

1234243

Registered provider: Horizon Care and Education Group Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately owned home provides care for up to three children.

There was one child living at the home at the time of inspection.

The manager is not yet registered with Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 25 and 26 June 2024

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: 5 December 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
05/12/2023	Full	Good
14/06/2022	Full	Good
08/11/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good
28/09/2021	Full	Inadequate

Inspection judgements

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

Although there was one child living in the home at the time of the inspection, there had been two other children who had moved on from the home. This report considers the experiences of all these children. Staff do not always actively encourage children down from their bedrooms in the morning. This results in the children spending much of the day asleep or in their room. The child currently living at the home has started to spend more time with staff. The child enjoys activities such as baking with staff. The child states that they believe staff would keep them safe if anyone they did not like approached the home.

Children can have a choice of bedrooms, where possible, and they can move bedrooms if they wish. Staff support children to think of ways to improve the decoration of the home. However, children do not have access to all areas in the home. For example, staff have a separate bathroom to children. One child preferred the staff bathroom to their own. Although allowed to use it on occasion, staff did not recognise the need to make bathrooms communal.

Staff do not record the children's lived experience in a way which will be helpful in the future. Staff do not write anecdotes which the child may appreciate when reading records back. Staff pre-populate daily records. This includes forward guessing the child's emotions and whether they have enjoyed activities during the day. Staff also make records under one another's accounts on the online system. This results in it being unclear who has written the record and who is involved in the care of the child. This puts into question the validity of staff recording.

Staff do not regularly consult with the child about the quality-of-care provided to them. Staff cannot evidence that the child has been explained their right to an independent advocate. Children who have moved from the home have done so under complicated circumstances. Some professionals do not feel staff appropriately advocated for the children.

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

When children display behaviour that challenge, not all staff have the skills to manage this. Consequently, this could put the child or others at risk. This has led to one child being unaware of what constitutes appropriate behaviour. For children this has impacted negatively on their relationships with their peers.

Staff have created an environment where children feel able to speak openly to them. This has supported one child to reduce self-injurious behaviour. Staff however do not always know how to respond to children's needs. When children express interest into

topics such as gender and sexuality, staff fail to arrange the support necessary to explore the child's feelings.

Staff use two different processes for recording the administration of medication. On several occasions the records did not match. This is not recognised through staff checks and there is no record of medication audits having taken place. For one child the online system record shows that they have been given a medication which is not prescribed to them. Staff state that this is a recording error. The systems in place do not ensure staff check for errors.

Staff have used physical intervention three times since the last inspection. On two occasions the physical intervention was not proportionate to the potential risk. Management oversight failed to recognise this. Staff do not always talk to children following a physical intervention to ensure their wellbeing. Staff fail to reflect on events, to learn from these incidents to learn any valuable lessons.

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

During the inspection period there have been three different managers and three different responsible individuals overseeing the home. This causes a high level of inconsistency for children and staff. The changes in management are not planned for which results in a lack of information being shared.

The current management team have a clear plan in place to make improvements to the home, staff development and the quality-of-care provided to children. They are receptive of feedback and understanding of the current shortfalls. Staff reported that they are now more hopeful that a manager has been appointed. Although staff feel supported there are no records of supervisions, appraisals or team meetings prior to the current manager starting their employment.

When safeguarding concerns arise, the manager acts quickly to seek information and gain guidance from appropriate professionals. Such professionals feel that the manager acts appropriately. Communication with professionals is not yet consistent. Resulting in several professionals finding it difficult to contact the manager or staff team.

The manager does not ensure that the homes documents are up to date. The statement of purpose is outdated. This results in the home not working in line with the model of care that the document promotes. When assessing possible risks to the location of the home, the manager has failed to include the impact that a lack of available school places has had on children living in the home. The manager is yet to consult relevant professionals.

Four of the previous recommendations set at the last inspection are met. Two recommendations have been reinstated relating to record keeping and ensuring that staff have appropriate supervision and appraisals.

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
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; 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; 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. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(b)) In particular this relates to ensuring that staff have the knowledge, confidence and skills to appropriately challenge and educate children in relation to children's behaviour in order to keep them safe. It also relates to staff having the skills to be professionally curious about children's behaviour and assessing possible	17 August 2023

