

1249183

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 and managed by a private provider. It provides care for up to four children who experience social and emotional difficulties. There were four children living in the home at the time of this inspection.

The manager registered with Ofsted in March 2019.

Inspection dates: 8 and 9 October 2024

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	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	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 10 May 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10/05/2023	Full	Good
10/01/2023	Full	Good
16/02/2022	Full	Outstanding
28/01/2020	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the last inspection, three of the children have continued to experience stability. One child has moved out due to becoming an adult and another child has moved in. All children say that they are happy to live in the home and said that staff keep them safe.

Children's relationships with their families and people who are important to them are maintained. Family members are kept up to date with relevant information about their children. Positive feedback obtained about one of the children indicated that there had been opportunities to repair relationships that are important to the child.

Children have positive leisure experiences and enjoy activities within their community linked to their individual interests. Children access the local gym, swimming pool, boxing clubs and libraries.

All children have access to bespoke education that has enabled individual progress. Staff advocate for children to ensure that their education provision continues to meet their needs. The manager ensures that relevant professionals are involved to make sure that children have the best chance of success. However, one child's education, health and care plan has not been reviewed within the appropriate timescales.

At times, the dynamics in the home have been difficult for some of the children. There have been many conversations with individual children, and the children as a group, about how they can live together harmoniously. There are various communal spaces across the home that children can share or spend time away from the other children. Arguments about the use of communal spaces have reduced by implementing a timetable. Children agreed that this has worked. However, there continues to be arguments between some children. This has sometimes resulted in physical altercations. Children said that this was something they did not like.

Children's health needs are well met. Staff facilitate planned and ad-hoc external health appointments when needed. Staff seek out specialist assessments for children when they have specific needs. There has been long delays in children receiving specialist assessments, but these appointments are continuously followed up by managers.

Children have positive experiences of moving into and out of the home, in line with their wishes and expectations. Children who have moved out are supported to maintain appropriate contact with staff in the home.

The home is spacious, yet homely. The children have their own individualised bedrooms. There is a well looked-after garden, with play equipment where children from the neighbourhood play together with the children who live in the home. This helps to improve children's social skills.

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

Staff have a good understanding of children's needs and how to support them. Staff invest time and effort into building positive and trusting relationships with children. This means when children are in crisis, staff usually know how to support them.

When needed, staff support children to physically separate from each other if there has been a disagreement. This prevents the situation from escalating. However, there are some occasions when staff have not recognised that children's behaviour is due to them seeking reassurance or attention from staff.

Risk assessments are detailed and contain most of the current risks for children. They provide clear strategies for staff to follow for known risks for children. Documents are regularly updated.

When children go missing there are well coordinated plans to support a safe return home. However, on one occasion a child left the home without staff being aware. This is despite only just returning from being missing. Staff did not try to engage the child or consider that the child needed their support. The manager did not note this in her oversight. This is a missed opportunity for reflective practice and learning.

After children have been missing, they can speak to someone independent when they return to the home. These independent people often contact the children by telephone to undertake these discussions, which means that they are not always successful in engaging children to talk about their experiences while away from the home.

When there are concerns that children may be at risk of exploitation, staff respond swiftly. Extensive liaison takes place with other professionals so that information shared means actions can take place to keep children safer. Sensitive conversations take place with children to help them understand the risks. These discussions have supported the development of trusting relationships between children and staff.

Children know how to make a complaint. One child has made a complaint. This was taken seriously, investigated and a response provided to the child. This shows children that their voice is important.

When allegations are made about staff, or issues are raised about staff conduct, these are managed well by the manager and organisation. Thorough investigations take place and swift decisions are made to ensure children remain safer. However, for one child, one risk assessment in relation to allegation management lacks sufficient detail for all staff to be able to follow.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is suitably qualified and experienced. She knows the children well and has strong and trusting relationships with all the children.

Staff enjoy working at the home and feel supported by the management team. Staff receive regular, reflective supervision. These sessions address any practice issues and encourages professional growth. This is complemented by good quality group supervision. Team meetings take place regularly and children are discussed in detail, which helps staff to reflect on why children behave in particular ways.

Staff are up to date with mandatory training. There is a clear system to ensure training remains current. However, one member of staff has not obtained the necessary residential qualification within the statutory timescales.

Staff do not regularly use consequences. When they do happen, the consequence is not always directly linked to the incident and they are not always restorative in nature. Management oversight of consequences does not always happen and the effectiveness of consequences are not evaluated to consider whether it helps reduce certain behaviours.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person 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 must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
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— use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(h)) In particular, that the manager has effective systems to ensure reflective practice is used after all incidents and when staff implement consequences. This will ensure that these are appropriate and to inform and improve the care provided to children.	6 January 2025
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 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—	6 January 2025

the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform.

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 date on which the individual started working in a care role in a home. (Regulation 32 (1) (2)(a)(b) (3)(b) (4)(a)(b) (5)(a))

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that a child’s education, health and care plan is reviewed at least annually. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 26, paragraph 5.3)
- The registered person should ensure that missing protocols and risk assessments contain the most up-to-date information, so staff have a clear understanding of what they need to do when a child goes missing or makes and retracts an allegation. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 45, paragraph 9.28)
- The registered person should ensure that staff understand and respond appropriately when children are displaying connection-seeking behaviour. Staff should have to skills to intervene in a timely way when children struggle to live harmoniously together. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 39, paragraph 8.13)

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: 1249183

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: Oliver Scrimshaw

Registered manager: Victoria Kitchen

Inspector

Joanna Beal, Social Care Inspector

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