

2586949

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 is a private children's home that provides care for up to three children. The home's statement of purpose states that children living at this home may have a range of social and emotional difficulties or learning disabilities.

The manager registered with Ofsted in April 2022. She is appropriately experienced and qualified to manage a children's home.

Inspection dates: 15 and 16 November 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	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 23 February 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
23/02/2022	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are happy living at the home and are well cared for. They have positive and respectful relationships with staff, whom they trust and can talk to. Children have improved their confidence and self-esteem while living at the home. One child said, 'I was troubled, and I have grown as a person. The staff team have done everything they can for me. I have big dreams that I wouldn't have been able to achieve without this staff team.'

Children are listened to and involved in decisions about their care. Children's meetings show that children's views are heard and taken seriously. The manager follows up any sensitive conversations with children in key-work sessions and her monthly consultations. These are opportunities for children to talk openly about their feelings about the care they receive and to have some valuable time with the manager.

Children are in general good health. They are supported to access additional health services, such as mental health and substance misuse services, when needed. The in-house clinical team oversees the detailed work that the staff team undertakes with children. On one occasion, a child was suspected to be injured and refused to seek medical attention. However, the staff team did not explore this further with a medical professional to seek advice about any action to take.

All children access and enjoy full-time education. Teachers reported that there is effective communication between the home and school to ensure that children achieve their potential. Out of school, children access activities and hobbies of their choice and preference, such as musical theatre, cheerleading and spending time with their friends. Children have enjoyed summer holidays together and have memory books to remind them of the fun they had together.

Children have positive relationships with each other, even when their relationships have been challenging at times. They are supported to understand the impact of bullying on others and how to be kind to each other. One child has written a poem in relation to anti-bullying. It is to be formally published, which is a huge achievement for the child.

When children move out of the home, their experiences have been varied. One child moved closer to their family at their request. This was a planned and positive transition. Another child's placement came to an end because their exposure to risk situations increased and had an impact on the other children in placement. Although this was not as the manager would have wished, the decision ensured the safety of all children involved.

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

Children, their parents and their social workers say that children are protected from harm and kept safe by the staff team. The staff are transparent in the work they do to safeguard children. Children understand the decisions that are made to keep them safe and how they are supported to work towards taking age-appropriate risks, such as having smart phones and independence time in the community with their friends.

The matching records show that careful consideration has been given to the two children currently living together. A multi-agency approach has been effective in planning how to meet their needs. The manager uses the home's safe area risk assessment to consider the local area risks. She uses guidance from safeguarding professionals to identify strategies to reduce risks for children as they move into the home.

Risk assessments reflect children's journeys and the reduction of some of their risks. The manager has a clear oversight of the risk assessments. She reviews them regularly to identify any key areas that the staff and the clinical team should focus on to support the children. Consequently, staff have a good understanding of children's risks and the action they should take to support them to make safer choices.

There have been two occasions when restraint has been used since the last inspection. On one occasion, the manager was involved in the restraint, and she has evaluated the incident record. This means that the evaluation of the incident is not impartial, specifically when considering the effectiveness of the intervention and any changes that could be made to staff practice to help children to manage their behaviour.

Children rarely go missing from the home. Staff take action to deter children from these risks and, when needed, act promptly to return children home safely. Following serious incidents, the staff team is proactive in carrying out follow-up work with children and working with additional safeguarding agencies to help keep children safe.

On one occasion when the manager was on leave, staff failed to report to a senior manager when a child said they had been injured by staff. There has been no impact on the child's welfare as the staff member has not continued to work at the home, and the child retracted the allegation. However, there was a delay in notifying the placing authority and the local authority designated officer about the allegation. The manager took immediate action on her return from leave, including carrying out a full investigation, consulting with the necessary professionals and addressing staff's failure to follow appropriate safeguarding procedures. This is a broader concern in relation to senior manager's oversight of the home and the support provided to the staff team in the manager's absence.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The home's responsible individual is temporarily absent. Some of the shortfalls identified at this inspection are associated with ineffective support systems and guidance in place for the staff team when the manager takes her leave.

On two occasions there has been a significant delay in Ofsted being notified of serious incidents relating to police involvement and an allegation made by a child. This again was during the manager's leave from the home. Managers have failed to implement a clear system as to who is responsible for notifying Ofsted about significant notifiable incidents in the absence of the manager.

The manager is not provided with regular formal supervision from a senior manager. This is a missed opportunity by senior managers to review the manager's practice and monitor the operation of the home.

However, the manager is a positive role model for the staff team. She is caring and child-centred. She focuses on obtaining the best outcomes for children, ensuring that children's achievements and progress are recognised. She understands children's strengths and any areas where they require additional support to develop their life chances.

Staff reported that they feel well supported by the manager. She ensures that her staff are all provided with regular practice-related supervision. This means that they are provided with the necessary support to conduct their roles and maintain positive team morale.

Team meetings are used to share new knowledge with staff and are an opportunity for regular consultation with the in-house clinical team. Mandatory training is regularly refreshed. The manager provides staff with most training that is specific to the needs of the children. However, staff have not yet been provided with sexually harmful behaviour training.

The manager provides a comprehensive review of the quality of care report to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the home. In addition, she completes quarterly reviews of safeguarding and serious incidents. These have enabled her to identify trends and patterns in children's behaviours and make changes to their care when required.

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— understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(v)(vi)(vii))	29 December 2022
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious; there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there. (Regulation 40 (4)(b)(c)) Specifically, a delegated person should be responsible for notifying Ofsted of serious incidents and allegations without delay in the absence of the manager from their role.	29 December 2022

Recommendations

- 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 when necessary and appropriate. Specifically, if children refuse medical treatment, staff should seek guidance from trained medical professionals in relation to the concerns they have about a child's health. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 34, paragraph 7.8).
- The registered person should ensure that records of restraints are reviewed in relation to the use of control, discipline and restraint to identify effective practice and respond promptly where any issues or trends of concern emerge. The review should provide the opportunity for amending practice to ensure it meets the needs of each child. Specifically, the person evaluating the record should be impartial to the incident. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 49, paragraph 9.59).
- The registered person should ensure that staff can access appropriate facilities and resources to support their training needs. Specifically, all staff should be provided with training in understanding and managing sexually harmful behaviour. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.11).
- The registered person should ensure that all staff, including the manager, receive supervision of their practice, which allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children assigned to their care. Specifically, the registered manager should be provided with regular practice-related supervision by a senior manager. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2).

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: 2586949

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Horizon Care and Education Group Limited

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

Responsible individual: Paul Smith

Registered manager: Jemma Craven

Inspector

Cheryl Field, Social Care Inspector

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