

2586949

Assurance visit

Information about this children's home

This privately owned children's home is registered to provide accommodation for up to three children who may have emotional and behavioural difficulties or learning disabilities.

A manager has been appointed and has started working in the home. She is not yet registered with Ofsted and not yet qualified to level 5, although she has a relevant degree.

Visit dates: 14 to 15 October 2020

Previous inspection date: Monitoring visits 15 July 2020 and 26 August 2020

Previous inspection judgement: Not previously inspected

Information about this visit

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), Ofsted suspended all routine inspections in March 2020. As part of a phased return to routine inspection, we are undertaking assurance visits to children's social care services that are inspected under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF).

At these visits, inspectors evaluate the extent to which:

- children are well cared for
- children are safe
- leaders and managers are exercising strong leadership.

This visit was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000, following the published guidance for assurance visits.

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills is leading Ofsted's work into how England's social care system has delivered child-centred practice and care within the context of the restrictions placed on society during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Findings from the visit

We did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance visit.

The care of children

The young person who is currently the sole resident of the home is experiencing a time of change and challenge. Despite this, staff continue to have a caring attitude towards him. They offer him nurture and positive regard even through difficult situations. They regularly tell him that they care about him and want the best for him.

The young person has numerous opportunities to express his views, and these are acted upon where possible. This means that, despite his frustrations, he feels that staff do listen to him and take his views into account.

Work around healthy eating and keeping active is plentiful. Despite this, the young person has not made progress with targets set in this area. Additionally, his emotional health needs have not been fully met in that he has not been re-referred to child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS), despite showing signs that he needs support with his mental health.

Staff have continued to promote family contact in line with government guidance relating to COVID-19. The young person was consulted about who he would like to 'bubble' with and which family members he would only communicate with via digital technology. This has met his need for positive ongoing familial relationships.

The young person has resumed his education. This evidences good progress for him. Although he is currently unsettled in the home, he has continued to attend school daily.

The safety of children

Staff show a good understanding of the issues that are affecting the young person at present and which are causing him significant distress. They understand the impact of change and of restrictions relating to COVID-19 on his behaviour. They have shown resilience in their responses to him and continue to care, despite his, at times, hostile behaviour.

The home has appropriate risk assessments in place in relation to COVID-19. There is a clear procedure to follow for any visitors to the home. The young person is educated about how to keep himself safe. Records show that planning and risk management around COVID-19 run through all aspects of care.

Risk assessments for the young person were found to have some shortfalls in the risk rating. This could leave staff unclear about the level of risk posed. An additional shortfall was identified in formalising a procedure to undertake regular checks on a

young person should they express any thoughts of suicide or self-harm. This could leave young people at risk of harm through lack of structured supervision. This shortfall was rectified at the time of inspection and staff spoken to had, in fact, undertaken checks as necessary even though there was no system in place to direct them to do this.

Staff's ability to implement consistent rules and boundaries has improved. The young person has clear structure and routine where all staff implement the same rules and support each other to do so.

Missing from care incidents have reduced. On the only occasion that the young person was missing, the correct procedure was followed and he was safely and swiftly returned.

Leaders and managers

There is a newly recruited manager in post who is in the process of applying for registration with Ofsted. Staff report that having a permanent manager in the home is beneficial in terms of support and consistency. Good levels of supervision and training also provide the right support for staff to fulfil their roles and promote good-quality care.

Senior managers within the company have maintained a regular and supportive presence in the home. On the day of the inspection, the responsible individual supported staff to manage a difficult incident.

The new manager has recognised some shortfalls in recording practice. She is evaluating records and giving advice to staff about how to improve recording. This has resulted in more detailed incident records, which allows for better understanding of incidents. Increased detail in direct work sessions with young people better enables the reader to understand context and hear the young person's voice.

The manager prioritises the well-being of young people. She has recognised the current challenges faced by the young person. As a result, she has requested a disruption meeting with his placing authority. This is to review his care plan and assess whether this home is fully meeting his needs.

There is a strong focus on the implications and impact of the current COVID-19 pandemic. The manager fully understands what this means for the home, the young person and the staff. Contingency plans are formulated and in place should they be needed. The home is currently overstaffed, which will be of benefit to young people should there be an outbreak.

At the monitoring visit in July 2020, six requirements were made. Four of these requirements have now been met, with two carried over in line with the shortfalls identified at this inspection.

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 health and well-being standard is that— the health and well-being needs of children are met; children receive advice, services and support in relation to their health and well-being; and children are helped to lead healthy lifestyles. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure that staff help each child to— achieve the health and well-being outcomes that are recorded in the child's relevant plans; understand the child's health and well-being needs and the options that are available in relation to the child's health and well-being, in a way that is appropriate to the child's age and understanding. (Regulation 10(1)(a)(i)(ii))	25/11/2020
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. (Regulation 12(1)(2)(a)(i))	25/11/2020

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 2586949

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,
Staffordshire WS11 0LG

Responsible individual: Sean Milnes

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Charlie Bamber, Social Care Inspector

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