

SC480850

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 registered to provide care and accommodation for up to six children or young people. It is owned and operated by a private provider. The manager is new to the post and has submitted his application to be registered.

Inspection dates: 22 to 23 October 2019

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected requires improvement to be good

The effectiveness of leaders and managers requires improvement to be good

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

Date of last inspection: 19 June 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
19/06/2018	Full	Outstanding
12/09/2017	Full	Outstanding
17/03/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
10/08/2016	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children and young people arriving at the home are given a warm greeting by staff. They are provided with a specially designed handbook so that they have information about the home and what they can expect from the staff team. Where possible, staff plan a positive transition when children and young people move on from the home. Some children and young people have been supported to successfully move home, into foster care or semi-independent living.

Children and young people are able to build good relationships with staff and speak positively about living in the home. They have stated that they feel listened to, respected and can trust staff to keep their word. Where it is their plan, children and young people can form a sense of permanence and belonging, helping them to form secure attachments.

Not all of the children and young people are in education, employment or training. Where this is the case, staff are proactive in finding solutions and supporting them to engage. As a result, one child will be starting in school after half term for the first time in many months, and another young person is seeking employment. Staff challenge and support children and young people who are currently refusing to engage. Staff encourage trusting relationships with children and young people which form the basis on which further success can be built.

Children and young people are making progress in the home from their starting points, even when the progress may seem very small. Children and young people have commented on how well the staff have supported them to make improvements with their behaviour and help them to focus on their future for when they leave the home.

Children and young people are supported to access specialist help when there is a need. Those who need input from mental health services or the support from substance and alcohol misuse services can rely on staff to access this for them. Staff are proactive in making and following up referrals and advocating for children and young people with outside organisations. This ensures that children and young people's needs are met appropriately and that they are supported with their physical and emotional well-being.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

The response to risks posed to children and young people is variable. The risks to some children and young people are well understood and the plans reflect what is being done to mitigate those risks. For others, not all risks have been identified and there are no written plans to support and mitigate those risks. When children and young people may be at risk of domestic abuse in their personal relationships, incidents have not been fully explored. Staff have minimised the risks and are not providing support around appropriate relationships. Furthermore, the staff have a limited understanding of the children and young people's internet and social media usage. This leaves the children

and young people exposed to the risks posed by the dangers of such forums.

Key-working sessions are variable in their quality and do not always address the issues as identified on the care plan. Children and young people are not consistently supported to better understand the concerns and have the tools to make better choices.

When matching children and young people, risk assessments lack the necessary detail to fully understand the effect a new admission may have on the group dynamic. Consideration is not given as to how risks posed to and by the children and young people would be managed by staff. This has led to one young person being placed in the home and for whom the risks cannot be managed, and the placement is not appropriate.

Not all staff are suitably trained to keep children and young people safe. This has led to occasions when the staff team has not been equipped to meet the needs of the children and young people in the home, leaving them at risk of harm. There are plans in place to ensure that this is addressed, and the staff team will be attending the required training in the near future.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

While leaders and managers show a passion and enthusiasm for supporting children and young people, the manager has been in post for a short time and is not yet registered. The manager is building a consistent staff team following a period of instability in the home. This means that the current team is new and is yet to embed and develop the practice standards expected for the children and young people.

Staff supervision does not focus on the children and young people in the home, their issues, plans or feedback. Team meetings do not robustly discuss the children and young people, leaving a gap in how information is shared. This also reduces the ability of staff to discuss and reflect on their practice to the benefit of the children and young people in the home. As a result, the manager has limited oversight of the quality of care afforded to children and young people.

The manager has a limited understanding of the necessary legislation and guidance for managing a children's home. When a child or young person became the subject of a child protection investigation, the manager did not notify Ofsted.

The procedures for recording when children and young people are missing from care are not clear. Some children and young people are recorded as being 'absent without authorisation', whereas others are 'missing from care'. This leaves the manager without an accurate oversight of these episode, hindering any plans to address and prevent children and young people from going missing.

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, the 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 positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on— In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— meet each child's behavioural and emotional needs, as set out in the child's relevant plans; help each child to understand, in a way that is appropriate according to the child's age and understanding, personal, sexual and social relationships, and how those relationships can be supportive or harmful; help each child to develop the understanding and skills to recognise or withdraw from a damaging, exploitative or harmful relationship. (Regulation 11(1)(2)(a)(i)(vi)(vii)) In particular, ensure that any child or young person at risk of harm in a relationship is supported through key-work sessions, and any relevant referrals, to understand how it can be harmful and support to gain the skills and confidence to withdraw from that relationship.	28/11/2019
The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and	28/11/2019

that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12(1)(2)(a)(i)(iii)(vi)(b)) In particular, where risks are known, ensure that plans reflect how those risks are being managed to reduce any harm to children and young people. Ensure that staff are suitably experienced and qualified to understand the risks posed to children and young people and that they are able to help them understand those risks. Ensure that the rota is arranged so that there are enough staff on duty with the necessary skills and experience to meet all of the needs of the children and young people.	
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— ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 13(1)(2)(c))	28/11/2019
The registered person must prepare and implement a policy which— The registered person must prepare and implement a policy ('the missing child policy') setting out— the steps taken, and to be taken, to prevent children from being absent without permission; and the procedures to be followed, and the roles and responsibilities of persons working at the home, in relation to a child who is, or has been, so absent. (Regulation 34(4)(a)(b)) In particular, ensure that plans are explicit in relation to what action is being taken to prevent children from going missing from home. Ensure that the policy is clear on how to appropriately record when a child or young person is considered missing or when they are away without authorisation.	28/11/2019
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— a child protection enquiry involving a child— is instigated; or concludes (in which case, the notification must include the outcome of the child protection enquiry). (Regulation	28/11/2019

Recommendations

- The registered person must have systems in place so that all staff, including the manager, receive supervision of their practice from an appropriately qualified and experienced professional, which allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children assigned to their care. Professionally qualified staff employed by the home, e.g. teachers or social workers, should be provided with relevant professional or clinical supervision by an appropriately qualified and experienced professional. ('Guide to children's home regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)

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: SC480850

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Hexagon Care Services Limited

Registered provider address: 1 Tustin Court, Port Way, Ashton-On-Ribble, Preston, Lancashire PR2 2YQ

Responsible individual: Andrea McKeown

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Deb Duffy: social care inspector

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