

SC479649

Registered provider: Hexagon Care Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned by a large private provider. It is registered to provide care for up to six children who may experience emotional, social and mental health difficulties.

The home comprises of five individual properties. Each property has its own staff team, but the whole service is managed by one registered manager.

The service offers short-term emergency care for children. It also provides longer-term placements for some children when it is in their best interests.

A permanent and qualified registered manager has been in post since February 2021.

At the time of the inspection, six children were living in the home. Five children spoke to the inspectors about their experiences of living in their home.

Inspection dates: 20 and 21 February 2024

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: 21 March 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/03/2023	Full	Good
21/03/2022	Full	Good
10/03/2020	Interim	Improved effectiveness
19/11/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children say that they are happy living in their home. Staff are skilled at building strong and trusting relationships with children quickly and this helps children to settle well.

Each property has its own staff team that is led by a senior worker. They understand the needs and vulnerabilities of children well. Each team is stable, and provides children with a consistent approach and security, which helps them to make progress in line with their individual plans.

Education is promoted, and children are making progress from their starting points. Children who have previously struggled in education engage well with the provision provided. Education is provided through a combination of online activities and in-person tuition each morning. However, children spend their afternoons engaging in activities that are not always structured. This does not support children to develop clear routines and limits their learning.

Staff support children to maintain their physical health and are keen to promote a routine that incorporates overall healthy living. Most children become members of gyms or boxing clubs to further promote health and well-being. One child was successfully supported to lose weight. This was a major achievement for them and has led to an increase in their self-esteem.

Children have opportunities to engage in a range of activities. They are supported to develop their own interests. One child has joined a rugby club, and another has continued his love of drumming and playing the guitar.

Individual work is carried out with children on a range of issues that are important to them, including healthy living, mental health awareness, relationships, substance misuse, and family time. These sessions help children to talk through issues and build skills and resilience.

Children's families often live a long distance from the homes; however, staff support children to see their families, as laid out in their plans. This helps children to maintain their identity and spend quality time with the people who are important to them.

Positive transition plans help children to successfully move on from the home to semi-independence or back to their home area. Professionals are very positive about the outcomes achieved for children.

Each home is generally well presented and maintained. Children are helped to personalise their bedrooms and communal areas. This helps children to develop a sense of belonging and take pride in the home.

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

Children say that they feel safe. Staff receive training that is relevant to children's needs and know how to keep them safe. Parents and professionals are positive about the care that children receive. One professional said that the service is 'head and shoulders above the rest' and a family member said that their grandchild 'was back to the child they knew'.

Assessments of risk and behaviour management plans are completed prior to children coming to live in the homes and are kept updated. However, when risks reduce, this is not reflected in the updated plans, which means that staff do not have the most-up-to-date information available.

Children do not often go missing. However, when they do, staff are proactive in their efforts to locate them and search the local area. The recording of these incidents is detailed, with clear oversight from the manager. Independent return-home interviews are conducted following any incidents of children going missing.

When staff are recruited, safer recruitment practices are followed. The provider ensures that necessary checks are completed before staff start working in the homes.

When allegations are made, investigations take place promptly and are thorough. External professionals and Ofsted are kept informed throughout the process. Action is taken swiftly to address the concerns and to ensure that children are looked after by adults who are safe to work in the home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The service is managed by a suitably qualified and experienced manager. The manager is supported by a deputy manager. The management team maintain daily contact with staff in each home and visit weekly to ensure that they are visible to the children and staff.

The manager takes time to build strong relationships with the children despite the short-term nature of the service. The manager is proud of the progress that children make, and describes each child's progress with positivity.

Staff benefit from regular supervision sessions and team meetings. In addition, group supervision sessions take place regularly to enable staff to learn from each other and reflect on practice. This enables them to provide consistently good-quality care to children.

Staff enjoy strong, supportive and professional relationships with each other. They are able to appropriately challenge each other and take pride in their roles.

Staff receive a wide range of training to help them to care for the children. Extra training is given, when required, to ensure that staff have the knowledge to meet children's individual needs. For example, staff received autism awareness training when a child was admitted with this diagnosis.

The organisation's therapeutic model is embedded into practice in the home. Staff have a strong understanding of the model and apply it to improve outcomes for children.

Leaders and managers use effective monitoring systems to fully understand the home's strengths and areas for development. The responsible individual regularly completes management audits to provide an additional level of scrutiny. However, the home's admission and discharge register was not maintained in line with regulation. This is something that the manager has taken action to address.

External scrutiny is provided through monthly independent person visits. The visitor produces detailed reports that are used by the management team to evaluate and further develop the service.

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 education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— help each child to achieve the child's education and training targets, as recorded in the child's relevant plans; support each child's learning and development, including helping the child to develop independent study skills and, where appropriate, helping the child to complete independent study; understand the barriers to learning that each child may face and take appropriate action to help the child to overcome any such barriers; help each child to understand the importance and value of education, learning, training and employment; promote opportunities for each child to learn informally; maintain regular contact with each child's education and training provider, including engaging with the provider and the placing authority to support the child's education and training and to maximise the child's achievement; raise any need for further assessment or specialist provision in relation to a child with the child's education or training provider and the child's placing authority; help a child who is excluded from school, or who is of compulsory school age but not attending school, to access educational and training support throughout the period of	10 April 2024

exclusion or non-attendance and to return to school as soon as possible; help each child who is above compulsory school age to participate in further education, training or employment and to prepare for future care, education or employment; help each child to attend education or training in accordance with the expectations in the child's relevant plans; and that each child has access to appropriate equipment, facilities and resources to support the child's learning. (Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(ix)(x)(b)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that children are in routines that aid their learning and development.	
Schedule 4 sets out the other information that the registered person must keep in relation to a children's home. The registered person must— maintain in the home the records in Schedule 4; ensure that the records are kept up to date; and retain the records for at least 15 years from the date of the last entry. (Regulation 37 (1) (2)(a)(b)(c))	10 April 2024

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that children's risk plans reflect children's current risks. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)

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: SC479649

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Hexagon Care Services Limited

Registered provider address: Hexagon Care, 1 Tustin Court, Port Way, Ashton-on-Ribble, Preston PR2 2YQ

Responsible individual: George Sumner

Registered manager: Kyle Ingham

Inspectors

Colin Jones, Social Care Inspector

Kelly McCurdy, Social Care Inspector

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