

2578355

Registered provider: Horizon Care and Education Group Limited

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is part of a large private organisation. The home cares for up to four children who may have social and emotional difficulties. One child was living at the home at the time of the inspection.

Inspection date: 2 September 2025

Date of last inspection: 29 April 2025

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Information about this inspection

At this inspection, the inspector evaluated:

- the care of children
- the safety of children
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers.

The inspector has looked closely at the experiences and progress of children, using the social care common inspection framework. This assurance 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'.

Findings from the inspection

Widespread concerns were identified during this assurance inspection regarding the care and protection of children.

At the time of the inspection, one child was living in the home. Two children had previously moved out following the provider's decision to end their placements. These decisions were influenced by poor planning and insufficient consideration of the children's needs prior to admission. The endings were not positive, as both placements concluded after short durations. Neither child made measurable progress during their time at the home.

The communal areas of the home are well decorated and maintained. However, the child's bedroom requires attention. The carpet and walls are stained and worn. During the inspection, staff were observed assisting the child with cleaning their bedroom.

Staff are not proactive in supporting the child's health needs. Although concerns about weight loss were identified in the child's looked-after child's medical assessments, staff failed to monitor this effectively. Support from health services was only sought after the issue was raised by the independent visitor several months later, resulting in a delay in the child receiving appropriate healthcare.

The child's case file does not contain the most recent statutory documentation. Staff have not taken reasonable steps to obtain these documents from the local authority. This limits the ability of managers and staff to provide care that aligns with the child's care plan and statutory responsibilities.

Staff do not demonstrate sufficient professional curiosity in response to self-injurious behaviours. Efforts to remove items that could be used to cause harm are inconsistent and, at times, ineffective. On one occasion, the police were required to attend and remove items from the child's bedroom that staff had failed to act on. This does not demonstrate effective safeguarding practice.

When the child leaves the home without permission, staff do not consistently follow agreed protocols. This results in varied responses and delays in returning the child to safety.

The home has been without a registered manager since the last inspection. Interim management arrangements have been poor and ineffective, involving multiple managers and leaders. Despite the instability, a manager has only been physically present in the home for up to eleven days each month. This has limited the support and consistency available to both the child and staff.

Monitoring and review systems are ineffective and do not challenge poor staff practice. Supervision is sporadic and, when it does occur, lacks quality and depth.

Managers miss opportunities to address practice concerns and do not provide staff with meaningful reflective space. Notifications of significant events have frequently been submitted to Ofsted following delays, undermining the effectiveness of external oversight and safeguarding assurance.

Management oversight is not consistently robust. Leaders failed to respond appropriately to concerns raised by the child about a staff member's practice. These concerns were not explored with the child or shared with relevant professionals, including the local authority designated officer and the child's social worker. Action to investigate the concerns was only taken after they were raised by the independent visitor more than two weeks later.

Staff sometimes implement punitive measures when managing behaviour. On one occasion, the child reported being ignored by a staff member following an incident, which caused them to feel unsafe and anxious.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
29/04/2025	Full	Requires improvement to be good
05/11/2024	Full	Good
18/06/2024	Full	Inadequate
22/05/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good

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, The 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 (1) 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; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(iii)(v))	20 October 2025
*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— understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality	20 October 2025

of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(f))	
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)) This particularly refers to poor planning and impact consideration when children move in and out of the home.	20 October 2025
The registered person must ensure that all employees— undertake appropriate continuing professional development; receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience; and have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (4)(b)) This particularly refers to managers and staff not having regular and meaningful supervision.	20 October 2025
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. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b)) This refers to children's most up-to-date local authority documents not being available or on their case file.	20 October 2025
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation; an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious;	20 October 2025

there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there; a child protection enquiry involving a child— is instigated; or concludes (in which case, the notification must include the outcome of the child protection enquiry); or there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(a)(b)(c)(d)(i)(ii)(e)) This particularly refers to notifiable incidents being referred late into Ofsted.	
The registered person must ensure that — No measure of control or discipline which is excessive, unreasonable or contrary to paragraph (2) may be used in relation to any child. The following measures may not be used to discipline any child— any form of corporal punishment; any punishment involving the consumption or deprivation of food or drink; any restriction, other than one imposed by a court or in accordance with regulation 22 (contact and access to communications), on— a child's contact with parents, relatives or friends; visits to the child by the child's parents, relatives or friends; a child's communications with any persons listed in regulation 22(1) (contact and access to communications); or a child's access to any internet-based or telephone helpline providing counselling for children; the use or withholding of medication, or medical or dental treatment; the intentional deprivation of sleep;	26 September 2025

imposing a financial penalty, other than a requirement for the payment of a reasonable sum (which may be by instalments) by way of reparation; any intimate physical examination; withholding any aids or equipment needed by a disabled child; any measure involving a child imposing any measure against another child; or any measure involving punishing a group of children for the behaviour of an individual child. (Regulation 19 (1) (2)(a)(b)(c)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(d)(e)(f)(g)(h)(i)(j)) This specifically relates to staff using punitive measures to implement consequences on the children.	
--	--

*These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 2578355

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Horizon Care and Education Group Limited

Registered provider address: C/O DWF Company Secretarial Services Limited, 1 Scott Place 2 Hardman Street, Manchester M3 3AA

Responsible individual:

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Latoya Morgan, 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://reports.ofsted.gov.uk>.

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 2025