

SC482569

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 for up to four children with social, emotional and behavioural needs, including autism spectrum disorders. The home cares for children who require medium and long-term placements.

The registered manager has been in post for several years.

At the time of the inspection, four children were living in the home.

Inspection dates: 9 and 10 December 2025

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

Date of last inspection: 18 March 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
18/03/2025	Full	Outstanding
16/01/2024	Full	Outstanding
07/06/2022	Full	Outstanding
07/06/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are cared for by a nurturing and therapeutically informed staff team. Children have positive relationships with staff and their interactions are warm and playful. Staff champion children, celebrate their achievements and encourage them to make good choices. Children trust staff and confide in them. They have a strong sense of belonging and they enjoy spending time with staff for example, going to theme parks, monster truck shows and Christmas markets.

Since the last inspection in March 2025, there has been a focus on supporting children to understand their journey into care and to process their lived experiences. Staff understand that trauma can negatively impact children's sense of identity so they support children to develop kinder perceptions of themselves, boosting their self-esteem. The children are making remarkable progress with therapy and their self-injurious behaviour has decreased.

The quality of staff's support with children's education is mixed and the children are making variable progress with their education. Two children completed their GCSE exams in the summer. However, both have struggled to attend college. Managers have supported outreach workers to visit the home with the aim of encouraging the children to re-engage with education. One child is registered to attend the provider's school. However, despite managers efforts, they have not accessed education for approximately one year. In addition, staff's support with educational activities at home for this child has been limited. Conversely, another child has good school attendance. Staff have proactively identified unmet learning needs and an education, health and care plan (EHCP) is now underway.

Staff listen to children's views and advocate on their behalf. For example, sharing children's wishes and feelings in relation to transition planning, spending time with their brothers and sisters and inviting their friends to the house for visits. Staff support children to spend time with people they love and to help them to rebuild relationships, when it is safe to. Staff make efforts to ensure that family time is memorable for children by planning fun activities such as rollerblading.

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

Staff have a good understanding of children's needs and vulnerabilities. They make efforts to develop relationships based on mutual respect and trust. Staff strike a balance between allowing children age-appropriate freedoms and keeping them safe. Staff are observant and they quickly notice changes in children's behaviour and emerging risks. They work jointly with the therapist to devise strategies that meet children's individual needs. Staff have not used physical interventions since the last inspection.

There has been an increase in missing-from-the-home incidents and this is attributable to several factors. On some occasions, staff have struggled to engage children in conversations when they are distressed. Children respond by leaving the house in an attempt to escape their feelings. Additionally, there has been a change in the relationship dynamics between children and sometimes they go missing from the home together. Staff have spoken with children individually, highlighting the importance of healthy relationships. Staff are supporting one child to recognise that their external friendships are putting them at risk of harm for example, missing incidents and alcohol misuse. Staff respond appropriately when children go missing. For example, they search for children, liaise with their friend's parents and notify the police.

Staff use appropriate strategies to help children calm when they are distressed and feel out of control. They use a therapeutic approach and encourage children to talk about their feelings; they give children hugs and reassure them. When this is not impactful, staff try and distract children and use playfulness to shift their moods. Staff remind children that they are loved, valued and cared for. Staff take a non-judgemental approach while talking to children about their experiences, choices and risks. They are curious during conversations and seek to educate children.

Staff are adept at recognising when children are at increased risk of harm and they take action to address this by escalating concerns to social workers. For example, they have requested exploitation assessments for children and challenged social workers in relation to family time arrangements.

Since the last inspection, there has been one allegation made against a staff member. This was managed appropriately and escalated internally and externally to the local authority.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The managers are experienced and astute. They have quickly noticed changing relationship dynamics in the home and they have taken steps to address this. They have supported the children to understand healthy boundaries with their peers and favoured staff members. This has reduced the frequency of missing episodes and it has reduced some children's over-reliance on specific staff, allowing them to strengthen their relationships with other members of the team.

At the last inspection, managers and staff highlighted friction within the staff team that had been ongoing since June 2024. These issues have now been resolved and the staff team are settled and happy. New staff feel supported by managers and they are developing the knowledge and skills to deliver good care to children. Safer recruitment is being carried out to a good standard and when necessary, risk assessments are implemented. This is overseen by senior leaders and the human resources team.

Managers have made concerted efforts to engage children in education. This includes attending meetings with education providers, identifying alternative provisions and exploring virtual learning opportunities. One child's education has been adversely impacted by funding disagreements within the provider's organisation. Separately, managers requested funding for another child to attend a practical course. This was declined by senior leaders within the provider's organisation. The registered manager makes efforts to challenge senior leaders; this is sometimes met with resistance.

Despite the difficulties managers have experienced since the last inspection, they remain committed to the children and continue to advocate on their behalf, even when other professionals disagree with their view. Managers make good efforts to work collaboratively with other professionals. However, they will not overlook the children's views, wishes and feelings in pursuit of professional relationships. Consequently, the children feel listened to and valued. One child said, 'managers always have my back.'

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 with 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 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 exclusion or non-attendance and to return to school as soon as possible. (Regulation 8(1)(2)(a)(viii)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that staff support children's learning through educational activities during periods of non-attendance.	6 February 2026

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: SC482569

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Hexagon Care Services Limited

Registered provider address: Unit 1 Tustin Court, Riversway, Preston, Lancashire
PR2 2YQ

Responsible individual: Leonie Duffy

Registered manager: Penelope Catton

Inspector:

Tara Webb, Social Care Regulatory Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

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