

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 individualised 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: 14 to 15 November 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 **outstanding**

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

Date of last inspection: 14 February 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: improved effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

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

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The four children have lived together in this home for over a year. They have personalised and structured routines. The routine and structure in the home helps the children to feel secure and settled. Staff use tools such as 'now and next' boards and social stories. These tools ensure that the children's choices are incorporated into their plans.

School attendance is good. The children only miss school if they have appointments or meetings that cannot be arranged during school holidays. Staff at the home are in regular contact with school staff. This ongoing communication ensures that the children receive consistent responses.

The children's interactions with staff include lots of fun and laughter. Staff are attuned and responsive to the children's differing needs and communication methods. This enables them to help the children to express their needs and emotions.

Staff pride themselves on working closely with health professionals. This partnership approach has been instrumental in managing children's medication, and in some cases has helped to reduce or stop medication.

Children are supported to access the emotional support and medical services that they require. The proactiveness of the staff recently enabled a child to receive medical treatment without delay. A parent stated that she has such trust in the staff and their care for her child that she allowed the treatment to occur in her absence.

Parents and professionals describe how pleased they are with the progress that the children are making. They highlight a reduction in the children's negative behaviours and an increased ability to socialise and complete tasks. This improvement has enabled children to have positive family visits and has improved relationships with their siblings.

Parents and professionals said that their desire is for the organisation to provide an adult service that the children could move on to. They said that their only worry relates to the adult provisions that the children will move on to, having had such a positive experience in the home.

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

Staff know the children so well that they can pre-empt many situations. These observations prevent incidents occurring or escalating.

They work in a non-risk-averse way and provide the children with the opportunity to try various activities such as swimming. These successes empower families to do similar activities, which they would not have previously attempted.

The use of physical intervention increased when one child was displaying very challenging behaviours. Following detailed analysis and reviews of the interventions, alternative strategies were identified. The child is now rarely held, as she uses these strategies to self-regulate her feelings.

The children's needs mean that they are always supervised by staff. The layout of the house enables this to happen without the staff presence overwhelming the children.

The sensory equipment is now more evenly distributed through the house. This provides additional spaces for children to relax and regulate their moods.

Children do not go missing from the home. Staff are aware of the protocol to follow should this ever occur when out in the community.

Staff receive training in a wide range of topics, to ensure that they recognise poor or unsafe practice and aspects of risk. They can describe how these topics are addressed in practice.

A recent incident at a child's school was observed, reported and followed through by one of the team. This vigilance demonstrates that the children's well-being is always the most important matter, even when the children are in someone else's care.

The two recommendations made at the last inspection have both been addressed. These related to the use of language when describing the children's behaviour and the oversight of the recordings of physical interventions.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The manager has several years of significant experience in residential care. He is suitably qualified and continues to be ambitious for the staff and children. All the staff are committed to improving the outcomes and life chances of the children. They all fondly refer to them as 'our children'.

The staff team are very positive about the managers. They describe them as motivating leaders. It is evident that their passion and advocacy for the children matches that of a caring parent. The staff are enthusiastic about their work.

Parents spoke favourably about the care their children receive. They praised the managers and said that all the staff love and care for their children as they do. A parent described their initial nervousness when their child moved in over a year ago. The parent said, 'It is home from home. I did not think it was going to be so fantastic.'

Staff are continually finding imaginative ways to improve the children's experiences. This includes arranging with a local store for shoe fittings to take place in a separate room. This arrangement minimised the anxiety for the children, as they can struggle with the crowds, noise and lighting when shopping.

They have also identified shops that participate in initiatives such as 'Autism Hour'. The staff's ongoing research into aspects of life that can be challenging for the children but that others take for granted is enabling the children to benefit from similar experiences to their peers.

The managers encourage the staff to work creatively to enhance the sensory experiences for the children. This includes adapting furniture and creating indoor and outdoor sensory spaces. They are also creating memory books that the children can take with them to remind them of their time living in this home.

A child and adolescent mental health worker said, 'I have developed a good relationship with the staff. They are always willing to try things out for the benefit of the children.' This openness to try different approaches means that the staff are continually learning and developing their practice.

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: Kenneth Farrimond

Registered manager: Paul White

Inspector

Sonia Hay, social care regulatory inspector

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