

SC398391

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

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A private provider of children's services operates the home. It has three beds for children who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The property is located in a rural area.

Inspection dates: 26 to 27 September 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: 30 March 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: Sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection:

None

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because:

- Effective behaviour management supports young people to make significant improvements in their behaviour.
- Young people's sense of belonging means that they rarely go missing.
- Proactive staff support young people to overcome barriers to engaging with education.
- Staff are creative in ensuring that young people access the health services that they need.
- Good links with the clinical team ensure that staff have a good insight into the emotional health needs of young people.
- Staff are successful in planning transitions into and out of the home.
- The registered manager is child focused and committed to improving the lives of the young people in her care.

The children's home's areas for development:

- In some instance, risk assessments do not provide clear guidance to staff about young people's vulnerability to risk.
- Case records are not always clear about the action taken when a young person is restrained.
- Some parts of the home are in need of decoration.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
30/03/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
16/05/2016	Full	Good
25/01/2016	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
07/12/2015	Full	Outstanding

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 registered person must ensure that within 48 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint, the registered person has spoken to the user about the measure, and has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and within 5 days of the measure the registered person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (3) (b) (i) (ii)) In particular, the registered person should ensure that the records of physical interventions are clear and reflective of the actions taken during and following the use of such measures.	15/11/2017

Recommendations

- For children's homes to be nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of the children, they will, in most cases, be homely, domestic environments. In particular, the registered manager should consider how the kitchen area could be improved. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- Ensure that staff continually and actively assess the risk to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. Where there are safeguarding concerns for a child, their placement plan, agreed between the home and their placing authority, must include details of the steps the home will take to manage any risks on a day-to-day basis. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Staff are good at developing trusting and open relationships with young people. These relationships provide the foundation for young people to succeed. All young people have made progress in respect of their emotional, behavioural and social development. An independent reviewing officer said, 'He seems to have developed good relationships with staff. He went on holiday with staff and he was the life and soul of the holiday park. That is phenomenal for him.'

Proactive staff are the driving force behind young people attending school. On a daily basis, staff encourage young people to go to school and offer rewards and praise to maintain this. Young people who have before lacked the motivation to go to school are now regular attenders. There are signs that this is resulting in academic progress. A social worker said, 'He is engaged in school and he wasn't before, so that is going well.'

Staff are able to meet the health needs of young people. Staff help young people who are anxious about going to health appointments to attend. For example, staff introduced certificates for one young person as a way to motivate him to go. This was successful and the young person received the treatment that he needed.

Young people's transitions into and out of the home are well considered. Staff support those young people who are moving on to independence to develop the skills that they need to be successful. Similarly, effective planning ensures that new arrivals to the home are able to settle quickly, and staff soon learn how best to support them.

Young people experience a pleasant and welcoming home environment. Young people said that they like the home and they would not change anything. However, recently completed maintenance has been of a poor standard and this detracts from the appearance of the home. Furthermore, the kitchen is looking tired and in need of refreshing.

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

Some young people struggle to manage their feelings of anxiety, frustration and anger. Staff are successful in supporting them during these moments. Reassurance, affection and distraction are strategies used well by staff. Notwithstanding this, there are occasions when young people are aggressive to others or cause damage in the home. Positively, the frequency and intensity of such behaviours have reduced dramatically.

Staff support young people to reflect on their behaviour. Staff focus on what young people can do better rather than what they have done wrong. Staff place a high value on promoting positive behaviour. Staff give young people regular verbal praise and rewards for their good behaviour. As a result, all young people have made significant

improvements in their behaviour, and the use of physical interventions is decreasing.

Young people rarely go missing from the home as they have developed a strong sense of belonging. Staff plan well for the likelihood of such events and take decisive action when required. Proactive and attentive staff keep young people safe.

All young people told the inspector that they feel safe. In spite of this, one young person recently advised staff that he feels that another young person is bullying him. Staff have acted quickly and are using their links with the police, clinical therapy team and school to coordinate their response. Staff are taking every possible action to address the concerns raised.

In some instances, the registered manager has not ensured that risk assessments are of a consistently high quality. This means that assessments do not always identify the changes to young people's vulnerability and therefore do not always provide staff with clear guidance about how to keep young people safe.

Despite this, staff show a good understanding of young people's vulnerabilities. Staff take the steps needed to keep young people safe online and in the community, for example by restricting young people's access to the internet and their free time. Staff use key work sessions and day-to-day discussion to educate young people on the potential risks. When young people are ready, staff identify opportunities to remove restrictions. This allows young people to learn to take responsibility for their own behaviour and to make safe choices.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager has been in post since June 2014 and holds a suitable qualification.

Staff benefit from a registered manager who is supportive and helpful. All staff receive regular supervision and access to a variety of appropriate training. This ensures that staff have the skills to meet the needs of young people. As a result, young people make progress in respect of their emotional, behavioural and social development.

Staff are successful in developing links with partner agencies. This includes the police, local authority and clinical therapy team. Good communication is at the heart of this. The collaborative approach secures positive outcomes for young people.

The registered manager uses a range of tools to review the quality of care that young people receive. This ensures that she has a good understanding of what staff do well and what they could do better. In spite of this, the registered manager's oversight of some case records has not always identified improvements needed. In particular, the recording of physical interventions is not always clear. This means that actions taken by staff and managers are not always well defined. There is no direct impact for young people.

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 differences 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: SC398391

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: James Barlow

Registered manager: Carina McLean

Inspector

Paul Robinson, social care inspector

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