and communication is good. This collaborative work protects the children and promotes positive working relationships.

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
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— are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(vii)) In particular, that all staff are aware of and follow the policy and procedure when a child makes an allegation.	18 September 2024
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— ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child; ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(d)(e))	18 September 2024
The children's views, wishes and feelings standard is that children receive care from staff who— develop positive relationships with them; engage with them; and	18 September 2024

take their views, wishes and feelings into account in relation to matters affecting the children's care and welfare and their lives. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff— keep the children's guide and the home's complaints procedure under review and seek children's comments before revising either document; ensure that an explanation is given to each child as soon as reasonably practicable after the child's arrival about— how to make a complaint or representations in relation to the home or the care the child receives and how any such complaint or representations will be dealt with. (Regulation 7 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(c)(d)(i)(ii)(iii))	
The registered person must— ensure that each employee completes an appropriate induction; ensure that each permanent appointment of an employee is subject to the satisfactory completion of a period of probation; and The registered person must ensure that all employees— receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (1)(a)(b) (4)(b))	18 September 2024
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there. (Regulation 40 (4)(c))	18 September 2024
The registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ("a quality of care review") at least once every 6 months. In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating—	30 November 2024

the quality of care provided for children;

the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it; and

any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children.

The system referred to in paragraph (2) must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff.
(Regulation 45 (1) (2)(a)(b)(c) (5))

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure the use of door alarms is regularly reviewed to ensure they are proportionate. 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. Homes should seek as far as possible to maintain a domestic rather than 'institutional' impression. ('Guide to The Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should ensure that when the staff have questions or concerns about a child's medication, they should approach an expert such as a General Medical Practitioner, community pharmacist or designated nurse for looked after children. ('Guide to The Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 35, paragraph 7.15)

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: 2735269

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: Angela Howden

Inspectors

Lee Riley, Social Care Inspector
Natalie Clark, Social Care Inspector

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