

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 provides care and accommodation for up to four young people who may exhibit emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The home offers crisis intervention and short-, medium- and long-term residential placements for children and young people aged between eight and 18 years of age. The manager has been registered since February 2018.

Inspection dates: 22 to 23 May 2018

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: 7 November 2017

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
07/11/2017	Full	Requires improvement to be good
18/07/2017	Full	Inadequate

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, 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
In meeting the quality standards, 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 (c))	01/07/2018

Recommendations

- When a child returns to the home after being missing from care or away from the home without permission, the responsible local authority must provide an opportunity for the child to have an independent return home interview. Homes should take account of information provided by such interviews when assessing risks and putting arrangements in place to protect each child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.30) In particular, to make sure arrangements are in place for someone totally independent of the home to undertake the interviews.
- The registered person must challenge (under regulation 5(c)) any placing authority who asks them to accept a child in the absence of a complete and current relevant plan, as the expectation that a placement of a child without the necessary information would go ahead (in circumstances other than an emergency) is inadequate in relation to their role. It is essential that homes understand what will be required of them before they accept responsibility for a child's placement, to avoid disruption and instability for the child in future and for other children in the home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 57, paragraph 11.5) In particular, to ensure the child's looked after paperwork refers to the current placement when the young person is admitted.
- Children should be encouraged by staff to see the home's records as 'living documents' supporting them to view and contribute to the record in a way that reflects their voice on a regular basis. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 59, paragraph 11.19) In particular, to make the home's placement plans more child-friendly so children can have an active

involvement in their completion.

- Staff should be familiar with the home's policies on record keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective, and clear recording. Staff should record information on individual children in a non-stigmatising way that distinguishes between fact, opinion and third-party information. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4) In particular, the recording used for a child who has been the subject of child sexual exploitation should portray the child as a victim.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children and young people settle quickly at the home. They experience consistent care from the nurturing staff team. The good care planning and quality of care that children and young people receive have a positive impact on their experiences and progress. The clear understanding that the staff team has of the children and young people is excellent. Children and young people speak favourably about staff and enjoy living at the home. They feel valued and contribute to their surroundings. This gives them a strong sense of belonging and stability.

Staff understand how children and young people's experiences of neglect and trauma affect their emotional well-being. The staff team uses a therapeutic parenting model to help start the reparenting process. They receive ongoing support from the company's clinical team. This includes advice about new approaches to use. Staff encourage positive attachments, leading to children and young people developing trusting relationships. Consequently, one young person has started to attend medical appointments and their health needs are now addressed.

Children and young people have mixed educational outcomes. However, improvements are made from their starting points. This includes young people passing exams and obtaining college placements. Staff undertake good, reflective key-working sessions with children and young people. These informal opportunities educate children and young people on issues that affect them.

Independent advocacy for children and young people is a high priority for the manager. Children and young people know how to complain and receive support to challenge decisions made by their placing authority and others about their care.

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

Staff have a good knowledge of children and young people's vulnerabilities. Individualised and detailed risk assessments provide staff with clear guidance on how to manage children and young people's risky behaviour. Also, children and young people's engagement in good-quality direct work ensures that they are aware of dangers.

Children and young people feel confident to talk about their experiences, and as a result they seek therapeutic support. They speak about feeling safe because of staff's intervention.

Behaviour management is good. There has only been one occasion when staff have had to use physical intervention. When children and young people are angry or upset, the strategies staff use are tailored for each child and young person. Staff's effective de-escalation skills result in fewer angry and aggressive outbursts. Children and young people engage in debriefing sessions with staff. This helps them reflect on the incidents. Consequently, children and young people learn to self-regulate their emotions.

Missing from home episodes have reduced. When children and young people have unauthorised absences, staff undertake welfare checks. They know where children and young people are, which leads to a reduced risk of child sexual exploitation. However, return home interviews are conducted by another registered manager employed by the company. This does not provide an independent person for children and young people to speak to.

Children and young people are no longer presenting offending behaviours. The police involvement is in line with the home's restorative approach. Staff do not unnecessarily criminalise children and young people. Children and young people no longer misuse drugs and alcohol. There are reduced self-harming incidents and improved emotional well-being.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

A new registered manager has been in post since November 2017. The new management team has made several positive changes, which includes meeting the requirements from the last inspection. This has improved the quality of care for children and young people. The manager is motivated, child-friendly and passionate about improving outcomes for children and young people.

The manager's priority has been training and developing the staff team. His hands-on approach has enabled staff to mirror his own style. Staff speak of 'gelling well together' and say that his approach has given them confidence in caring for children and young people.

The staff team has a good knowledge of the wider risks to children and young people, such as child sexual exploitation and radicalisation. Although staff know the signs and symptoms of abuse, some of their recording has been inappropriate. This has led to the child or young person not being portrayed as a victim of exploitation.

Careful recruitment takes place, not only in respect of keeping children and young people safe but also so that staff members who can meet the ethos of being a therapeutic home are employed. Staff speak of feeling supported and benefiting from the regular supervision and team meetings. The attendance of clinical colleagues stimulates discussions and creative practices. A strength is the openness and honesty of

the staff team and its reflective approach. This helps staff develop and ensures that they remain child-focused in their practice.

Good monitoring systems enable the manager to recognise the home's strengths and weaknesses but some of the local authority's care planning documentation needs updating. Children and young people's individualised placement plans are also not child-friendly, as they do not highlight their input.

The manager has developed good links with other professionals, such as the police, health and education. The manager has challenged the contribution made by these partners, but this has not always been successful. Matters have not been escalated, which has resulted in a delay in children and young people receiving the support they need.

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: 1249183

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: Matthew Fisher

Registered manager: Sean Milnes

Inspector

Tina Ruffles, social care inspector

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