

1251076

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 four-bedded home aims to provide care and support for children who have additional learning needs. The manager registered in 2017. He is a qualified social worker and holds a management qualification.

Inspection dates: 4 to 5 December 2019

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: 31 January 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: Improved effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: None

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
31/01/2019	Interim	Improved effectiveness
14/11/2018	Full	Good
14/02/2018	Interim	Improved effectiveness
10/05/2017	Full	Requires improvement to be good

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

Recommendations

- For children's homes to be nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of the children, they will, in most cases, be homely, domestic environments. Children's homes must comply with relevant health and safety legislations (alarms, food hygiene etc.); however in doing so, homes should seek as far as possible to maintain a domestic rather than 'institutional' impression. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- Records must be kept of the administration of all medication ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 35, paragraph 7.15). This is with particular reference to ensuring that accurate records are kept of all medication given to children and that staff adhere to the home's own policy on the receipt of medicines into the home.
- The use of external agency staff can be a positive choice to complement the skills and experiences of the permanent workforce. Any external agency staff should meet the requirements in regulation 32(4) regarding mandatory qualifications and the registered person should consider their skills, qualification and any induction necessary before they commence work in the home. The use of agency staff should be carefully monitored and reviewed to ensure children receive continuity of care. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 54, paragraph 10.16)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children enjoy living at this home. They enjoy this because the whole setting meets their communication and sensory needs. They have many opportunities for sensory play. They can also access different spaces, such as a tent, to reduce anxieties. The large garden has sensory plants, a swing and trampoline. There is a climbing frame for one child in particular. There is a sensory pebble pathway that children enjoy walking on.

The home is carefully designed and decorated, with children's individual needs in mind. Children and families choose how bedrooms are decorated. Sometimes rooms have very low stimulus, and this meets the children's needs related to their autism spectrum disorder.

Education outcomes are good. This is because children are well prepared for school. As soon as children wake up, staff start to think about how to prepare them to do well at school. Staff know the importance of a calm beginning to the day. They understand the impact on education if this does not happen. Staff recognise drivers and escorts as an

essential part of the wider staff team. Because children have good relationships with their drivers and escorts, transitions between home and school are good.

Staff celebrate and take pride in the achievements of the children. Even relatively small achievements are recognised as very important steps. For example, one of the children took many months to learn to take a plate to the kitchen. Because the achievement was celebrated, the child developed better self-esteem and her learning was reinforced.

Families spoke highly of the care that their children receive. They said that this has significantly improved their relationships and especially those with their siblings. This means the children and families feel supported. Families are involved in their children's care.

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

Staff know the children very well. They understand their individual methods of communication. This means that there are many opportunities for children to communicate and make their wishes and views known to staff. Staff act on children's views and wishes straight away. This enables children to trust the staff.

Because staff know the children's complex and specific needs so well, they are able to predict the children's behaviour and intervene well to keep them safe. Physical intervention is carried out appropriately and effectively when necessary to protect children.

The home environment is generally safe and well maintained. However, some minor damage was evident during the inspection. Most of this damage was promptly repaired during the inspection.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Managers have specialist knowledge of the children they look after. They research new areas and share this with their team. This means that the children are looked after by a skilled and knowledgeable staff team. Some training, such as physical intervention and safeguarding, is not specifically focused on children with disabilities. Staff said that training could be more specific to the children they look after so that they have the skills they need and confidence in their work.

Managers understand the strengths and weaknesses of the home. They know the importance of a consistent staff team. Managers support their team when there are staff shortages. This means that children are cared for by familiar staff, who maintain a consistent approach. Predictable and stable care arrangements reduce children's anxiety.

The home uses some agency staff. On occasion, when the information provided by the agency has not been detailed enough, managers have not raised this with the agency.

Managers need to ensure that any impact caused by changes in staff on the care of the children is minimal. This is because the children at this home rely on a consistent and predictable approach.

Team meetings have not taken place regularly. This means that staff have had fewer opportunities for peer support, to share information and to review as a team the progress of children.

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: 1251076

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: Emma Carrington

Registered manager: Paul White

Inspector

Simon Hunter, social care inspector

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