

1258089

Registered provider: Horizon Care and Education Group Limited

Interim inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A private company operates and runs this home. It was registered in February 2018, to provide care for up to four children or young people whose plan is to live in a medium- to long-term residential setting. There is only one child in placement currently. This is due to a leadership response in the absence of a manager. The home has been without a registered manager since August 2018. Three managers have been appointed but have not stayed more than a few months. A further manager has very recently been appointed and commenced in post on 22 February 2019. The provider is confident that she will commit to the home and make improvements.

Inspection date: 14 March 2019

Judgement at last inspection: good

Date of last inspection: 11 June 2018

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

This inspection

The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection

This home was judged good at the last full inspection.

At the interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has declined in effectiveness.

There has been instability in the staff and management team, and this has negatively affected the children and young people. At times, the staff have had no clear direction or practice guidance. This has affected the implementation of routines and boundaries for the children and young people. The newly appointed manager has started to take control and instigate changes to develop the home. The manager's approach is resulting in positive outcomes for the one child who remains living there. For example, there are improvements in the child's attendance in education, and she is enjoying participating in

activities, including swimming and horse riding.

The staff are talking to the child about pertinent issues. As a result, the child is receiving guidance and support in areas of her life that she is finding challenging. The key-work sessions are creative and embrace the involvement of the child. For example, the child completed an excellent poster about online safety.

There have been shortfalls in staffing at the home, leading to a lack of stability and consistent care for the children and young people. The management has addressed these staff shortages through the use of agency staff. There has been an increase in the number of significant incidents at the home. The staff have not de-escalated incidents effectively, and this has resulted in the children and young people's behaviours escalating. The staff have relied on the police to manage incidents, but the regulator has not consistently been informed.

On one occasion when the children and young people have made allegations against staff, the internal record of the investigation has not been recorded. This leaves a significant gap in the home's evidence as to whether the manager has taken effective action to investigate and ensure that children and young people remain safeguarded. However, since the manager's appointment, experienced staff members have been recruited, and no further staff members have left.

The children and young people have been missing from home. The staff have taken appropriate action to locate them and ensure their safe return. However, the children and young people are not routinely provided with an independent return-home interview. This is a missed opportunity for the provider to ensure that children and young people's safety and well-being are prioritised. Additionally, the home's location risk assessment is not updated with the relevant information that could aid the protection of the children and young people.

The children and young people have experienced both planned and emergency transition from and into the home. Poor matching has resulted in the escalation of risk-taking behaviours and limited the children and young people's progress and outcomes. Emergency discharges from the home have occurred when staff have been unable to manage children and young people's challenging behaviours. However, in contrast to these transitions from the home, one child experienced a positive planned move back to her parent's care. Lessons have been learned, and the manager has a clear plan for future admissions.

The manager is enthusiastic and passionate about the potential for improvement at the home. She has created a development plan and is confident that things are improving. Internal and external monitoring reports have lacked consultation. The manager has taken steps to rebuild the relationships with professionals, thus improving partnership working. There is an increased level of communication and information sharing to enable the needs of the children and young people to be met.

The manager is supporting her staff to be confident in their roles and has held group

supervision to address practice issues. There remain gaps in the frequency and implementation of supervision and annual appraisals. The manager has strategies to address this and further support her team.

There have been some developments towards the requirement and recommendations set at the last inspection. However, notifications continue not to be sent to the regulator, and the staff require further training to support their practice. This is with particular reference to county lines and criminal exploitation.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/06/2018	Full	Good

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person 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— ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b)(2)(e))	09/05/2019
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 (2)(a)) This is with particular reference to the need to consult with children, young people, staff and parents regarding the	09/05/2019

experience of and the care provided by the home.	
In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating— the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it. The system referred to in paragraph (2) must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff. (Regulation 45 (2)(b)(5))	09/05/2019
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(b)) This is with particular reference to all notifiable events being shared with the regulator.	09/05/2019
The procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation of abuse or neglect must, in particular— provide for records to be kept of an allegation of abuse or neglect, and the action taken in response. (Regulation 34 (2)(d))	09/05/2019
The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b))	09/05/2019

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff can access appropriate facilities and resources to support their training needs, and should understand the key role they play in the training and development of staff in the home ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.11). This is with particular reference to staff training on 'county lines' and criminal exploitation.
- When establishing the home, the registered person must ensure that it is suitably located so that children are effectively safeguarded and can access services to meet needs identified in their relevant plans (see regulation 12(2)(c)). Under regulation 46, the registered person should review the appropriateness and suitability of the location and premises of the home at least once a year. The review should include the identification of any risks and opportunities presented by the home's location and strategies for managing these. Providers should refer to the non-statutory advice about the location assessment process: 'Children's

homes regulation amendments 2014: Advice for children's homes providers on new duties under regulations that came in to effect in January and April 2014'. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 64, paragraph 15.1)

- When a child returns to the home after being missing-from-care or away from the home without permission, the responsible local authority must provide an opportunity for the child to have an independent return home interview. Homes should take account of information provided by such interviews when assessing risks and putting arrangements in place to protect each child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.3)
- The registered person must have systems in place so that all staff, including the manager, receive supervision of their practice from an appropriately qualified and experienced professional, which allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children assigned to their care. Professionally qualified staff employed by the home, e.g. teachers or social workers, should be provided with relevant professional or clinical supervision by an appropriately qualified and experienced professional. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)
- All staff must have their performance and fitness to carry out their role formally appraised at least once annually. This appraisal should take into account, where reasonable and practical, the views of other professionals who have worked with the staff member over the year and children in the home's care. As part of the performance management process, poor performance should be addressed by a timely plan to bring about improvement. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.5)

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.

This inspection focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

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: 1258089

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: Matthew Fisher

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Jennifer Fenlon, social care inspector

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