

SC483710

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 privately run and provides care for up to three children. Since the last inspection a total of four children have resided at the home. At the time of inspection three children were living in the home.

The home has an experienced registered manager.

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 May 2025

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: 28 August 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: Good

Enforcement action since last inspection:

None

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
28/08/2024	Full	Good
23/08/2023	Full	Good
11/01/2023	Full	Good
30/11/2021	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Staff have created a safe, welcoming space for children. This means that children who would otherwise spend lots of time away from the home choose to bring their friends to the house. This gives children a sense of community and results in them being proud to call the house their home. Children like that staff show a genuine interest in their family and friend's well-being.

Children have positive moves to and from the home due to the careful planning by staff. Children that have moved from the home remain in regular contact with staff. This shows the positive relationships that were built. Staff support children to build meaningful relationships with one another. Children take into consideration one another's feelings which creates a friendly living environment. This also supports children to feel safe in expressing their individual identities.

Children who have been out of education for prolonged periods, are now enrolled on their chosen courses. The manager knows children well and what will help them succeed in education. The manager is strongly advocating for realistic transition plans back into education. For the first time in a while, children are excited about their future.

The home has not been maintained to a high standard. As a result, staff have not consistently role modelled to children how to take pride in their home. Children's bedrooms are not appropriately cleaned and maintained.

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

Staff have a strong understanding of contextual safeguarding. This means that staff know how to manage risk well. Staff fiercely advocate for children's safeguarding needs and seek support from external professionals. Staff encourage and support children to actively engage with professionals that can support them.

Staff have created a culture where children feel safe to openly talk about past experiences and current concerns. Staff show high levels of professional curiosity. This supports staff to gain a better understanding of the risks that children are exposed to. Staff liaise effectively with children's family members and others close to them to try and ensure safety through open communication.

Staff think carefully about the best way to deliver advice to children. They regularly revisit subjects of positive decision making or making healthy choices. Staff are creative in how they try to alter children's patterns of behaviour. Professionals and children's family members say that children have come a long way since moving to the home.

Children understand and accept the importance of room searches to keep them and others safe. However, during a period of concern staff did not consistently undertake room searches in line with a child's plan.

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

Staff speak positively about the support from their manager. However, staff have not always felt support from the wider organisation. Ongoing staff changes cause staff to feel that the workload is unbalanced. As a result, staff morale has declined. Staff ensure that this does not impact on their demeanour when caring for the children.

A contributing factor has been the lack of consistent leadership oversight. During a period when the registered manager had planned leave, leaders did not offer appropriate support and guidance. This resulted in some oversight being delayed until the registered manager returned. As a result, staff note that the manager appears 'over stretched'.

The manager encourages staff to reflect on their practice through her written feedback and by having in person discussions. Oversight of her evaluations by the responsible individual are inconsistent in quality. On occasion these are not reflective or do not acknowledge the current risks for children. This hinders continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home from being made.

Those involved in children's care planning are very complimentary about the manager and staff team. Parents feel well informed about their children's care and truly feel that the manager takes on board their views. Professionals are extremely pleased with how quickly children are building trusted relationships with the staff team.

The manager has been able to evidence that staff complete the appropriate training. They have also evidenced that all recommendations made during the fire assessment are complete. Records were seen to be signed by the correct individual and therefore all three requirements set the last inspection have been evidenced to be met.

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
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; 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 (2)(b)(c)(f)(h)) In particular this relates to leaders ensuring that those acting on behalf of the manager have adequate support and guidance. It also relates to ensuring that leaderships oversight of the home supports the manager to further reflect on practice so that continuous improvements can be made.	9 July 2025
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;	9 July 2025

understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person;

that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm;

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)(v)(b)(d))

In particular this relates to the registered manager ensuring that staff consistently undertake room searches in line with children's plans. It also relates to ensuring that children's bedrooms are appropriately cleaned and maintained.

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the children's guide helps children to understand how to contact the Office of the Children's Commissioner. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 24, paragraph 4.22).

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: SC483710

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Horizon Care and Education Group Limited

Registered provider address: 17 Wolverhampton Road, Cannock, Staffordshire WS11 1AP

Responsible individual: Alexander Lee

Registered manager: Victoria Dirican

Inspectors

Ellen Monk, social care inspector

Chloe Harvey, social care inspector

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