

1241789

Registered provider: Horizon Care and Education Group Limited

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

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

At the time of this inspection, 2 children were living at the home. One child had moved out during this inspection period.

The manager was not present during the inspection and was on planned leave. The inspection was supported by an interim manager and the responsible individual.

Inspection date: 23 March 2026

Date of last inspection: 9 September 2025

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Information about this inspection

At these inspections, the inspector evaluated:

- the care of children
- the safety of children
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers.

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children, using the social care common inspection framework. This assurance 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.

Findings from the inspection

We did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance inspection.

Children live in a homely environment. The manager has ensured that areas of the home that had been identified as requiring improvements at the last inspection have been completed. Children's bedrooms are suitably furnished, and children are supported to personalise their bedroom.

The 2 children currently living in the home do not attend house meetings together. Instead, their wishes and feelings are gathered through individual conversations with staff. The interim manager has introduced a new approach to collecting and sharing children's information. As part of this, children are now encouraged to contribute to their own agendas and express their views directly. This ensures that they are actively involved in decision-making, can identify the support they need and have safe opportunities to share their vulnerabilities.

Staff do not fully understand the importance of children developing healthy relationships with one another. As a result, the children live largely separate lives within the home, although they have recently joined together to celebrate each other's birthdays. Prior to the inspection, managers were unaware of one child's reasons for avoiding interaction with the other. This lack of insight means that staff do not yet have the skills or knowledge required to help the children build trusting and safe peer relationships.

The children have differing experiences of the support provided in the home. One child is encouraged to develop independence and is given opportunities to broaden their friendship groups. In contrast, the other child is not supported to take age-appropriate risks or to form friendships outside the home. Despite these inconsistencies, both children said that they enjoyed positive relationships with staff.

The manager has ensured that staff have regular supervision, and staff say that they feel supported by the manager. Care has been taken to consider staffing and the rota to ensure consistency of care for the children.

The responsible individual said that she is committed to making improvements in the quality of care provided to children. During the inspection, she implemented an action plan to meet the requirements, including directing staff to complete focused conversations with one child.

Staff support children to meet their health needs, including managing self-injurious behaviours. As a result, one child has not felt the need to self-harm.

Management oversight continues to be limited and inconsistent. Key-work sessions and risk assessments are not consistently reviewed, and there were a number of documents that lacked management oversight. Where oversight was recorded, there

was no evidence to suggest that there was any learning or reflection to improve staff practice.

There has only been one incident where staff have had to hold a child. While paperwork suggests that this was proportionate, there was no record of staff attempting to speak with the child after this hold.

Since the last inspection, one child has moved out of the home. Documents were not available to review how the child was supported. Therefore, this requirement is restated.

The manager has met one requirement and the one recommendation raised at the last inspection. Three requirements have been restated. Two additional requirements and one recommendation have been made.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/09/2025	Full	Requires improvement to be good
12/09/2024	Full	Outstanding
20/03/2024	Full	Good
27/03/2023	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, 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 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; and 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)(b)) The registered person must ensure that behaviour support plans are detailed and consider all known risks and support required by children. It also relates to ensuring that staff consistently follow children's individual behaviour support plans and missing-from-home protocols.	19 June 2026

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— 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; 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; and feedback on the experiences of children, including complaints received; and 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)(f)(g)(i)(ii)(h)) The registered person must have effective oversight of the quality of care provided to children so they can identify areas of concern and respond with clear and measurable actions. This includes recording in children's case records and reporting incidents. This specifically relates to embedding monitoring systems, capturing children's progress effectively and producing an ongoing review of their progress.	19 June 2026
The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and	19 June 2026

have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that arrangements are in place to— ensure the effective induction of each child into the home; manage and review the placement of each child in the home; and plan for, and help, each child to prepare to leave the home or to move into adult care in a way that is consistent with arrangements agreed with the child's placing authority; that each child's relevant plans are followed. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(i)(ii)(iii)(c)) The registered person must ensure that careful and considered decisions are made when admitting children into the home and that children have a positive experience of moving into and out of the home.	
The children's views, wishes and feelings standard is that children receive care from staff who— 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— 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;	19 June 2026

(Regulation 7 (c)(20 (a)(i)(ii)(iii)) The registered person must ensure that children's wishes and feelings are obtained, and they are given proportionate reasons for decisions made.	
The registered person must ensure that; within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint i n relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes; a description of the measure and its duration. (Regulation 35 (3)(a)(iv)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that staff record all information about a physical intervention, including how the intervention and staff's actions supported the child.	19 June 2026

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that the home provides care that meets each child's needs and promotes their welfare, taking into account the child's gender, religion, ethnicity, cultural and linguistic background, sexual identity, mental health, any disability, their assessed needs, previous experiences and any relevant plans. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 14, paragraph 3.2)

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: C/O DWF Company Secretarial Services Limited 1
Scott Place 2 Hardman Street, Manchester M3 3AA

Responsible individual: Victoria Dirican

Registered manager: Jodi Wheatstone

Inspector

Corline Parker, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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