

SC398391

Registered provider: Hillcrest Children's Services (2) Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The privately owned children's home provides care for up to three children who have experienced adverse childhood experiences that have led to associated trauma and complex behaviours.

The current manager was registered with Ofsted in 2014. She is suitably qualified.

Inspection dates: 18 to 19 June 2019

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **requires improvement to be 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 is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 1 May 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
01/05/2018	Full	Good
26/09/2017	Full	Good
30/03/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
16/05/2016	Full	Good

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 protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure–</p> <p>that staff–</p> <p>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; and that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health.</p> <p>(Regulation 12(1)(2)(a)(i)(d))</p>	16/08/2019
<p>The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that–</p> <p>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to–</p> <p>demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on feedback on the experiences of children, including complaints received.</p> <p>(Regulation 13(1)(a)(b)(2)(g)(ii))</p>	16/08/2019
<p>No measure of control or discipline which is excessive, unreasonable or contrary to paragraph (2) may be used in relation to any child.</p> <p>(Regulation 19(1))</p>	16/08/2019
<p>The registered person must make arrangements for the handling, recording, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of medicines received into the children's home.</p> <p>(Regulation 23(1))</p>	16/08/2019

<p>The registered person must ensure that within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes details of the child's behaviour leading to the use of the measure and within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure.</p> <p>(Regulation 35(3)(a)(ii)(c))</p>	<p>16/08/2019</p>
<p>The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation; an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious; there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there; 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); or there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious.</p> <p>(Regulation 40(4)(e))</p>	<p>16/08/2019</p>

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff can access appropriate facilities and resources to support their training needs, and should understand the key role they play in the training and development of staff in the home. ('Guide to the children's home regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.11)
- Staff should be familiar with the home's policies on record keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective, and clear recording. Staff should record information on individual children in a non-stigmatising way that distinguishes between fact, opinion and third-party information. ('Guide to the children's home regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

This specifically relates to ensuring that records are accurate.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

Relationships between children and staff are positive. Children said that they enjoyed spending time with staff. One child told the inspector, 'The staff are the best thing about living here.' Staff regularly remind children how to make a complaint if they are unhappy. However, on one occasion when a child made a complaint about a member of staff, the complaints process was not followed. This means that children do not always feel that their complaints are taken seriously.

Soon after children go to bed, the electricity supply to the electrical sockets in their bedrooms is cut off. This means that their televisions, music systems and bedside lamps are turned off. This institutionalised practice neither promotes children learning how to be responsible for their actions nor develops their independence skills.

Children make progress in education, taking account of their starting points. Staff work with education staff to identify and address any barriers to learning. Consequently, children's attendance is over 99% and children are learning how important education is in helping them to achieve their future ambitions.

Staff work with social workers to help children to maintain or develop positive relationships with their families, when this is appropriate. They recognise how significant these relationships are to children and to their progress. This ensures that children are not isolated from the people who are important to them.

Children have access to a range of activities and they are supported and encouraged to develop their individual interests. One child enjoys cooking, and this is an activity where staff actively support and encourage him to develop his skills. This results in improved confidence and self-esteem.

Children enjoy good health and staff help them to lead active and healthy lifestyles. When required, specialist help is sourced appropriately.

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

Managers and staff do not consistently ensure that all documents relating to children contain all relevant information. For some children, these documents provide staff with clear strategies to help them to manage children's dangerous behaviours. However, for other children, specific behaviours that potentially place them or others at risk of harm are not included. This means that staff, particularly agency staff and bank staff, do not have the information that they need.

The registered manager has taken steps to ensure that children live in a comfortable home. The recent redecoration of some communal areas and children's bedrooms means

that the environment is more welcoming and homely. However, there are aspects of the physical environment that are not safe for children. For example, one child has been able to gain access to and interfere with an external gas tank. On these occasions, the child did not experience harm, and work is planned to erect a secure fence around the gas tank to prevent further incidents.

Staff use physical restraint to prevent children from harming themselves or others. The use of this measure of control has reduced, because staff prioritise building positive relationships with children. However, when staff do use restraint, they do not always ensure that the records of these incidents include all the necessary details. This makes it difficult for senior managers to ensure that restraint is proportionate and necessary. Management oversight of the recording of incidents of physical intervention remains inconsistent.

Staff do not always follow young people's risk management plans. For example, staff have failed to supervise children in line with their agreed plans. The children were subsequently found to have placed themselves at risk through smoking cigarettes which they lit from the embers of a camp fire. Staff have since ensured that arrangements for the supervision of children reduce the likelihood of similar incidents.

The arrangements for administering medication are not always effective. For example, on a small number of occasions, young people have not received the correct dose of their medication. Managers have responded after each event. However, young people's health could have been affected. New storage facilities have recently been introduced to reduce medication errors.

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

Staff receive regular supervision. The registered manager recognises the importance of providing staff with good support. All staff hold suitable qualifications for their role or are currently working towards achieving these. However, some staff are not up to date with refreshers for a small number of mandatory training courses including topics such as GDPR. Staff do not yet have the knowledge to understand a new therapeutic approach which has been recommended through expert assessments. Plans are in place to address this.

Managers have failed to inform Ofsted about a small number of significant events, such as when children have been involved in serious incidents when they were at risk. This prevents the regulator from having oversight of incidents that relate to the welfare and protection of children.

Managers do not have consistent oversight of the direct work that staff undertake with children. When work does take place, it is not evident that this links to children's care plans and it lacks clear outcomes. Staff are unable to demonstrate that this work has any positive impact on children's progress and experiences.

The registered manager has challenged the placing authority effectively when its

responses have not been effective. She has positive relationships with a range of professionals. A headteacher stated, 'Communication with the manager is good, and if there are any issues, we sit down and resolve these together.'

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 difference 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: SC398391

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Hillcrest Children's Services (2) Ltd

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

Responsible individual: Samantha Millward

Registered manager: Carina McLean

Inspector

Annemarie Parker, social care 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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