

SC398393

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

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home provides care and accommodation for up to three children who have experienced childhood trauma. A large private organisation operates this home.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since October 2017. She holds a level 5 qualification in leadership and management.

Inspection dates: 4 to 5 December 2018

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: 9 May 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/05/2017	Full	Good
29/03/2017	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
11/07/2016	Full	Good
09/03/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness

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 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 use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b)(2)(h))	01/02/2019
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The registered person may only employ an individual to work at the children's home; or if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home, if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). The requirements are that full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1)(2)(3)(d))	01/02/2019

Recommendations

- As set out in regulations 31–33, the registered person is responsible for maintaining good employment practice. They must ensure that recruitment, supervision and performance management of staff safeguards children and minimises potential risks to them. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1)
This is in relation to ensuring that supervision is conducted in a confidential environment and ensuring that records of supervision include clear action plans and review timescales.

- 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. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.5)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children make excellent progress because of the nurturing, individualised care that they receive from dedicated staff. Children build trusting relationships with staff who they know care about them. There is a positive atmosphere of mutual respect in the home between the staff and children. One member of staff told the inspector, 'They respect us; we have earned respect. That's important. We want them to do well.'

The house has recently been extended to allow for a third child to join the home. Children have designed their own bedrooms as part of the remodelling. Staff and children are very proud of their home, which has a welcoming and relaxed feel. A reviewing officer told the inspector, 'It has not got that residential home feel, it's very homely. [Name of child] feels at home, which has had a positive impact on how well she is doing.' Children and staff are involved in projects to further improve things. For example, the children and staff have worked together to redesign the lounge furniture.

Children have good school attendance. Staff are strong advocates for children, which enables the children to influence decisions made about them. For example, one child asked to attend a mainstream school to improve his opportunities. This move has been successful because of the strong teamwork that staff have established with the school.

Children enjoy a range of activities and feel part of their local community. Staff support children to increase their social independence. One member of staff told the inspector, 'He has free time. That was unthinkable before. He's a different child, he has a wider view of the world, you can see him maturing and he has a lot of potential and should have a good future.'

Staff complete targeted work with children that supports their positive progress. For example, children have taken increased control over their own money, or have increased their understanding of how to stay safe on social media. This work is recorded in a child-centred way, with photographs and explanations to support children's understanding of their achievements. When children move on from the home, these photographs go with the child.

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

Children told the inspector that staff keep them safe.

Staff implement consistent boundaries which ensure that children are clear about what is expected of them. A therapist told the inspector, '[Name of child] has thrived under the safety and security that the team has provided... They have strict boundaries that make her feel safe without feeling controlled.'

Staff understand the risks that children face. A member of staff told the inspector, 'It says a lot about the relationship with the child that you can pick up on when they are not themselves... and they will start to talk to you.' This openness and trust ensures that staff are quick to identify and respond to any concerns that arise.

Staff make sure that positive behaviour is recognised and rewarded. The registered manager has developed a system that is individual to each child. As a result, children choose to behave positively. This means that incidents and the use of physical intervention are rare.

Since the last inspection, managers have ensured that there is more oversight of the vetting of new staff. However, this has not extended to the recruitment of casual staff to permanent contracts. For example, the registered manager did not gain a reference from the most recent employer for a member of staff moving from a casual to permanent position. This lack of attention means that managers are not assured that all staff are suitable to work with children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is a child-centred practitioner who is driven to achieve the very best for the children who live in the home. She is a strong role model for the staff team.

Staff clearly link research to practice in their day-to-day care of the children. The registered manager has implemented a 'Why we do what we do' overview. This helps to focus the staff on understanding the long-term impact of their actions on children's outcomes.

Staff said that they are well supported by readily available managers. They receive regular opportunities to reflect on their practice in supervision. However, the records of these sessions do not always clearly identify the actions to be taken or the timescale for these. In addition, supervision for two members of staff has taken place in a public place. This practice fails to promote the confidentiality of both staff and children.

The manager has implemented systems to monitor and improve practice in the home. However, these systems are not always effective. For example, the registered manager has not challenged the independent visitor when the monthly reports have not accurately reflected the practice in the home. In addition, the registered manager had not identified that the most current children's risk assessments were not available in the

home and that the home's electrical certificate had expired. These omissions show that the manager does not always have a clear oversight of the home.

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: SC398393

Provision sub-type: Children's home

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

Registered provider address: Turnpike Gate House, Alcester Heath, Alcester,
Warwickshire B49 5JG

Responsible individual: Samantha Millward

Registered manager: Charlotte Johnson

Inspector

Tracey Coglan Greig, social care inspector

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