

1234244

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 owned by a private provider and registered to provide care for up to three children with social and emotional difficulties.

Two children were living in the home at the time of the inspection. The children were spoken to as part of the inspection.

The home is led by a qualified and experienced manager who is registered with Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 November 2024

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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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: 12 August 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: inadequate

Enforcement action since last inspection:

Following the last inspection, Ofsted issued compliance notices in respect of regulation 12, the help and protection standard, and regulation 13, the leadership and management standard. A monitoring visit was carried out on 24 September 2024, and the notices were lifted, having been deemed as met.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/08/2024	Full	Inadequate
20/02/2024	Full	Good
30/05/2022	Full	Outstanding
18/05/2021	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

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

Since the last inspection, the leadership team have been increasingly settled. This has helped to improve children's overall experiences and helped them to make progress. There had been vacancies in the staff team, and these have now been filled. The improvements in the stability of the staff team caring for the children has led to children feeling more settled. The manager has ensured that the staff provide children with nurturing and thoughtful care that helps them to make progress.

The home is well maintained and decorated. It feels like a family home. There are photos of children on display, together with their artwork. This reflects children's interests and the things they enjoy. The children's bedrooms reflect their hobbies and are decorated to their tastes. However, one child's bedroom had not been checked, in line with their care plan. It was in a poor state, with leftover food and drinks lying around.

Staff prioritise children's educational achievement. For example, one child's attendance in education has improved due to a plan being implemented that meets their identified educational needs. The other child attends school on a full-time basis and is making progress. This child was assessed by school as needing an education, health and care plan. The manager has not escalated this to the relevant local authority. As a result, the right support plan is not in place for the child. Additionally, the manager has not challenged the school's assessment of the child, which differs from their own assessment and that of the social worker.

One child has been living in the home for over a year. There is a plan for the child to return home to their family. However, there has been no work undertaken with the child to prepare them for this move. The child's care plan does not reflect any discussions between the child and staff or with managers in relation to the child's feelings about this.

Staff support children to build positive relationships with each other. Staff ensure that interactions between the children are monitored. There has been an improvement in how the children behave towards each other. Children's feelings are listened to. They feel supported to express their thoughts and emotions. Children are not yet sharing their views on their care or the home's development with the manager and staff.

Staff have provided children with opportunities to go on holiday and engage in meaningful activities. One child went abroad and enjoyed new experiences. Staff made every effort to provide a similar experience for the other child. However, they declined. Children are encouraged and supported to save and plan for things they hope to do. One child spoke of how well they are doing in saving towards a first-time visit to a football stadium.

Staff support children with their emotional and physical health. There has been a significant improvement for one child, who is now up to date with all health

appointments. The social worker said, 'This has been a huge turnaround. They previously refused to engage with appointments.'

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

Staff provide children with support to manage their behaviour and any strong feelings or emotions they may have. Children respond well to this. However, there is a lack of individualised behaviour support planning for children. This means that new and emerging information about children is not being shared and reflected on. New staff would be reliant on verbal sharing of information on key methods for supporting children.

All the children have individual risk assessments. However, they are not reflective of the views of the manager or staff. This impacts children as they are subject to inaccurate assessments. One child's risk assessment details a significant concern. The manager has not secured specialist intervention for the child. Additionally, the manager does not agree with the assessment. He has not acted to review or amend the assessment. Discussions with external professionals to explore this have not taken place. If not addressed, this will impact the child's future and progress.

The risk of exploitation for one child has reduced. This has resulted in them no longer needing more specialist support in this area. The manager and staff have been part of a wider professional network to keep the child safe. This has been effective, and the child now engages with their own safety plan and communicates with the staff and professionals about staying safe.

Children do not go missing from their home. Children have individual plans that cover any potential missing-from-home incidents. Staff understand the plans and what action to take should children go missing from home. Should children have any concerns, complaints or grievances about their care, they can raise these with managers and external professionals. Staff are trained in how to manage safeguarding concerns.

One child continues to use vapes and smoke cannabis. Staff attempt to discuss this with them, however, there has been insufficient progress in reducing this harmful behaviour. There has been some progress in reducing vaping in the home, but at times this continues.

Overall, new staff to the home are recruited in accordance with safer recruitment procedures. However, the manager has not ensured that he has full oversight of this. As a result, there were employment gaps in one staff member's record that were not explored. This has the potential to place children at risk.

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

The manager has become well established in the home. A deputy manager and a newly recruited senior member of the team provide staff with the leadership and guidance they need. The manager is creating a good atmosphere in the home. He is well thought of by staff, who feel supported.

Staff receive individual supervision with a manager or senior member of staff. The manager has ensured that there are additional opportunities for reflection, both informally and as a team. New staff have good and comprehensive inductions. All mandatory staff training is up to date. However, there is not a clear development plan for the home. This means that children's needs are not fully considered when managers review the staff training needs. For example, one child has attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, and there has been no training for staff on this.

External professionals speak highly of the managers. They comment that communication is good and there has been positive change in the home. However, managers have not challenged professionals on behalf of one child. They have failed to raise concerns that the child is not receiving the support they need in relation to an area of risk.

The manager and leaders do not yet use systems for monitoring care effectively. Children's documents, such as care plans, are not yet routinely reviewed, updated and amended and do not reflect the progress made by children. These documents do not provide staff with the information they need to provide the best possible care.

The manager is supporting staff to develop their skills in approaches to therapeutic care. The organisation is currently overseeing the recruitment of a clinical team. However, this is not yet in place, so the team is not yet delivering the model of care that is planned.

The manager has high aspirations for the development of the team. However, he does not yet have full oversight of the strengths and weaknesses of the home. He is being supported by the responsible individual in working through an action plan for improvement. The impact of children's views and participation is not yet visible in the development plan for the home. This prevents children from being fully involved in their care.

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
In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff— seek to involve each child's placing authority effectively in the child's care, in accordance with the child's relevant plans; seek to secure the input and services required to meet each child's needs; if the registered person considers, or staff consider, a placing authority's or a relevant person's performance or response to be inadequate in relation to their role, challenge the placing authority or the relevant person to seek to ensure that each child's needs are met in accordance with the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 5 (a)(b)(c)) In particular, this relates to the need to escalate concerns regarding the risk assessment for one child and the lack of progress in completing their education, health and care plan.	21 January 2025
The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on— mutual respect and trust; an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and positive responses to other children and adults. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— meet each child's behavioural and emotional needs, as set out in the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(i))	21 January 2025

In particular, this relates to the development and continual review of effective behaviour support plans for each child.	
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; 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)(b)) In particular, this relates to risk assessments being reviewed and updated to reflect the current level of risk and staff knowledge of the child and where progress has been made and risk has reduced or is not relevant.	21 January 2025
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 in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— 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)(f)(h)) In particular, this relates to the registered person ensuring that they prioritise the review of children’s care plan documents and	21 January 2025

use the knowledge and experience of the staff team in shaping the plans.	
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Recommendation

- The registered person should maintain good employment practice and ensure that recruitment, supervision and performance management of staff safeguard children and minimise potential risks to them. Specifically, they should have oversight of safe recruitment and ensure all checks under schedule 2 are complete. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1)

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: 1234244

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: Alexander Lee

Registered manager: William Law

Inspector

Chris Haines, Social Care Inspector

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