

Children's homes – Interim inspection

Inspection date	17/03/2017
Unique reference number	SC480850
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Hexagon Care Services Limited
Registered provider address	Hexagon Care Services, 1 Tustin Court, Port Way, Ashton-on-Ribble, Preston PR2 2YQ

Responsible individual	Kenneth Croll
Registered manager	Karen Brooksbank
Inspector	Michele Hargan

Inspection date	17/03/2017
Previous inspection judgement	Good
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection This home was judged good at the full inspection. At this interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has improved effectiveness. The requirement and two recommendations made at the previous inspection are now met. There are no recommendations or requirements as a result of this inspection. Disciplinary measures taken in response to young people's behaviour are now recorded. As a result, the impact of this can be fully evaluated to determine how effective the responses are for the young people concerned. In addition, staff now employ a restorative approach instead of punitive sanctions, thus increasing young people's understanding of the choices they make. This means they experience how to rebuild relationships and it aids their ability to feel empathy. A young person said, 'It's alright here, I can talk to staff if I am worried.' Staff compile a detailed chronology if a young person goes missing. This enables the sharing of important information with other professionals, so that prompt action can be taken to protect young people. Reviews of these chronologies also demonstrate that such incidents are fewer in number and are not due to serious concerns. In addition, the police and the missing-from-care coordinator have met with staff to explain new procedural guidance and to discuss their roles. This improves collaborative working and helps to keep young people safe. A police officer said, 'It is one of the best homes going.' The independent visitor's reports are timely and provide excellent examples of meaningful independent scrutiny of the home. Recommendations raised by the visitor are child centred and are taken seriously by the manager, which makes them a worthwhile contribution to ongoing improvement. As these are routinely shared with staff, this also helps keep young people's needs at the forefront of care practice. Staff have high aspirations for young people. Some young people have gained employment, passed a motorbike driving test and successfully taken part in challenging outdoor activities. This improves young people's self-esteem and resilience. A member of staff said, 'We found a 16-week building and plumbing course. [Name] gets a bursary from college and that is a good incentive. After he	

has finished the course he'll get chance to apply for apprenticeships. [Name's] college has been great.'

Those young people who are new to the home also receive good levels of support. They are provided with opportunities to take part in activities that reflect their individuality and interests. As a result, they feel safe and trusting of staff, which helps them quickly settle in, build good routines and start to make plans for the future.

Staff recognise that some young people express their emotions through their involvement in antisocial behaviour. Staff therefore work closely with partner agencies, parents and the police to manage the impact of this. They evaluate the effectiveness of their approach by enlisting the help of specialist services to identify how best to help young people. This approach improves practice by increasing the knowledge and skills of staff. A team manager said, '[Name] tried really hard to break down the relationships with staff, but everyone was able to come through that.'

The staff team has effective links with the designated officer for the local authority. This means advice and guidance is sought and acted on in order to ensure that staff fully understand their responsibilities. A member of staff said, 'I would be clear that we would have to pass it [concerns] on and listen to what the young person had to say. It's not my job to investigate it, but to report it.'

Professionals are very positive and have a high regard for the home and staff, as they see staff as genuinely committed to improving young people's outcomes. Staff ensure that placing social workers are kept up to date on matters of importance relating to young people. A team manager said, 'We get very detailed reports about young people from staff; reading them, you almost feel like you were there.' Staff are routinely given dedicated time to focus specifically on matters that are important to individual young people. This builds trusting relationships and increases young people's sense of belonging. A member of staff said, 'We are arranging for [Name] to go on holiday abroad with staff.'

Monitoring systems have improved. The managers ensure that records of direct work with young people are audited to identify any themes that reflect young people's unmet needs. This level of vigilance promotes reflective and consistent care practice. A senior member of staff said, 'I can see at a glance now the areas [of discussion] staff are focusing on and if we need to help young people with particular issues.'

Mutual respect exists between the staff and management. Staff are well led by the manager, who is highly invested in improving young people's lives. A member of staff said, 'The manager is spot on, she gives a 100%. She really does know her stuff. She is very approachable and fantastic with the kids.'

Information about this children's home

The home provides accommodation for up to six children who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. It is operated by a private company.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10/08/2016	Full	Good
20/01/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
17/07/2015	Full	Good

What the inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspection we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the 'Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection'.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people living in the children's home. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference that adults make to the lives of children and young people. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with children, young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care given to children and young people. Wherever possible, they talked to children, 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 who it is trying to help, protect and look after.

This inspection focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service 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'.

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