

1253501

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 operated by a private provider. It is registered to provide care for up to three children who have learning disabilities.

At the time of the inspection, there was one child was living at the home. The inspector spent time with the child during the inspection.

The home is led by an experienced registered manager.

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 November 2024

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
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The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: 13 February 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
13/02/2024	Full	Outstanding
13/02/2023	Full	Outstanding
14/12/2021	Full	Outstanding
19/12/2019	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

One child was living at the home during this inspection, and two children have left the home since the last inspection.

Children make exceptional progress. They often stay at the home for many years. Taking into consideration their learning disabilities, and complex healthcare needs, they make considerable developmental progress in all areas of their lives. The staff and children have trusting relationships, and this is the foundation for children to become settled, safe and make remarkable progress. This means disabled children with complex needs lead fulfilling and enriched lives.

Staff are dedicated and committed to children. The high-quality care promotes excellent outcomes for all children. The staff use their knowledge, skills and experience to meet the needs of the children in a nurturing manner. Staff morale is high, and staff enjoy working at the home. One staff member said, 'I just love my job, and I'm so happy working here; we're just like one big happy family.'

Staff have worked creatively and with resilience to develop effective means of communication with children. Specific learning disability training and research-informed practice ensure that staff remain skilled and knowledgeable. Children who previously did not communicate can now sign certain words to make their needs and wishes known. Children communicate with signs, symbols and pictures. These have led to significant improvements in communication and mean that children have a stronger voice in their own day-to-day care.

Staff have a thorough understanding of children's histories and reasons for being in care. This understanding helps staff to understand the children and build crucial relational bonds with them. One staff member said, 'We provide children with increased opportunities, like having their hair cut at the hairdressers, learning to sign and to use the toilet. This is such an achievement not only for the child to now be able to do this, but for us as the team enabling the child to achieve this.'

Staff support children to undertake a wide range of activities and to have a great deal of fun. Children experience things for the first time while living here, such as youth clubs, swimming, trips to the cinema, zoo and seaside. Careful planning and regular risk assessments in relation to activities mean there are no unnecessary barriers for disabled children. Children are very well prepared for new experiences through the extensive use of social stories, signs and symbols. Staff understand the importance of disabled children experiencing consistent and predictable routines, so this is fully embedded throughout children's bespoke care planning.

Children really enjoy spending time with their family. Staff have worked hard to show family members the best way to support the children. Working together in this way has allowed children's relationships with their families to strengthen.

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

Staff have a comprehensive understanding of the child's individual needs and vulnerabilities. Each child has a detailed risk assessment that is subject to regular review and updating by the manager and staff. These assessments are detailed and reflect the home's proactive approach in monitoring changes in children's presentation and potential risks. This ensures that any emerging concerns are promptly identified and addressed.

Children's complex health and behavioural needs mean that children's behaviour can be challenging for staff, at times. Staff are skilled at promoting positive behaviour and have embedded a consistent response on these occasions. Staff respond quickly to any potential risk to children or concerns with children's behaviour. They use de-escalation techniques well. Consequently, incidents are low in number, and they are managed effectively. This means that staff do not have to hold children as a means of managing behaviour.

Leaders are acutely aware of the additional safeguarding vulnerabilities and inherent risk factors for disabled children. Learning from research is a strength of the leadership team and is shared throughout the service. This includes through staff supervision sessions, team meetings, shift handovers and internal training events. Staff understand the importance of an open safeguarding culture. As a result, they know how to recognise, report and act on any safeguarding concerns they may have.

Staff are confident in their safeguarding roles and responsibilities, alerting managers to any concerns in adherence procedures and policies. Staff understand that their concerns will be taken seriously and acted on. One staff member said, 'Keeping children safe is our number one priority. It's my job to keep the children safe, and I take this seriously.'

Managers respond to any allegations against staff, in accordance with guidance. Records of investigations show a thorough approach to managing any concerns over staff conduct. When allegations have been made, managers work with safeguarding partners to ensure that information is shared, and investigations take place. Staff are also supported throughout this process. This process ensures that children are protected.

Children are well cared for and loved by staff who are sensitive to their needs. Secure relationships help children to regulate their emotions. Staff set good behavioural boundaries. Children do not go missing, and there is no need for behavioural sanctions.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The home is managed by a committed, motivated and nurturing leadership team. They are focused on improving outcomes for children. Leaders are forward looking to the next aspect of care that can be improved for children's overall well-being.

The outstanding care provided by this children's home is driven by an excellent manager. She has utilised her skills, knowledge and experience to promote excellent outcomes for children. She knows children well and has high aspirations for them. She has created a warm, loving, nurturing and therapeutic environment for the children. As a result, children feel safe and well cared for.

The management team offers good support and provides regular and reflective supervision to staff. This means that staff can reflect on their experiences, performance and professional development. Staff say they are well supported, listened to, and know they can always turn to the manager for help and guidance.

Staff training is of a high standard. Training is tailored to meet the specific needs of children. For example, staff attended Makaton safeguarding training, increasing their signing vocabulary to safeguard children, they also understand attachment and trauma, epilepsy and a range of important training that helps staff provide excellent care.

The manager has exceptional working processes alongside quality assurance mechanisms. The manager's oversight of the home allows all information to remain up to date. If needed, the manager will chase local authorities for information. Equally, she will advocate for children with external professionals to promote their needs or wishes. All this work enables the team to have all they need to provide optimal care for the children and promote excellent outcomes.

The leadership team works hard to develop and sustain commendable relationships with children's families and external agencies. Communication has been key in this area and the manager ensures that everyone is updated on a regular basis. Working this way allows individuals to feel valued and involved in the children's care. This has been fundamental in the positive moves from the home that children have experienced. One parent said, 'I would recommend them to any other parents who were looking for a provision like this. They have been absolutely brilliant.'

The manager has improved the induction process for staff, tailoring this specifically to equip her team with the skills and knowledge to support children with learning disabilities. Staff progress is regularly reviewed and any shortfalls in practice are met with a rigorous response and difficulties are worked through in a professional and accountable way. As a result, the quality of care for children remains consistent, which helps children to thrive.

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: 1253501

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: Daniel Goldie

Registered manager: Angelie Rankine

Inspector

Zoey Lee, Social Care Inspector

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