

# SC482301

Registered provider: Hillcrest Children's Services Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## **Information about this children's home**

This is a privately owned children's home that provides care and accommodation for up to six children who have social, emotional and mental health needs.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since 27 October 2015.

### **Inspection dates: 3 to 4 March 2020**

**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:** 5 December 2018

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>Inspection type</b>	<b>Inspection judgement</b>
05/12/2018	Full	Good
07/11/2017	Full	Good
28/03/2017	Full	Good
06/09/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good**

Children benefit from a highly dedicated and skilled staff team. Staff create good-quality individual care and support plans that work for children and promote positive change. In cases where children have moved on, staff demonstrate commitment to those children and work exceptionally hard to help them to move on successfully.

Professionals are highly complimentary of the service. They say that they would definitely place other children in the home if they had the opportunity. They describe strong professional practice, excellent communication and positive outcomes for children.

One social worker spoke about a recent case where a placement had broken down. The social worker said that staff could not have done a better job. She felt that they had been strong advocates for the child and managed his risky behaviours well.

Children are lovingly supported and nurtured. It is clear that they feel valued. The therapeutic ethos of the home comes through in the way in which staff talk about children. The registered manager implements induction plans to ensure that newer staff become embedded in these ways of working as quickly as possible.

Children are confident to voice their views and opinions. They feel listened to. Staff record children's input in a 'You said, we did' book which holds staff accountable. This also ensures regular feedback to children on how their views have shaped the service. In general, children have a good awareness of their rights. In one case, a child had not been encouraged to instruct an advocate to support them with an upcoming placement transition. Staff acted on this immediately when it was highlighted during the inspection. An advocate had been appointed by the time the inspector left the premises.

Staff keep the home in good condition. Children's rooms are personalised and age-appropriate. Children are encouraged to take part in domestic activities around the home. Staff have a good system in place for weekly room cleans which the children adhere to well. Children take pride in the home and have had input into the recent refurbishments. The registered manager was honest about a recent unsettled placement which had resulted in a lot of residual damage. She said that it is not easy to source responsive maintenance services in the local area. She is currently recruiting for a dedicated maintenance person. Under these circumstances, staff have done well to maintain a homely environment for children.

Children enjoy positive engagement in local community activities. They benefit from a wide range of activities. One dedicated staff member holds the responsibility for improving this in the future and is constantly looking for new opportunities and experiences for children.

The registered manager has created a dedicated independence flat. Children who are approaching the end of care obtain real benefit from this in the development of their independence skills as they prepare to move on.

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

Risk assessment and risk management practice are very good. Staff are confident in speaking about the current risks to children in the service. They are also consistent in describing the safety measures in place. The quality of recording and paperwork is good. Staff use electronic recording systems effectively. The registered manager also invests time in supporting newer staff members to understand the role and function of good record-keeping.

Staff manage incidents of children going missing well. They demonstrate effective partnership working to support children to keep themselves safe. One child has been involved in more incidents of going missing than previously. Staff have not only managed this effectively, but they have also invested time in learning and education support for the child around making safe choices. This provides a safety net for the child as they approach independence.

Children demonstrate some complex behaviours but staff approach situations in a calm and professional manner. They demonstrate effective de-escalation skills that, in many instances, have prevented more serious incidents occurring. Staff have been able to place much less reliance on physical intervention and for most children it is no longer used at all. For one child, the rationale for holding him is clear as there is a real risk of self-harm or harm to others.

Staff employ good behaviour management strategies. Children benefit from a well-considered rewards system and this supports positive change for children. Children say that they feel safe and the reduction in risk-taking behaviours is a clear result of effective practice from staff.

Staff would benefit from refreshing knowledge around the criminal and sexual exploitation of children, gangs and county lines. Current training is dated, and some staff have not completed online training. As the age group of children in the home rises, this has become more of a live concern for staff.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good**

The registered manager demonstrates effective leadership and has created an excellent senior team around her. She has a clear vision for the development of her staff and has created clear plans to enhance their skills, training and expertise.

She has a detailed knowledge of the children in her care and high aspirations for their future. She is a positive role model to the whole team, whose members share this vision and feel motivated and committed to the home.

The registered manager uses careful analysis of trends and patterns to identify areas for growth. She has used this analysis to create a plan for the service which has scope and ambition.

Staff feel well supported and when talking to the inspector they praised the quality of supervision and leadership. The registered manager has created a supportive culture in which staff benefit from support from seniors but also from the whole team around them. They spoke of lots of opportunities to reflect on practice and to share ideas.

The registered manager gives excellent examples of advocacy for children with external agencies. Good records of email chains and other forms of communication help build a picture of a team that fights hard for the children in their care to ensure that they get access to the best possible services outside the home.

Children are able to explore their identities in a natural and inclusive environment. Staff role model this inclusivity to children, who in turn support their peers to express themselves openly in a safe and nurturing space.

## 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
<p>The children's views, wishes and feelings standard is that children receive care from staff who take their views, wishes and feelings into account in relation to matters affecting the children's care and welfare and their lives.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure that each child is given appropriate advocacy support;</p> <p>ensure that an explanation is given to each child as soon as reasonably practicable after the child's arrival about what advocacy support or services are available to the child, how the child may access that support or those services and any entitlement the child may have to independent advocacy provision. (Regulation 7 (1)(c)(2)(b)(iii)(d)(iii))</p>	<p>31/05/2020</p>

### Recommendations

- Staff skills for safeguarding should include being able to identify signs that children may be at risk, and support children in strategies to manage and reduce any risks. Staff should encourage children to express their views about whether they feel safe both within and outside the home. Staff should support children to understand how to ask for help to stay safe and that the home is an environment which supports this. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 43, paragraph 9.10)

### 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:** SC482301

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** Hillcrest Children's Services Ltd

**Registered provider address:** Turnpike Gate House, Alcester Heath, Alcester,  
Warwickshire B49 5JG

**Responsible individual:** Rodrigo Ferreira

**Registered manager:** Kelly Kearn

## Inspector

Peter Jackson, Social Care Inspector

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