

SC398482

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 company owns this home. It provides care for up to 4 children who have experienced adverse childhood experiences.

At the time of this inspection, 4 children were living in the home. The inspector spoke to all 4 children.

A suitably qualified and experienced manager is in post.

Inspection dates: 3 and 4 February 2026

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

Date of last inspection: 25 February 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
25/02/2025	Full	Outstanding
18/03/2024	Full	Outstanding
22/03/2023	Full	Outstanding
18/08/2021	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the last inspection, 3 children have moved out of the home and another 3 children have moved in.

Plans for children moving into and out of the home are well thought out and individualised. Staff work with partner agencies to ensure that children experience stability. The manager advocates for children even before they move into the home.

Children living in the home receive stable and good-quality care from a committed staff team who understand their individual needs well. Leaders and staff have appropriate skills, experience and knowledge, which helps them respond sensitively and effectively to children's emotional and practical needs. They are child focused and nurturing. As a result, children develop trusting and secure relationships with the staff who care for them.

Children regularly say they feel happy living in the home. They say they feel safe and receive good care. One child said, 'I feel safe, secure and listened to, and staff care about us.'

When children move on from the home, staff make efforts to maintain relationships and ongoing support. This helps children to feel that the relationships they have built remain important and valued after they move out.

Children benefit from a homely and warm environment. Their photos and certificates of achievements are displayed around the home. They are also encouraged and supported to have their own pets. This gives children a sense of belonging and creates a family-like home.

Staff support children to develop an understanding of the needs and feelings of others. They help children consider their choices and decisions and the effect these have on others. This helps children develop responsibility and maintain respectful relationships.

Staff provide opportunities for children to have fun. Children enjoy a range of activities and experiences, such as visits to the beach, kickboxing and going to theme parks. One child said, 'You can do whatever you want.' Another child went abroad on holiday, enriching their life experiences.

Staff promote education in line with each child's circumstances. They work closely with schools, tutors and other professionals to secure appropriate provisions for children. When children experience disruption to their education, staff respond promptly to help re-establish routines and support. This approach has helped children to make progress from their starting points and supports their long-term development.

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

Staff demonstrate a strong understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities and take appropriate, timely action to help keep children safe. Practice is underpinned by a clear focus on prevention, which contributes to there being few incidents in the home.

Staff are skilled at quickly building positive relationships with children and the manager puts effective support plans in place. This has meant wellbeing-related incidents have reduced since children have moved to the home. When concerns have arisen, the manager has acted quickly to ensure that children receive the support they need. This provides children with a greater sense of stability and improves their wellbeing.

Staff help children to understand and manage their emotions in healthy and age-appropriate ways. They use consistent nurturing approaches to help children recognise their feelings and develop coping strategies when their emotions feel overwhelming. This means children steadily build emotional resilience and learn to manage their feelings independently.

There have been few uses of physical intervention. On 2 occasions, staff have used interventions in response to risk. Following these instances, staff focus on reassurance and offer comfort to children. This helps children overcome big feelings they find difficult to manage.

Consequences have been used by staff at times to support children to develop an understanding of how their behaviour can affect others. When issues arise, staff use these as opportunities for learning and reflection. For example, children have been supported to consider when they have not made the right choice or decision and how this has made others feel. This approach promotes accountability and helps children's social and emotional development.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The manager is highly experienced and demonstrates an exceptional understanding of children's needs. She is a nurturing and child-centred leader who consistently places children's wellbeing at the centre of her practice. She is supported by a deputy manager who is also experienced and knowledgeable. Together, they provide strong and consistent leadership to their team. As a result, standards of care are high, and children benefit from a nurturing and well-run home where they can thrive.

Staff consistently demonstrate the home's ethos in their daily interactions with children, because of strong leadership. The manager reinforces this approach through clear expectations, regular reflective discussions and consistent leadership. She promotes a culture of professional curiosity by encouraging staff to engage with relevant research and supporting them to apply their learning in practice. As a result, the quality of care has improved, and children benefit from individualised support that is responsive to their vulnerabilities and needs.

All staff have the relevant qualifications for their role or are working towards them. The manager ensures that staff are appropriately trained and skilled. She takes a proactive approach to leadership, anticipating potential challenges and addressing them through targeted training for her team. As a result, staff are skilled and confident to respond to children's needs when issues arise.

Staff consistently report feeling highly supported and valued by leaders. This helps staff maintain positive morale and a strong commitment to their roles. Staff speak with genuine enthusiasm about their work, which contributes to a stable and cohesive team. Only one member of staff has left the home since the last inspection. As a result, children benefit from enduring, trusting relationships with experienced staff who know them well and provide consistent and high-quality support.

The manager ensures that staff receive regular supervision. These sessions are reflective and focused on professional development. This helps staff to continually strengthen their practice.

Team meetings are held monthly and are purposeful forums for reviewing practice, sharing learning and driving ongoing improvement. Training is planned proactively and the manager often sources bespoke training which strengthens staff's knowledge and skills to meet children's diverse needs. As a result, the staff are confident and consistent in their care.

Feedback from external professionals was unanimously positive. One said, 'I think the staff are absolutely fantastic, they are so supportive and understand the children's needs and the reasons behind the behaviours.' Another said, 'I genuinely could not speak any more highly of [name of home].'

No requirements or recommendations have been made.

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: SC398482

Provision sub-type: Children's home

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

Registered provider address: Maybrook House, Third Floor, Queensway, Halesowen, West Midlands B63 4AH

Responsible individual:

Registered manager: Lesley Deam

Inspector

Chrisoula Contoyianni, Social Care Inspector

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