

1258434

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 is owned by a private company. It is registered to provide care for up to four children with social and emotional difficulties.

The registered manager's post is vacant following the previous manager leaving on 7 November 2023. A new responsible individual came into post in October 2023, following the previous responsible individual leaving in July 2023.

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 January 2024

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	inadequate
---	-------------------

How well children and young people are helped and protected	inadequate
---	------------

The effectiveness of leaders and managers	inadequate
---	------------

There are serious and/or widespread failures that mean the care and experiences of children and young people are poor.

Date of last inspection: 8 February 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
08/02/2023	Full	Outstanding
11/01/2022	Full	Good
05/11/2019	Full	Good
12/02/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

In October 2023, the provider informed Ofsted that significant concerns had been shared with them regarding staff's practice, a rodent infestation and the condition of the environment. Once the provider became aware of the concerns, they took action to temporarily close the home and suspend the manager and staff team. As a result, the three children living in the home experienced unplanned endings.

Following the provider's decision to temporarily close the home, the provider informed Ofsted of their intention to investigate the concerns that had been identified and undertake works to address the environment. This provider informed Ofsted that the works at the home were due to be completed in December 2024.

Since the previous inspection, there has been a change in the leadership and management of the home. The previous registered manager left in November 2023, following significant shortfalls being identified. This post remains vacant. The home has a new responsible individual who recently joined the company and acknowledges the failures in the care that had been provided to children. Leaders have been unable to successfully recruit a new manager and staff team. Following this inspection, the provider took the decision to voluntarily cancel the registration for this home.

At the time of this inspection, no children were living at the home. The inspection identified serious and widespread failures in the care planning and safeguarding arrangements for children and the leadership and management of the home.

Children lived in an unsafe and unhealthy environment. Managers and staff did not take action to address a rodent infestation, significant damage in the home and children's intermittent access to hot water as a result of a faulty boiler. Senior leaders were unaware of these concerns until they were raised by a whistle-blower. They have since taken action to improve the quality of the environment.

The previous manager did not always adequately assess if staff were able to meet the needs of children before they move into the home. This resulted in one child being placed in the home when their needs were not fully known. This contributed to another child, who was settled, becoming unsettled, and this all consequently had a negative impact on both children's experiences, progress and safety.

Staff supported children to access education and attend full time.

Staff supported children to maintain important relationships with family members, relatives and carers and understand the importance of children spending meaningful time with their families. They communicated with external professionals to review and update the family time arrangements for children.

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

The previous manager did not have sufficient oversight of staff practice in the home. Children were exposed to unnecessary restrictions. Staff had been locking doors, restricting children's movements around their home. There was no information within children's plans or risk assessments to reflect the need for this restriction. As a result, children's liberties had been deprived, and they had not been supported well when they become distressed.

The previous manager failed to ensure that all staff working in the home had undertaken the mandatory training needed to respond to children's needs. As a result, three members of staff had not undertaken the home's mandatory physical intervention training, one of whom has been involved in restraining children. This practice potentially compromised children's safety.

The previous manager did not consider all the risks relevant to each child. For example, the manager failed to consider the impact of one child living in close proximity to family members. As a result, risk assessments did not reflect the potential risk to the child, and staff were not provided with relevant information and guidance to keep children safe. This poor approach to the assessment of risk prevented actions from being put in place to protect children and negatively impacted on the stability of children's placements.

Staff records of safeguarding incidents did not contain full information of all actions taken. For example, no records were available to review at this inspection of incidents that led to doors being locked within the home.

Children were not always made aware of the outcome of the allegations or concerns they report. This does not reassure children that managers hear and understand their concerns and will take action to address them.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

Leaders and the previous managers' monitoring of the home was insufficient. They have failed to consistently identify shortfalls in practice and in the quality of care delivered to children. This means there were missed opportunities to develop practice and improve the care that children receive. Leaders and managers' ineffective oversight contributed to the significant deterioration of the quality of care and environment. However, once senior leaders became aware of the concerns they made the decision that the home was unfit for children to live in and that the children had to leave their home. Leaders and managers have since undertaken an investigation into the deterioration of the quality of care and environment to learn lessons and they have implemented an action plan to improve the environment.

Leaders did not provide the previous registered manager with regular supervision sessions in line with the home's statement of purpose. No supervision sessions were undertaken for six months. This was a missed opportunity to have oversight of the

quality of care provided to children and to reflect on development needs that ensure that the competency of staff was adequately assessed. As a result, some staff did not have access to specific mandatory training that ensures that they had the skills needed to understand and meet children's needs.

Leaders have been unable to successfully recruit a new manager and staff team. Following this inspection, the provider took the decision to voluntarily cancel the registration for this home.

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

Statutory requirements

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 in paragraph requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies; 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; that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(iii)(vi)(vii)(b)(d)) In particular, the registered person should: ensure that full information is requested before children transition into the home. This will enable	23 February 2024

associated risks to be considered and risk assessments to be put in place to reduce the risk of harm to the child and children living in the home ■ ensure that the health and safety and fire risk assessments are kept up to date to ensure that the home remains safe for children to live in ■ ensure that staff are trained in the agency's model of physical intervention to enable them to have the required knowledge and skills to respond when children are at risk of harm and/or to reduce the risk of harm.	
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(b) (2)(c)(h)) In particular, the registered person should ensure that: ■ staff complete the agency's mandatory training to ensure they have the skills to meet children's needs ■ they have systems in place to monitor, review and update practice to ensure the quality of care and the home environment continue to meet the needs of children living there.	23 February 2024
Restraint in relation to a child is only permitted for the purpose of preventing— injury to any person (including the child); serious damage to the property of any person (including the child); or a child who is accommodated in a secure children's home from absconding from the home.	23 February 2024

Restraint in relation to a child must be necessary and proportionate. (Regulation 20 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)) In particular, the registered person should ensure that children are not restricted from areas of their home and deprived of their liberty without the agreement of a court order.	
The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— understand the children’s home’s overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; use this understanding to deliver care that meets children’s needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— provide to children living in the home the physical necessities they need in order to live there comfortably. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(vii) (4)(b))	23 February 2024
The registered person must maintain records (“case records”) for each child which— include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child; are kept up to date; and are signed and dated by the author of each entry. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b)(c)) The registered person should ensure that children’s records, including risk assessments and safeguarding incidents, contain accurate, up-to-date and legible information.	23 February 2024

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: 1258434

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Horizon Care and Education Group Limited

Registered provider address: Unit 12, Venture House, Prospect Business Park,
Longford Road, Cannock, Staffordshire WS11 0LG

Responsible individual: Rachael Sharpe

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Sharon Bourne, Social Care Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2024