

2532036

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 privately owned home is registered to provide care for up to three children who may have learning disabilities and emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in March 2021.

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

We last visited this setting on 3 December 2020 to carry out an assurance visit. The report is published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection dates: 29 to 30 September 2021

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 25 July 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
25/07/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are happy living in the home and said that the care they receive is '10 out of 10'. Staff work hard to develop positive relationships with children. Some children benefit from long-term, stable placements. When children have moved into the home on an emergency basis, the manager has carefully considered the impact of children living together and the suitability of the staff team's skills to be able to meet the child's needs.

Social workers said that children make good progress while living in the home. Children have improved their self-esteem and confidence and matured emotionally. Staff encourage children to engage in regular fun activities and key-work sessions to help children build trusting relationships with the adults around them.

Children are, overall, healthy and encouraged to attend routine appointments. Staff access additional agencies to help children with their health needs, such as substance misuse. However, on one occasion when a child had potentially sustained an injury following an accident but refused to attend hospital, staff did not advocate on behalf of the child to obtain medical guidance from appropriate healthcare services or NHS direct.

Some children are progressing well in education and regularly attend their preferred traineeships or college courses. Children are encouraged to have future aspirations. For example, one child is attending a national citizen course in the summer holidays. Where children are resistant to attending school, the staff team promotes regular school attendance through incentive charts, regular educational meetings, and focused key-work sessions to explore children's barriers to learning. All children's achievements are celebrated, no matter how small they may be.

The manager promotes a diverse and inclusive environment. Children are respected. Staff are sensitive and responsive to children's identities, encouraging them to express their individuality. Children are encouraged to develop safe and positive friendships with their peers. They also attend groups or youth clubs specific to their interests and identity.

The home environment is relaxed, comfortable and personalised to children's wishes. Improvements have been made to the décor of the home since the last visit. However, one of the children's bathrooms requires replacing to the standard of the rest of the home and to ensure that it is fit for purpose. That said, there are plans scheduled for the refurbishment of this second bathroom later in the year.

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

Children feel safe living at the home. When children have become unsettled and engaged in risk-taking behaviour, the staff team has used their positive relationships to educate children to make safer choices. In addition, the manager actively

challenges other professionals' decisions if the child's safety may be compromised because of this decision.

Children are not criminalised. The staff team rarely contacts the police to manage any incidents. Any involvement of the police has been appropriate to keep children and staff safe. Staff use effective de-escalation strategies to support children to reduce any risk-taking behaviour and, because of this, restraint has not been used in the home.

The manager and staff have a good understanding of the risks for children. They work in accordance with agreed strategies to minimise risks and maintain children's safety. Risk assessments are child focused and contain an up-to-date chronology of behaviour. This means that staff are consistent in their approach to safeguarding children.

When children go missing from home, staff are extremely proactive in their approach to reduce any further incidents. Staff actively search for children and liaise with families and other known associates to quickly locate children. The staff team completes regular welfare checks and encourages children to be open about who they are spending their time with. This has helped to keep any missing-from-home incidents to a minimum.

Allegations and complaints are responded to thoroughly and managed without delay. There is a zero-tolerance approach to bullying. Bullying is not allowed to develop in the home and children are taught to respect each other. Direct work helps children to recognise the impact that bullying can have on others and develops their resilience to any bullying they may experience out of the home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is passionate about achieving positive outcomes and change for children. She has good relationships with the children and knows them very well. She is a positive role model to the staff team, advocating on behalf of the children to ensure that their views are listened to and considered when planning their care.

Staff are supported by a manager who recognises the strengths and weaknesses of the service and plans against these to make improvements to the operation of the home. She promotes transparency to ensure that staff are confident should they need to raise any concerns they have about the care provided to children.

The manager sets high expectations in relation to engaging children in daily routines, regular education, and social activities. This is reflected in the team's proactive approach to motivate children to invest in their placements. One child is struggling to engage with the plans in place to meet their care needs, due to the uncertainty of their placement. The manager has not escalated her concerns beyond the child's social worker, with respect to the impact this is having on the child's commitment to their placement. The manager should obtain a clear plan from the

placing authority as to whether the child will continue to live at the home, so the staff team can support the child to develop a sense of permanency at the home.

The staff team is trained to support the therapeutic element of children's placements on a day-to-day basis. However, in line with the home's statement of purpose and as proposed in one child's risk assessment, the team has not been provided with regular consultations in recent months from the company's clinical team. The manager should work with the clinical team and senior managers to ensure that this is implemented, so the staff team is provided with additional guidance to support the child's emotional well-being.

There is a stable and experienced staff team in place, providing continuity of care to children. Regular practice-related supervisions and team meetings are used as opportunities to reflect on approaches to safeguarding, lessons learned from the management of incidents and children's changing needs. The manager ensures that staff receive up-to-date training, including courses that are specific to children's needs and creative opportunities to aid additional learning for staff.

The manager's review of the quality-of-care report provides a thorough account of the progress children have made. The manager obtains regular feedback from children and staff about their experiences of the home. In addition to this, the manager completes a monthly audit of records and systems to ensure that there is good management oversight and action taken to address any shortfalls identified.

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
In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff— if the registered person considers, or staff consider, a placing authority's or a relevant person's performance or response to be inadequate in relation to their role, challenge the placing authority or the relevant person to seek to ensure that each child's needs are met in accordance with the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 5 (c))	29 October 2021
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— lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a))	29 October 2021

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that children's homes are nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of their children. They will, in most cases, be homely, domestic environments. Homes should seek as far as possible to maintain a domestic rather than 'institutional' impression. Specifically, children's bathrooms should be fit for purpose, homely and the décor in keeping with the good standard of the rest of the home. ('Guide to the children's home regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

- The registered person should ensure that staff have sufficient understanding of relevant health services. They should support children to navigate these services, advocating on their behalf where necessary and appropriate. Specifically, staff should access appropriate healthcare services, such as NHS direct, to seek advice when children sustain injuries and they have refused to be seen by a medical professional. ('Guide to the children's home regulations, including the quality standards', page 34, paragraph 7.8)

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: 2532036

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Horizon Care and Education Group Limited

Registered provider address: Horizon Care and Education Group Limited,
Venture House, Unit 12 Prospect Business Park, Longford Road, Cannock WS11 0LG

Responsible individual: Paul Smith

Registered manager: Michelle Taylor

Inspector

Cheryl Field, Social Care Inspector

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