

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

This home provides placements for three children who have learning disabilities. The service is operated by a large national private provider.

Inspection dates: 24 to 25 July 2017

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: This was the home's first inspection since re-registration when the registered provider changed.

Overall judgement at last inspection: Not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection

None

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because:

- Children are enjoying new and positive experiences. They are making progress in all areas of their lives. Their school attendance is good and they are achieving in line with expectations. They develop social, life and independence skills that

will form the basis of a successful progression into adulthood.

- Children are active participants in the community and within the home. They take part in a variety of activities that improve their social skills and self-confidence. They have fun.
- Children have positive relationships with staff. As a result, children are happy and settled.
- Children can express their wishes and feelings. They help shape their experiences and care plans.
- Children are safe because staff know them well and understand their vulnerabilities. Staff assess risks effectively and provide appropriate strategies to minimise them.
- The manager is an effective, experienced and child-focused leader. He leads by example. He and the staff team are committed to promoting positive outcomes for children.

The children's home's areas for development:

- Children's plans do not always provide specific enough guidance for staff. This is particularly important in circumstances where a child may be deprived of their liberty.
- Staff do not always follow children's individual behaviour support plans. In addition, records do not always demonstrate why a particular behaviour management technique is used, making it difficult to understand how effective it is.
- All records need to be available and accessible during an inspection.

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

Statutory requirement

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(s) must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard requires the registered person to ensure— that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12 (2) (b)) In particular, ensure that staff behaviour management practice is consistent with guidance provided in each child's plan.	22/08/2017

Recommendations

- Restraint includes restricting a child's liberty of movement. This includes, for example, changes to the physical environment of the home (such as using high door handles) and removal of physical aids (such as turning off a child's electric wheelchair). Restrictions such as these, and all other restrictions of liberty of movement, should be recorded as restraint. Some children, perhaps due to impairment or disability, may not offer any resistance, but such measures should still constitute a restraint.

In particular, ensure that staff have clear and detailed guidance so that they understand in which circumstances an electric wheelchair can be turned off. ('Guide to the children's home regulations including the quality standards', page 47, paragraph 9.42)

- Some records may be kept electronically (regulation 38) provided that this information can be easily accessed by anyone with a legitimate need to view it and, if required, be reproduced in a legible form. Electronic records should be held at the individual home in accordance with data protection principles. IT systems should ensure the safe storage of these records and business continuity planning should be in place to prevent loss or damage to them. ('Guide to the

children's home regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 14.2)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children have lots of new experiences. Recently they have thoroughly enjoyed attending a pop concert, a trip to the beach and a ride on a train. Children regularly go swimming and to the library to choose books to read. The big emphasis on providing a wide range of activities enables children to make a positive contribution to their community. It also helps them become healthier and develop life and social skills.

Children make good progress in all aspects of their development. They all have appropriate educational placements and their attendance is excellent. Staff meet children's healthcare needs well and access appropriate services as necessary. In respect of the progress made by one child, their social worker said: 'He has become more confident and chatty.'

Children respond well to the clear guidance, boundaries and expectations provided by the staff team. A parent commented: 'My child will sit at the table with us now. I would never have believed that. It's just amazing.' Children become more able to manage transition times, for instance travelling by taxi from the home to school. Children are in good routines and are encouraged by staff to develop life skills, such as eating with a fork.

Care planning is individualised, and staff ensure that children play a full role in developing their care plans. Staff use social stories to help children to understand what is happening and prepare them for any activities or events. Achievements are celebrated. Each child has their own board which has their weekly planner and pictures of recent events enjoyed. Certificates are on display, and each child has a memory book full of pictures that they take with them when they leave the home.

Children's rooms are personalised and well equipped with toys and books to play and learn with. The home benefits from a large garden with a trampoline. Children love being outside and getting themselves and staff wet through water play.

Children enjoy quality contact with their family and people who are important to them. As a result of children's improved behaviour and social skills, family relationships improve. A parent described the 'quality time' she now spends with her child.

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

Children are safe in this home. They have warm and trusting relationships with staff which enable them to feel safe and secure. Staff know the children well and understand their vulnerabilities and complex needs. This enables them to make comprehensive risk assessments that inform appropriate strategies to minimise any risks. Children do not go missing from the home. However, staff have a good understanding of the procedures to follow if this were to happen.

Staff usually manage behaviour well. They have a good understanding of the triggers

which may lead to episodes of challenging behaviour by children. Written support plans provide guidance to staff so that behaviour is managed appropriately. In one instance, however, this guidance was not clear enough to help staff understand when they can turn off the power to a child's electric wheelchair. This information is extremely important, as inappropriate use of this method of restraint could infringe on the child's liberty of movement. On one occasion, a 'time out' behaviour management technique was used with a child, which was not consistent with their behaviour support plan. The recording of the incident lacked detail about what happened prior to, during and after the event. This limits the manager's capacity to understand why the technique was used and whether it infringed on the child's liberty.

Health and safety procedures, such as regular testing of fire safety equipment, ensure that the home is a safe environment.

The procedures for the recruitment of staff are robust and result in the appointment of people who, as far as can be ascertained, are safe and suitable to work with children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

A very experienced and knowledgeable manager leads the home effectively. He is also the registered manager of a children's home next door. A deputy manager supports him in his role, which ensures that there is appropriate management oversight at the home. The manager and his senior team have a good understanding of the home's strengths and weaknesses. For example, they had already identified, prior to the inspection, that the quality of record keeping is an area for improvement.

The manager has good monitoring systems which ensure that he is fully aware of the progress children are making. His knowledge and experience of working with disabled children is evident in his reflective and evaluative comments, which in turn help staff to understand better how to care for the children living in the home.

Staff use a consistent and caring approach towards children. A social worker said, 'They are clued up in terms of my child's needs and are proactive. They have tried to go above and beyond.' Staff have access to a training programme, which enables them to meet the specific needs of the children living in the home effectively. A staff member stated: 'Any training we need, we get.' The management team supports staff well through one-to-one supervision and team meetings. Staff work in close partnership with other agencies with the aim of achieving the best possible outcomes for children.

During the inspection, two paper copies of incident records were not available. The electronic copies were also unavailable due to a change of computer system. As a result, the inspector was unable to scrutinise all records thoroughly during the inspection. This also means that there is not a full and accurate record of some children's time living at the home.

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 difference 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. Whenever 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 and 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, Unit 12, Prospect Business Park,
Longford Road, Cannock WS11 0LG

Responsible individual: Ann-Cheri Callow

Registered manager: Paul White

Inspector

Catherine Honey, Social care inspector

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