

1241789

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 home is owned and operated by a private organisation. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to three children and young people who have emotional, social and/or behavioural difficulties.

There is an acting manager in post who is not yet registered.

Inspection dates: 7 to 8 January 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: 6 March 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
06/03/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good
05/02/2018	Full	Good
14/12/2016	Full	Outstanding

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 registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The registered person may only— employ an individual to work at the children's home; or if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the children's home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). The requirements are that— full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1)(2)(a)(b)(3)(d))	10/02/2020
Case records must be kept— securely in the children's home during the period when the child to whom the case records relate is accommodated there; and in a secure place after the child has ceased to be accommodated in the home. (Regulation 36 (2)(c)(d))	10/02/2020
When the independent person is carrying out a visit, the registered person must help the independent person— if they consent, to interview in private such of the children, their parents, relatives and persons working at the home as the	10/02/2020

independent person requires.

(Regulation 44 (2)(a))

This particularly refers to seeking feedback from placing social workers and independent reviewing officers.

Recommendations

- For children's homes to be nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of their children, they will in most cases, be homely, domestic environments. This relates to the need to ensure that a refurbishment of the kitchen takes place as a priority. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- Any home using monitoring equipment should take into account the need and right to privacy for each child. This relates to the use of bedroom door alarms. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 16, paragraph 3.16)
- Staff should continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements to protect them. This relates to the need to ensure that risk assessments relating to the home and community are regularly reviewed and updated. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children receive positive care and support from the staff team. A new manager came into post in October 2019. She is committed to ensuring that children feel well supported and have their needs met. It is evident that, in a short period of time, she has gained the trust and respect of both children and staff.

Children attend education provisions and make progress in this area. One young person does not have any education or training provision in place currently. Staff are supporting them to identify a suitable provision and being proactive in ensuring that they are focused on securing something as soon as possible.

Feedback from a placing social worker is very positive. They state that their child has matured and is thriving in this placement. They report excellent communication and multi-agency working, including with the school and family members. This reflects the commitment of staff to ensuring that children make progress.

Children's health needs are well met. Staff update health plans regularly following reviews and annual health assessments. They meet with children to discuss specific health issues and needs. They have assisted one child to reduce their addiction to nicotine. Staff are supported by clinical psychologists within the organisation. They provide regular consultation and advice on how to support children. This further promotes children's emotional well-being. The recommendation set at the last inspection has been met.

Children feel listened to by staff and the manager. Their views are regularly sought. They contribute to the running of the home and decisions about the care they receive. They know how to make a complaint and receive detailed and clear responses to any issues they raise.

The home is generally well maintained and homely in feel. However, the kitchen is in need of refurbishment. The acting manager has identified this on the home's development plan and has raised this with senior managers. There is no timescale set for the replacement of the kitchen units. A recommendation has been set to address this shortfall.

There have been several changes to staff working in the home since the last inspection. This has led to an increased use of agency and bank staff at times. The home has now recruited new staff members who have started in post. The manager is committed to ensuring that children receive consistent care and support. Children form positive relationships with staff and present as settled and happy. They feel well supported in relation to seeing and keeping in touch with family members and friends.

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

Staff now manage children's challenging and risky behaviours well. They report feeling that there is more clarity and consistency around expectations regarding how to support children. Detailed and up-to-date behaviour management plans assist in this process. The manager has implemented clearer systems to support staff in this area. Children understand the reasons and need for boundaries and rules. There has been no use of physical restraint and very few negative sanctions have been imposed. The requirement set at the last inspection has been met.

Risk assessments relating to the wider home and community have been reviewed by the acting manager recently. Some of them do not contain enough detail or information on recent relevant incidents. The acting manager has already identified that more work needs to be done in this area. A recommendation has been set to address this minor shortfall.

Door alarms are activated each night for both the children's bedrooms and external doors to the home. Two staff sleep in each night and respond to any child leaving their bedroom during the night. Not all children pose a risk of going missing or being at risk of other harm. There is a need for the manager and staff to consider whether the use of

bedroom door alarms is proportionate and necessary. A recommendation has been set to address this minor shortfall.

There have been very few incidents of children going missing from care. Staff have followed missing protocols and procedures well. Recording of such incidents is very detailed and clear. Staff clearly understand what action they should take, in the event of a child going missing. It is evident that they work closely and proactively with relevant agencies and professionals, as well as family members.

There has been one allegation made against a staff member since the last inspection. This was reported to the designated officer promptly. The manager took all necessary action and worked closely with relevant professionals and agencies. The requirement set at the last inspection has been met.

Recruitment procedures and practices are generally robust and safe. However, agency staff paperwork is not consistently clear. The agency used has not consistently provided their staff with identification to bring to the home. There have also been some incidents of information from the agency not being clear or detailed. These relate to the qualifications and skills of agency staff, as well as employment history gaps. A requirement has been set to address this shortfall.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

There is currently no registered manager. The home has an acting manager who has applied to Ofsted for registration. The acting manager has started the required qualification in leadership and management. She came into post in October 2019. She has worked for the organisation for several years in other children's homes. She is well regarded by both staff and children. One member of staff said: 'The manager is great. She has brought the team together and I am so much happier in my work now she is here.'

The acting manager understands the strengths and weaknesses of the home. She has successfully addressed the shortfalls identified at the last inspection. She has a clear development plan in place. Her focus has been to secure a full staff team and support the staff in their roles. She has also formed very positive relationships with the children and is well respected and liked by them. She undertakes monthly management audits of all records held in the home and work done to support children. The responsible individual then carries out a further audit each month. This provides good management oversight of how children are being supported.

The standard of recording has improved. Staff record detailed and clear information relating to children. Management oversight is evident on records. The recommendation set at the last inspection has been met.

The storage of case records relating to children currently accommodated in the home and those who have moved out is not robust enough. The manager has failed to ensure that some of the records for children who have left the home have been sent off for

archiving. These records, together with those of children currently living at the home, are being kept in a locked room, but not in locked cabinets. A requirement has been set to address this shortfall.

The independent visitor comes to the home each month. They provide detailed reports, outlining any potential areas of need and making recommendations. The visitor has not managed to gain feedback from placing social workers, independent reviewing officers or family members each month. A requirement has been set to address this shortfall.

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 differences 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: 1241789

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Horizon Care and Education Group Limited

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

Responsible individual: Emma Carrington

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Tracy Murty, Social Care Inspector

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