

1245572

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 managed by a private provider. It offers care for up to four children who experience social and/or emotional difficulties. Two children were living at the home at the time of the inspection.

The manager registered with Ofsted in April 2023.

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 May 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	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: 18 April 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection:

At an assurance inspection on 3 January 2024, Ofsted identified serious and widespread concerns at this home. Ofsted issued a notice restricting accommodation at the home and three compliance notices under regulations 12, 13 and 14.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
18/04/2023	Full	Good
14/06/2022	Full	Good
21/12/2021	Full	Good
19/11/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

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

Children's day-to-day experiences vary because staffing sufficiency and changes to the staff team have meant that they have not always received continuous care. However, since some children moved out of the home, sufficiency has improved. This has led to staff being better equipped to provide children with more structure and consistent boundaries. As a result, children are more settled.

Since the home has become more settled and incidents have reduced, the relationships between staff and the children are stronger. The relationships between the two children currently living at the home have improved, they are getting along and like spending time together. This positive environment has meant that one child is now spending time outside of their bedroom and enjoying doing activities with staff and the other child.

Children are supported to spend time with their family and friends in line with their individual plans. However, staff have not advocated for one child when they asked for their family time arrangements to be reviewed. The child has not received any feedback about their request. This does not make children feel valued and listened to.

Children's attendance at school has been inconsistent, which has impacted on the progress that they are making. However, staff understand the barriers to children's education, and they provide them with support and encouragement to attend. Staff advocate for children to receive the right support in school. For one child, this has led to improved attendance from their starting point.

Staff talk to children about their well-being, and they encourage them to attend their health appointments. However, despite staff's efforts to help children to access health services, children often decline this. This means that children's health needs are not always met.

Staff talk to children about a range of topics that are specific to their individual needs. Children's wishes and feelings are captured in the conversations they have with staff, but it is sometimes unclear how staff respond to the children because the actions they have taken are not always recorded.

The home is well maintained and decorated. However, children's bedrooms are not personalised to reflect their individuality. Despite two children making a complaint about the cleanliness of the home, staff have not ensured that children receive the right support to help them to keep their own bedrooms clean and tidy.

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

Incidents where children show risky and unwanted behaviours have reduced significantly. Staff provide children with consistent boundaries. They talk to the children about risks and are clear in their expectations about their behaviour.

Staff understand children's individual risks and vulnerabilities. Children's risk assessments identify all known risks to the child, and they provide staff with clear steps to follow to mitigate some of those risks.

The use of physical restraint has not been necessary with the children living in the home. Consequences are rarely given. When they are used, they are restorative.

Children who live at this home do not go missing. There are plans in place that provide staff with clear guidelines to follow should this happen. There are systems in place to ensure that children's whereabouts are known when they are spending unsupervised time in the community. Staff are proactive in ensuring that they remain in contact with children when they are away from the home.

Complaints from children are taken seriously. They are investigated, and children are provided with feedback about their complaint. However, the manager has not always ensured that feedback from children is used to improve the quality of care provided to children.

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

The manager and senior leaders have not taken actions to ensure that concerns raised by staff have been fully investigated and addressed. When staff have raised concerns about management, they have not been investigated by an independent person who is not involved in the concern. This does not provide staff with the right support and has the potential to discourage them from raising any concerns in the future.

Staff receive regular supervision which provides them with opportunities to discuss the children. Team meetings take place regularly and are well attended. The manager has followed formal processes to address shortfalls in staff performance. However, the actions taken are not always clearly recorded on staff files.

Staff are suitably trained to meet the needs of the children living at this home. They receive additional training when children's needs and risks change. However, two members of staff have not attained a relevant qualification in line with regulatory timescales.

The manager has not always ensured that partnership working is effective. She has not followed the home's escalation procedure to challenge others when their response is inadequate and is not meeting the children's needs. This relates to ensuring that children's family time is promoted and that children's placing authorities have applied for

travel documents required for a planned trip abroad that children have been involved in planning.

Staffing at this home is not sufficient to provide children with continuous care. Changes in the staff team have led to a high number of agency staff working at the home. Children moving out of the home has meant that staffing sufficiency has improved, and the number of agency staff has reduced. However, vacant positions have not yet been filled, which means that the home is continuing to use agency staff to cover gaps in the rota.

The manager has ensured the safe recruitment of staff, including those through an agency. Newly recruited staff, including agency staff, receive an induction and regular supervision.

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; and 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)(c))	22 July 2024
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— 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; and regularly consult children, and seek their feedback, about the quality of the home's care. (Regulation 7 (1)(c) (2)(a)(ii)(iii)(iv))	22 July 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—	22 July 2024

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; ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate; ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child; and 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; and demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on— feedback on the experiences of children, including complaints received. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(d)(e)(f)(g)(ii))	
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children’s safety. For the purposes of paragraph (3)(b), an individual who works in the home in a care role has the appropriate qualification if, by the relevant date, the individual has attained— the Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare (England) (“the Level 3 Diploma”); or a qualification which the registered person considers to be equivalent to the Level 3 Diploma. The relevant date is— in the case of an individual who starts working in a care role in a home after 1st April 2014, the date which falls 2 years after the	22 July 2024

date on which the individual started working in a care role in a home. (Regulation 32 (1) (4)(a)(b) (5)(a))	
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Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that staff provide a nurturing environment that is welcoming, supportive and meets children's basic day-to-day needs and physical necessities. This relates specifically to helping children to ensure that their bedrooms are clean and tidy. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.7)

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: 1245572

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Horizon Care and Education Group Limited

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

Responsible individual: Oliver Scrimshaw

Registered manager: Sharon Mackenzie

Inspectors

Rachel Webster, Social Care Inspector
Tenji Wesa, Social Care Inspector

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