

SC398385

Registered provider: Hillcrest Children's Services (2) Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is registered to provide care for up to three young people who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The home is privately owned and forms part of a large social care organisation.

Inspection dates: 26 to 27 June 2017

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 **good**

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

Date of last inspection: 12 January 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: Improved effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection

None

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because

- A change in registered manager in the past four months has led to high levels of staff morale and stability. This has given young people greater consistency of care.
- The registered manager leads by example, promoting a culture in which young people's needs are at the heart of everything that staff do.
- Staff understand the complex experiences and emotional needs of young people and take their time to help each young person to make safer decisions.
- Staff establish meaningful relationships with each young person, which helps young people to develop a sense of belonging.
- Effective communication and working relationships between the staff, social workers and other professionals supports the development of young people.
- Young people are engaged in education and are making excellent progress.
- Staff make effective use of risk assessment to make informed decisions about the risks and needs of each young person. This contributes to young people reporting that they feel safe.

The children's home's areas for development

- Staff's planning for emergency admissions is not always sufficient to enable placements to be successful.
- Staff do not use every opportunity to support young people to develop the skills, knowledge and ability to keep themselves safe in the community.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/01/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
05/07/2016	Full	Requires improvement
23/03/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
15/09/2015	Full	Good

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

Recommendations

- Staff should support young people to be aware of and manage their own safety both inside and outside the home to the extent that any good parent would. Staff should help young people to understand how to protect themselves, feel protected and be protected from significant harm. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 43, paragraph 9.9)
- Ensure that when young people are newly admitted to the home, staff develop strong working relationships with the placing authority in order that care planning is effective and placements are successful. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 56, paragraph 11.2)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Caring, intuitive staff take the time to get to know young people well. As a result, young people feel that they can trust staff, and consequently they open up about their thoughts and feelings, even when they are highly sensitive and potentially embarrassing to discuss. This is helping one young person to understand and come to terms with certain aspect of their personal identity.

Staff are currently in the process of completing a re-decoration of the home in order to modernise the property, repair damage and ensure that young people are afforded a pleasant and homely environment.

Staff successfully promote young people's engagement with education, by providing daily praise and encouragement and offering impressive incentives, such as trips to music festivals. Furthermore, staff work closely with schools to ensure that the support offered both in school and at home is tailored to meet the educational needs of young people. A deputy headteacher told the inspector, 'Staff are very impressive. We really do work well together.' As a result, young people make academic progress. For example, one young person has recently completed her GCSE examinations, which she hopes have gone well. The young person is now working with staff to identify future education and training opportunities and a part-time job for the summer period. Young people receive the support and guidance from staff to be successful.

Staff work effectively with the child and adolescent mental health service and clinical therapy team to address young people's emotional health needs. For one young person, staff support includes offering a settling-down routine in the evening, and encouraging her to take her medication and engage with counselling. This is helping the young

person to become more emotionally resilient and therefore less likely to resort to self-harming behaviours.

Although existing young people's placements are anticipated to be long term, staff give consideration about how to support young people to develop the skills that they will need for adulthood. Staff encourage young people to cook and complete household chores, recording their progress in their independence workbooks, so that areas of strength and development are clear to identify. Naturally, young people are at different stages, and staff tailor their approach to provide young people with personalised support so that they are able to make progress.

Staff encourage and facilitate contact between young people and their families, where appropriate, so that young people do not feel isolated from their families. Staff are alert to the impact and anxiety that contact with family can cause young people and they ensure that appropriate support is in place during these times.

In one instance, staff planning in respect of a young person's emergency admission was not sufficient to ensure that all necessary information was shared between the local authority and staff. Consequently, on this occasion, the young person's placement came to an abrupt end after less than three weeks in placement. Despite this, the registered manager used the learning from the brief placement to help to contribute to the planning undertaken as part of the young person's transition to his new placement.

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

Staff offer young people consistent and clear boundaries and, as result, young people know what is expected of them. One professional told the inspector, 'I think that there is a real harmonious approach and this flows down to the young people. I think all the staff sing from the same hymn sheet and work together, and that has had a positive impact on the young people in house.' Staff use their relationships with young people to resolve situations through talking and being open about what is causing young people to become frustrated or upset. As a result, physical interventions are rare.

Staff have a proactive approach to behaviour management and actively look for opportunities to recognise and praise good behaviour, no matter how small it may be. Verbal praise, monetary rewards and trips to music concerts are used effectively to promote good behaviour and, as a result, young people are less likely to resort to negative attention-seeking behaviours.

Although young people rarely go missing, staff plan well for such situations, ensuring that individualised missing from care protocols are in place for each young person. As a result, the risk to young people when they do go missing is minimised as much as possible.

Staff demonstrate an awareness of the risks associated with child sexual exploitation and radicalisation and put in place appropriate safeguards, such as restrictions on free time. Although some efforts have been made to develop young people's understanding of the

dangers they potentially face, both online and in the community, further intervention is required to enable young people to make safe choices.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager has been in post since February 2017 and has completed the level 4 national vocation qualification in leadership and management for care services. He has a number of years of experience.

The registered manager has reviewed the home's statement of purpose to make sure that it accurately reflects the care that young people receive. Consequently, young people are making good progress in respect of their educational, emotional and social development. Staff are proud of young people's development and progress.

Internal and independent monitoring reports demonstrate that the registered manager has a strong understanding of the strengths of the home, of where improvements need to be made and of how these are going to be achieved.

Five of the nine staff members have completed qualifications equivalent to the level 3 diploma for residential childcare, and the remaining staff are either currently or due to be enrolled. The registered manager provides staff with regular supervisions and team meetings, which are both supportive and challenging. Staff said that he is empowering, supportive and helpful.

The registered manager recognises that some staff have been on a developmental journey over the past few months, but he is proud about how staff have responded to this and the positive impact that this is having in respect of the care that young people receive.

Liaison with other agencies is increasingly becoming a strength of the team, and working together is benefiting young people by ensuring that staff identify and meet their needs. Staff liaise with health, education, social workers, police and therapists, offering appropriate challenge to partners when required. The company's clinical team works effectively with staff to review young people and to help them to support their emotional health needs.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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: SC398385

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Hillcrest Children's Services (2) Limited

Registered provider address: Hillcrest Children's Services (2) Limited, Turnpike Gate House, Alcester Health, Alcester, Warwickshire B49 5JG

Responsible individual: Jarrod Elcock

Registered manager: Mark Duckers

Inspector

Paul Robinson, 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 <http://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 <http://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: <http://www.gov.uk/ofsted>

© Crown copyright 2017