

Children's homes - interim inspection

Inspection date	14/01/2016
Unique reference number	SC483710
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Horizon Care and Education Group Limited
Registered person address	Venture House, 12 Prospect Business Park, Longford Road, CANNOCK, Staffordshire, WS11 0LG
Responsible individual	Cheri Callow
Registered manager	Vacant
Inspector	Mary Timms

Inspection date	14/01/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Requires improvement
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection. This home was judged Requires improvement at the full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has Declined in effectiveness. Leadership and Management arrangements have been unstable since the last inspection in July 2015. A key shortfall in this inspection is that there has been no registered manager in charge of the home since April 2015. The interim manager at the time of the last inspection no longer works for this organisation. Interim management arrangements have been put in place by the provider, however, the rate of change has led to staff feeling frustrated at times by the different management styles and expectations. The lack of a permanent manager, changes in interim management arrangements and numerous other staff changes across the care team has resulted in weaknesses in service delivery. New staff, in an already exposed team, have not had the opportunities they need to hone their knowledge and skills. There have been occasions when it is apparent that staff have not understood their roles and responsibilities, or have not had the skills to work effectively with young people. For example, poor internal communication has resulted in key information not shared between staff in the team. Additionally, staff have failed to respond appropriately to incidents and negative behaviours. As a result, young people have been left in potentially unsafe situations. Young people are not reaching their potential in relation to educational attainment. The culture in the home has been too accepting when external arrangements for education do not currently meet young people's educational needs. While staff have escalated concerns about a lack of satisfactory arrangements, staff have failed to ensure that young people spend their time constructively during the hours of a typical school day. As a result, young people have often remained in bed late and some spend extended periods playing computer games. The registered person has failed to ensure that serious events are always notified to Ofsted immediately, as required by regulation. This means that the regulator has been unaware of serious incidents until several weeks later. Following the last inspection regional managers took action to strengthen their	

oversight of the home and to issue updated guidance to staff in response to the requirement set at that time. Improvements have not been fully effective and further requirements has been set in order that the care young people receive is of a good quality. The provider has successfully recruited a new permanent manager who has very recently commenced work in the home. This individual is enthusiastic and has plans in place to drive forward service improvements. This new manager is in the process of completing an application to Ofsted for the registered manager position. Very recent recruitment means that a full team of permanent care staff will be in place by the end of February. A few members of staff have been in post since the home opened and together have worked hard to maintain elements of consistency in young people's care. It is apparent that the permanent manager has brought a sense of stability and clear direction.

Comments from young people show that they feel safe living here and that they are able to raise concerns and to talk to staff if they needed to. Involved professionals confirm that communication and joint working is good. Also, that staff strive to engage young people who are known to be extremely resistant on many levels to working with professionals.

Information about this children's home

This section should outline:

The home is operated by a large private organisation and is registered to provide care and accommodation for three children and young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties. The home was first registered in February 2015.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
28/07/2015	CH - Full	Requires improvement
08/06/2015	CH - Full	Inadequate

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Statutory Requirements

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person/s meets 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 with the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
8: The Education Standard In order to meet the education standard the registered person must ensure that: (2) (a) (v) staff promote opportunities for each child to learn informally.	05/02/2016
13: The Leadership and Management Standard In order to meet the leadership and management standard the registered person must: (2)(c) ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child.	05/02/2015

The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay when an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4) (b))	14/01/2016
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What the inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspection we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people living in the children's home. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference adults make to the lives of children and young people. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with children, young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care given to children and young people. Wherever possible, they talked to children, young people and their families. In addition the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people who it is trying to help, protect and look after.

This inspection focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service 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*.

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