

1229762

Registered provider: Horizon Care and Education Group Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is privately operated and provides care for up to 3 children who experience social and emotional difficulties.

At the time of this inspection, 3 children were living at the home. The inspectors spoke with all the children.

A manager is in post but has not yet applied to register with Ofsted. They were present throughout the inspection.

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 April 2026

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: 14 July 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/07/2025	Full	Good
31/07/2024	Full	Requires improvement to be good
07/02/2024	Full	Good
06/07/2022	Full	Good

Summary of findings

Positive relationships between staff and children are beginning to develop, and communication between staff and the children's network is positive. However, staff do not have a thorough understanding of children's experiences to support their holistic care. Although children have not experienced harm, assessments and processes to keep them safe are not robust or personalised to their individual needs. A lack of management oversight has resulted in limited opportunities to develop staff practice. While shortfalls are beginning to be identified by leaders and managers, actions to address them are not yet fully understood or embedded.

Inspection judgements

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

Children's health needs are not consistently met. There has been a delay in putting appropriate provision in place for one child's dietary requirements. Although this has not resulted in harm, it does not demonstrate that the child's needs are prioritised. In addition, children's health histories are recorded inconsistently. This results in staff lacking a comprehensive understanding of factors that may affect children's physical and emotional wellbeing, limiting their ability to provide informed and responsive care.

Relationships between staff and children are beginning to develop, with staff spending time with children and demonstrating genuine care and interest. One child spoke positively about feeling listened to. However, there is a lack of reflective practice among the staff regarding understanding children's behaviour as a form of communication. In particular, behaviours linked to experiences of shame are not consistently recognised or addressed appropriately. As a result, staff do not always demonstrate consistent empathy or a sufficient understanding of children's lived experiences. This is evident in both the quality of written records and in day-to-day interactions with children.

Staff actively nurture relationships by encouraging children to spend meaningful time with their families.

Staff encourage and support all children to attend school, and children feel positive about doing so. One child has made exceptional progress through regular attendance, which staff celebrate when they return home, giving them a sense of pride. Staff attend school meetings and have regular discussions with school staff about the children to ensure that they understand their education is valued.

Staff actively seek out a range of enriching experiences to promote children's confidence and development. Staff are creative in identifying opportunities that reflect children's interests.

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

Staff have failed to ensure that key documents designed to keep children safe are clear and kept up to date following incidents. This failure has created gaps in risk management and increased the potential for risks to escalate. Staff have not demonstrated a clear understanding of children's known risks or the actions required to respond to them effectively, which compromises their ability to safeguard children.

Although children have not experienced harm, staff have not consistently used risk information to inform care or guide their responses. There is some isolated positive practice. For example, staff involved one child in assessing the risks of an activity. However, this practice is not yet embedded across the staff team.

No children have been missing this inspection year. However, plans for responding to children who go missing are not individualised and fail to reflect each child's experiences and known vulnerabilities. It is not clear that staff understand what actions they would take in response to a child going missing.

The home is warm and inviting. Photos are proudly displayed, and children's bedrooms are decorated according to their preferences, giving them a sense of belonging. However, issues such as mould on the bathroom ceiling and walls are not always addressed in a timely manner. This could result in adverse health effects for children. The mould issue has since been rectified; however, the delay does not ensure that children feel valued.

Action has been taken to ensure children's safety in the event of an allegation. Children have been provided with a guide to the home, which includes details of who to contact should they have concerns. Where practice falls short, there has not been consistent consultation with professional agencies, leading to a lack of wider analysis of potential risks to children. There has been a lack of timely management oversight to address this practice, with a subsequent delay in notifications to Ofsted, leaving potential for risk to reoccur and a delay in regulatory oversight.

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

Leaders have not established a cohesive management structure, which has resulted in weak oversight and a failure to maintain effective monitoring systems. This has limited leaders' understanding of the improvements required in practice and delayed necessary action.

Leaders have not ensured that training and induction provide staff with the knowledge and confidence needed to care for children effectively. Information is not well organised and is held across multiple locations, which reduces clarity and accessibility for staff. Although leaders have identified areas for development, they have not taken sufficient action to drive improvement. For example, training to meet children's specific needs has

been identified, but it is not embedded in practice, resulting in care that lacks personalisation.

Managers and leaders have failed to ensure that children's moves into and out of the home are robustly assessed. They have failed to ensure that decision-making has understood and evaluated children's needs and vulnerabilities and demonstrate how they will adequately support children already living in the home to live safely alongside new children. Furthermore, leaders have not assessed effectively whether staff have the skills and capacity to meet the needs of all children, leading to children having to move out because their needs could not be met. This has led to children experiencing instability in their care experiences.

Staff supervision is not held regularly. When it does take place, records are incomplete, lack critical reflection, and do not sufficiently consider children's needs and progress. Leaders have not ensured effective oversight of supervision sessions carried out by senior staff, resulting in inconsistencies in the monitoring and development of staff practice. In addition, managers have not embedded consistent learning from incidents, and management reviews lack sufficient evaluation, leading to missed opportunities to improve the quality of care provided to children.

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 protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard 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; - help each child to understand how to keep safe; - have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; - manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other; - understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; - take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and - are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies; - 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; - 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; and - that the effectiveness of the home's child protection policies is monitored regularly.	28 August 2026

(Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(v)(iv)(vi)(b)(d)) In particular, this relates to ensuring that plans for children's care are clear and personalised, with management oversight that supports and develops staff's understanding of children's needs and vulnerabilities. The registered person must ensure that plans for children who are missing are clear and personalised. The registered person must consult partner agencies when there is a concern in relation to staff practice. The home must be free of mould, and any areas that are identified as having this issue must be promptly addressed.	
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 requires the registered person to— lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose; ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate; ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child; understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(c)(e)(f)(g)(h)) This specifically relates to ensuring that systems and processes to develop the oversight of the registered person continue to be	28 August 2026

embedded and developed consistently to ensure that they can continue to evaluate the quality of care in the home. The registered person must ensure that all staff, including the registered manager, receive relevant training to meet children's needs and continue to receive supervision in line with the home's statement of purpose, which ensures that they reflect on children's vulnerabilities, risks and needs and that this is completed by a suitably qualified person. The registered person must evaluate the moves into the home and the ability to meet the child's needs.	
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. (Regulation 40 (4)(a)(b)(c)(d)(i)(ii)(e)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that notifications are made by the registered manager in a timely manner under these circumstances.	28 August 2026
The health and well-being standard is that— the health and well-being needs of children are met; children receive advice, services and support in relation to their health and well-being; and	28 August 2026

children are helped to lead healthy lifestyles.

In particular, the standard requires the registered person to ensure—

that staff help each child to—

achieve the health and well-being outcomes that are recorded in the child's relevant plans;

understand the child's health and well-being needs and the options that are available in relation to the child's health and well-being, in a way that is appropriate to the child's age and understanding;

understand and develop skills to promote the child's well-being. (Regulation 10 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iv))

In particular, the registered person must ensure that dietary requirements for each child are provided for and encouraged.

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: 1229762

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Horizon Care and Education Group Limited

Registered provider address: C/o DWF Company Secretarial Services Limited, 1 Scott Place, 2 Hardman Street, Manchester M3 3AA

Responsible individual: Victoria Dirican

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Rebecca Barker, Social Care Inspector
Siobhan Holmes, 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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