

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

This privately run home offers care and accommodation for up to four children and young people who may exhibit emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The home offers short-, medium- and long-term residential placements for children and young people aged eight to 18 years.

The manager has been registered since March 2019.

Inspection dates: 28 to 29 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 **requires improvement to be good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 23 August 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: improved effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
23/08/2018	Interim	Improved effectiveness
22/05/2018	Full	Good
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(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 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: ■ ensure that the training identified is undertaken by staff and the training is made explicitly clear in the impact risk assessments to show how children and young people's needs will be met ■ ensure that sanction records are consistently signed by the registered manager with their comments and also include the child's or young person's views ■ improve staff supervision records to ensure that they represent the actual supervisions held and are consistently signed off by the registered manager ■ implement child-friendly care plans so that children and young people can have a more active involvement in their completion.	20/03/2020
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	20/03/2020

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— 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))	
The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children's home at least once each month. 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 independent person requires. (Regulation 44 (1)(2)(a))	20/03/2020

Recommendations

- The registered person should have a system in place so that all serious events are notified, within 24 hours, to the appropriate people. The system should cover the action that should be followed if the event arises at the weekend or on a public holiday. Notification must include details of the action taken by the home's staff in response to the event. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 63, paragraph 14.13)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The children prosper from the good-quality care and strong relationships that the staff team have built around them. The nurturing support values their wishes and feelings and individuality within a loving and non-judgmental therapeutic parenting model.

While the current children are flourishing from their starting points, their day-to-day experiences and progress have at times been disrupted by the mix of children, which has created periods of disharmony. This has resulted from the poor information sharing by placing authorities, which has limited the registered manager's capacity to make consistently robust matching decisions about the existing group of children and young people.

Children and young people are supported to leave positively, and some have kept in touch with the home. This is testament to the positive relationships with the staff. Some of the children and young people's endings have been unplanned. This has been due to some unpredictable and unmanageable behaviours, despite the best efforts of the staff team. In recent weeks, the home has resumed stability. The children are happy and safe and they are engaging in their plans. They are developing skills to cope with their emotions.

Regular keywork sessions provide opportunities for the children and young people and staff to discuss a range of relevant issues. The children and young people's access to primary and specialist healthcare services meets their physical and emotional health needs. They are learning to be independent, which enables them to do more for themselves, such as travelling alone, learning about budgeting and helping in the kitchen.

Children and young people's education is valued highly. Their learning is considered a vital and necessary means to improve their life chances. The children and young people benefit from living in a home where staff work tirelessly to ensure that all the children and young people have access to education, which currently is taking place through home tuition. Older young people in college have high attendance and they are working towards their goals successfully.

Staff facilitate family time between the children and young people and their family and friends, which keeps them in touch with the important people in their lives. The individualised memory books remind the children and young people about the good times, and they can take these with them when they leave.

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

The staff team's ability to keep the children and young people safe is underpinned by their training in safeguarding. Consequently, the individual risks to the children and young people are well understood, managed effectively and reviewed, which promotes their safety and welfare. When the risks to staff and individual children and young people have increased to an uncontrollable level, this has resulted in unplanned endings.

Missing incidents are no longer a significant feature for the current group of children and young people. When incidents have occurred, they are managed well in conjunction with the missing from care protocols. The staff use the strength of their relationships with the children and young people to help the children and young people to reflect on any negative or disruptive behaviours. The staff team is supported well by the clinical team. The close collaborations ensure that everyone understands the children and young people's positive behaviour management plans and needs. The strategies for distracting and defusing challenging behaviour is leading to some positive behavioural changes and a settled home environment.

Allegations made against staff have been handled appropriately. They have been investigated in consultation with the designated officer. This ensures transparent working-together practices.

The physical environment in the home is well maintained and checked regularly for hazards, which keeps everyone safe.

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

The children and young people benefit from living in a well-managed home that is overseen by a dedicated and hands-on registered manager. She is supported by the responsible individual and the motivated staff team. The staff understand their roles and responsibilities to the children and young people and feel supported by the registered manager.

The staff team has reflected on a very difficult and challenging period. A contributing factor has been the lack of transparent information sharing from some local authorities when children and young people have been placed at the home. Some staff have been subject to threats, physical assaults and disruptive behaviours, which has had an impact on the day-to-day operation of the home. The team reflection has been useful when considering future referrals. The service plan for the home has been reviewed to make clear the home's admissions policy to all placing authorities. A meeting is planned between the provider and placing authority to seek to improve admission practices.

The registered manager has a very clear understanding and knowledge of the children and young people's needs and risks. However, her monitoring of the home has not identified and addressed all the gaps. For example, not all the consequence records have been signed off by the registered manager with her comments, and not all of them include the child's views. The registered manager has not challenged the independent visitor reports that do not consistently seek the views of professionals and parents.

The staff receive a range of training opportunities, but not all training has been delivered in a timely manner. Impact risk assessments do not make explicit the staff training to show how they will meet the individual children and young people's needs.

Although the registered manager sends appropriate safeguarding notifications to Ofsted, the notifications have not been consistently sent within the timescales. This impedes Ofsted from monitoring and responding to safeguarding practices in the home.

Staff supervision records have not been consistently signed by the registered manager. Some duplication of information in supervision records undermines the authenticity of the discussions held in the supervisions.

Staff recruitment procedures do not consistently check references as far back as practicable in respect of roles in which the applicant has been caring for vulnerable people. The recommendation made at the last two inspections to make the care plans more child friendly so that children and young people can have a more active involvement in their completion has not been carried out.

Professionals spoke highly about the quality of care in the home. They described the quality of the communication with the registered manager and staff team in favourable terms.

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: Sean Milnes

Registered manager: Victoria Kitchen

Inspector

Jacqueline Malcolm, social care inspector

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