patterns of behaviour so that safeguarding measures can be put in place. It is also in relation to ensuring staff feel able to report practice concerns.	
Restraint in relation to a child is only permitted for the purpose of preventing— injury to any person (including the child); serious damage to the property of any person (including the child); a child who is accommodated in a secure children's home from absconding from the home; Restraint in relation to a child must be necessary and proportionate. (Regulation 20 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)) In particular this relates to the manager ensuring that staff only use restraint as a last resort and that it is only used when absolutely necessary and proportionate.	17 August 2024
The registered person must make arrangements for the handling, recording, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of medicines received into the children's home. In particular the registered person must ensure that— medicines kept in the home are stored in a secure place so as to prevent any child from having unsupervised access to them; medicine which is prescribed for a child is administered as prescribed to the child for whom it is prescribed and to no other child; a record is kept of the administration of medicine to each child. (Regulation 23 (1) (2)(b)(c)) In particular this relates to the manager ensuring that there are clear arrangements in place for the recording of medication. It also relates to ensuring that any errors to recording medication administration are recognised and effectively handled to ensure the safe administration of medication.	17 August 2024
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;	17 August 2024

promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) 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 have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for 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; demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on— research and developments in relation to the ways in which the needs of children are best met; feedback on the experiences of children, including complaints received; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(b) (2)(a)(c)(d)(f)(g)(i)(h)) In particular this relates to the manager ensuring that they have robust oversight of the home, care of children and records.	
The children’s views, wishes and feelings standard is that children receive care from staff who— develop positive relationships with them; engage with them; take their views, wishes and feelings into account in relation to matters affecting the children’s care and welfare and their lives. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—	17 August 2024

ensure that staff— ascertain and consider each child's views, wishes and feelings, and balance these against what they judge to be in the child's best interests when making decisions about the child's care and welfare; help each child to express views, wishes and feelings; help each child to understand how the child's views, wishes and feelings have been taken into account and give the child reasons for decisions in relation to the child; regularly consult children, and seek their feedback, about the quality of the home's care; ensure that each child— is enabled to provide feedback to, and raise issues with, a relevant person about the support and services that the child receives; is given appropriate advocacy support; (Regulation 7 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(b)(i)(iii)) In particular this relates to the manager ensuring that children's views are regularly sought in relation to the quality-of-care provided for them. It also relates to ensuring that staff actively try and encourage children to come down from their bedrooms in the morning and participate in activities. It also relates to ensuring that children understand the role of and are offered appropriate advocacy support.	
The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which— include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child; are kept up to date; are signed and dated by the author of each entry. (Regulation 36 (1)(b)(c)) In particular this relates to the manager ensuring that electronic records are recorded under the correct staff name. It is also in relation to ensuring that staff are not pre-empting the outcomes	17 August 2024

of the day or a child's emotions prior to activities being undertaken.	
The registered person must compile in relation to the children's home a statement ("the statement of purpose") which covers the matters listed in Schedule 1. The registered person must— keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. Subject to paragraph (6), the registered person must ensure that the home is at all times conducted in a manner which is consistent with its statement of purpose. (Regulation 16 (1) (3)(a)(b) (5)) In particular this relates to ensuring that the statement of purpose is up to date in relation to employee details, experience and qualifications. It also relates to ensuring that the home works in line with the statement of purpose and any specific models of care.	17 August 2024
The registered person must review the appropriateness and suitability of the location of the premises used for the purposes of the children's home at least once in each calendar year taking into account the requirement in regulation 12(2)(c) (the protection of children standard). When conducting the review, the registered person must consult, and take into account the views of, each relevant person. (Regulation 46 (1)(2)) In particular this relates to the manager taking into account all aspects in the location risk assessment which may impact on a child residing in their care. This includes the challenges in finding an appropriate school placement for children. The manager also needs to ensure that the appropriate people are consulted when undertaking the review.	17 August 2024

Recommendations

- The registered person must ensure that all staff must have their performance and fitness to carry out their role formally appraised at least annually. This appraisal should take into account, where reasonable and practical, the views of other professionals who have worked with the staff member over the year and children in the homes care. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.5).
- 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 Homes Regulations, including the quality standards, page 62, paragraph 14.4).
- Just as in a family home, children should be able to access all shared areas of their home unless there are specific reasons why this would not meet a child's needs. Limits on access may only be put in place to safeguard each child in the home (regulation 21(c)(i)). Any decisions to limit a child's access to any area of the home and any modifications to the environment of the home, must only be made where this is intended to safeguard the child's welfare. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards, page 15, paragraph 3.10).
- The home should work in partnership with relevant people including education professionals and social workers as appropriate to ensure that each child is provided with support to communicate their views, wishes and feelings and participate as fully as possible in all aspects of their care planning and daily care. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards, page 22, paragraph 4.6)

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: 1234243

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Horizon Care and Education Group Limited

Registered provider address: Venture House Prospect Business Park 12 Prospect Park, Longford Road, Cannock, Staffordshire WS11 0LG

Responsible individual: Post Vacant

Registered manager: Post Vacant

Inspector

Ellen Monk, social care inspector

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