

2578355

Registered provider: Horizon Care and Education Group Limited

Full 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.

The registered manager's post has been vacant since 25 April 2024. A manager was appointed on 1 May 2024. They have not yet submitted their application to register with Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 18 and 19 June 2024

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	inadequate
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	inadequate
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	inadequate
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There are serious and widespread failures that mean children and young people are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded and the care and experiences of children and young people are poor and they are not making progress.

Date of last inspection: 22 May 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
22/05/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
05/07/2022	Full	Good
13/04/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

One child lives at the home. Since the last inspection, three children have moved on from the home. Their experiences and progress of living at the home were mixed. One child made good progress and returned to live with their previous carers. The other two children made limited progress, and they requested to move on from the home.

Managers and staff do not support children effectively to develop good routines that help them to engage in learning during the school day. For example, there are no educational activities offered and provided to the child by staff outside the few hours of online learning that they have. This lack of encouragement and structure does not support the child to meet their academic targets.

Not all aspects of children's health are well understood by staff. For example, managers have not explored information about the child's potential health needs. They did not consult relevant professionals to satisfy themselves that the child does not need ongoing support with these needs.

The home environment is not well maintained. There was a strong and unpleasant smell from the upstairs bathroom, which has been an ongoing issue since January 2024. This was only fully addressed during the inspection when the inspectors brought this to the attention of a senior manager. Some exterior walls to the front of the home are covered with mould. Staff said that this issue has been raised with managers but not addressed. Shortfalls in the standard of accommodation do not help children to feel cared for and valued.

The child said that staff are kind and that she is able to express her wishes and feelings to them. The child has developed positive relationships with some staff.

Staff support the child to spend quality time with close family and friends. She values this support, and it helps her to stay connected with people who are important to her.

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

Leaders and managers have not taken learning from when there were concerning risks of child exploitation. For example, a child had to move on from the home because staff could not meet their needs safely. The child suffered harm while living at the home and had to move to a specialist provision. However, managers then arranged for a new child to move into the home who had similarly complex needs. Assessments of this child's needs failed to fully consider how staff would be able to

meet them. Shortfalls in care planning and decision-making do not promote children's welfare and safety.

Some fire doors in the home are not in good condition, and this has not been addressed promptly. This has the potential to compromise children's and staff's safety in the event of a fire emergency.

Monitoring and surveillance systems are not assessed for risk, and staff are not clear about their use. Some staff are confused as to whether CCTV cameras are operational, how CCTV is managed and whether children's social workers have consented to its use. In addition, managers and staff gave conflicting information about the use of bedroom door alarms and whether this is individual to the needs of each child or used as a blanket approach. As a result, it is not clear if these systems impinge on children's privacy without good reason.

There has only been one restraint incident since the last inspection. However, despite the child raising concerns about how the restraint was managed, they were only spoken to about what happened by those staff who were involved in the restraint. Consequently, the child did not have the opportunity to talk to somebody independent. In addition, records did not document the duration of the restraint. Managers have not identified these shortfalls through monitoring, which does not help to promote children's safety.

Staff and the manager respond promptly when children go missing from home. They try to follow the children, search local areas, contact all relevant agencies and reassure children on their return. Children also get the opportunity to speak to someone independent of the home about why they went missing from home and what happened while they were missing.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

Management arrangements are weak. The registered manager and responsible individual positions are vacant. The manager in day-to-day charge of the home since 1 May 2024 has not yet submitted their application to register with Ofsted.

The management, monitoring and reviewing of the home are weak. Managers lack an understanding of the shortfalls in the quality of care provided to children. This means that effective action is not taken swiftly when children are not receiving the care that they need. This limits children's progress and negatively affects the experiences that they have.

The home has experienced a high turnover of staff within a short period of time. Managers have had to use external staff and casual bank staff to care for children. These staff are mostly inexperienced. As a result, children receive inconsistent care, which at times is poor.

Staff do not receive regular and good-quality supervision and support. This is a missed opportunity by managers to provide staff with clear leadership and guidance to address practice issues and improve the quality of care given to children. Consequently, some of the children's basic care needs are not being met.

Important information was not shared with inspectors, despite this being requested. Managers stated that there were three electronic recording systems in place, which made it difficult for them to find some records. As a result, it remains unclear whether staff have received training to help them understand and meet children's needs.

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 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— provide personalised care that meets each child's needs, as recorded in the child's relevant plans, taking account of the child's background; ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to— meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(iv)(c)(i))	30 August 2024
The education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— help each child to understand the importance and value of education, learning, training and employment; promote opportunities for each child to learn informally;	30 August 2024

help a child who is excluded from school, or who is of compulsory school age but not attending school, to access educational and training support throughout the period of exclusion or non-attendance and to return to school as soon as possible. (Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(i)(iv)(v)(viii))	
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; help each child to understand how to keep safe; that the premises used for the purposes of the home are located so that children are effectively safeguarded; 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)(ii)(c)(d))	22 July 2024
*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; promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate; ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; ensure that the home’s workforce provides continuity of care to each child;	22 July 2024

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 of care provided in the home; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(c)(e)(f)(h))	
The registered person may only use devices for the monitoring or surveillance of children if— the monitoring or surveillance is for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child concerned, or other children; the child's placing authority consents in writing to the monitoring or surveillance; so far as reasonably practicable in the light of the child's age and understanding, the child is informed in advance of the intention to do the monitoring or surveillance; and the monitoring or surveillance is no more intrusive than necessary, having regard to the child's need for privacy. (Regulation 24 (1)(a)(b)(c)(d))	30 August 2024
The registered person must ensure that all employees— receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(b))	30 August 2024
The registered person must ensure that— within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes— a description of the measure and its duration; the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")— has spoken to the user about the measure.	30 August 2024

(Regulation 35 (3)(a)(iv)(vii)(b)(i))	
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))	30 August 2024

*These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

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: 2578355

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Horizon Care and Education Group Limited

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

Responsible individual: Post vacant

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Rumbi Mangoma, Social Care Inspector
Vicky Smith, Social Care Inspector

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