

2573144

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 large private provider. It provides care for two children with complex emotional needs.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since May 2020 and is suitably qualified and experienced.

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021.

We last visited this setting on 14 October 2020 to carry out an assurance visit. The report is published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection dates: 6 to 7 January 2022

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: not applicable

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: not applicable

Recent inspection history

Not previously inspected

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

One child was living in the home at the time of this inspection.

Children have good relationships with staff that develop over time and are reliable for them. However, when some staff leave employment at the home, they do not always tell children until near the time they are leaving. This does not give children time to process the loss of important relationships. This is not in line with the therapeutic approach outlined in the home's statement of purpose.

Children make progress in their education. Staff are persistent in supporting children who have been out of education. This means that children have re-engaged with their learning. Staff also support children to consider their next steps after they finish school. As a result, one child is applying to a university to follow their academic interests.

Staff help children to develop independence skills. Children have confidence in areas such as budgeting and cooking. In addition, they are certain that staff will support them in the future if they need it. Staff also encourage children with age-appropriate activities. For example, one child is learning to drive. Staff work hard to make sure that when children leave the home, this is successful. Staff stay in touch with children who they have long-standing relationships with and are exceptionally proud of their achievements. This helps children to connect to their past.

Staff advocate for children and work closely with the other professionals in their lives. This means that children experience joined-up support for their emotional needs. Staff are also committed to children staying in touch with people who are important to them. For example, staff willingly drive children long distances so they can see their families and friends. Staff have also supported children in their reintroductions to their families and offered support to help this be successful. This emphasises the commitment that staff have to children and their long-term relationships.

Children live in a homely and well-maintained environment. The home has a newly refitted kitchen and bathroom, which has improved the facilities for children. When children express their feelings through damage to the home, the registered manager acts quickly to make repairs. This is a continual reminder to children that they deserve a nice place to live and grow up in.

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

The registered manager is clear about her expectations of staff. When necessary, she carries out investigations into concerns and ensures that actions resulting from these are clear and embedded in practice. This enables a culture of high expectations that staff work hard to meet.

Staff only physically intervene with children when there is no other choice. When this is unavoidable, they act quickly and safely to keep children safe. However, the quality of records is variable, and the registered manager has planned a session to support staff to develop their recording skills. This will result in better-quality records for children.

The registered manager considers all known information about children before they move into the home. She also considers the skills and experience of staff and uses her extensive knowledge of other children in the home. This means that she ensures that there is no conflict between children's individual needs and decisions are child-focused. There are occasions when the registered manager is not provided with all the known information about children that is required to make these decisions. In these circumstances, staff work hard to adapt their approach to keep children safe. Where this is not possible, and children need to move on from the home, the registered manager makes decisions with all the children's best interests and safety in mind.

Staff have effective skills to work with children's challenging needs. For example, staff managed to support one child to stop smoking in the home, which put others at risk. Staff are also skilled and resilient in working with children who may pose a risk to others through their behaviour. As a result of staff skills and experience, some children live in the home for many years and have good prospects for their future.

When children do not feel safe, they talk to staff about this. One child was able to share information with staff about an immediate risk to life. Staff and registered managers acted quickly, including liaising with the police, to ensure everyone's safety. This shows children that staff are trustworthy and will act in their best interests.

The registered manager completes a regular assessment of the location of the home. She has also assessed an area that one child visits regularly to see friends. This helps staff to understand any risks in that area. However, this regular assessment is not consistently informed by the views of other professionals. This weakens the overall picture of the location of the home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is committed to the children in her care. She has a strong reflective capacity to consider children's difficulties. The registered manager shares this reflective knowledge with staff and children. This enables her to have honest, positive relationships with them.

The registered manager has a structured system to oversee the activity of the home. This gives her a good view of the care children receive. The registered manager also asks other managerial colleagues to review incidents. This provides quality assurance of her oversight of how staff work with children. This approach

supports the registered manager and staff to develop their practice as they strive to provide the best for children.

Staff receive regular supervision from the senior staff in the home. They appreciate this time to consider their work and their development. Staff are clear that the registered manager is approachable and supportive and has high standards and expectations. The registered manager uses team meetings to make her expectations clear, and these are useful opportunities for the team to talk and develop together.

The registered manager is clear that staff should have relevant qualifications and be well trained to support children. As a result, all permanent staff have the required qualification for their role and are up to date with all relevant training. This means that children receive care from staff who have the knowledge and skills to meet their needs and keep them safe.

The registered manager informs Ofsted about serious incidents. There are some occasions where notifications should have been more timely. No child was left at risk of harm because of this delay, but the system in place to ensure that this happens did not work on these occasions.

The registered manager makes person-centred decisions that are in the children's best interests. For example, a child has recently stayed at the home past the age of 18 as their next home was not ready at the agreed time. The registered manager was clear in her rationale for this young person to stay in the home and she risk assessed it well. She also ensured that staff used the opportunity to continue to support the development of the child's important life skills. This led to an exceptionally positive ending to the child's time in the home after several years and an excellent transition to the next phase of their life.

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 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— ensure that staff— understand and apply the home's statement of purpose. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(i)) In particular, the registered manager should ensure that staff understand the impact of their decisions to leave the home in the context of the underpinning approach of the home outlined in the statement of purpose.	18 February 2022

Recommendations

- The registered manager should ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies on record keeping, and ensure that recording is professional, clear and well presented. ('Guide to children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)
- The registered manager should ensure that notifications to Ofsted are made in a timely manner. ('Guide to children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 63, paragraph 14.13)
- The registered manager should ensure that there is sufficient consultation with relevant stakeholders and local services when reviewing the appropriateness and suitability of the location of the home. ('Guide to children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 64, paragraph 15.1)

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: 2573144

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: Rebecca Grimshaw

Registered manager: Kate Whitehouse

Inspector

Karol Keenan, Social Care Inspector

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