

Children's home inspection – Full

Inspection date	06/12/2016
Unique reference number	1234243
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Horizon Care and Education Group Limited
Registered provider address	Venture House, Unit 12, Prospect Business Park, Longford Road, Cannock, WS11 0LG

Responsible individual	Ann-Cheri Callow
Registered manager	Jacqueline Norbury
Inspector	Mary Timms

Inspection date	06/12/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Inadequate
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Requires improvement
The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.	
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Requires improvement
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Requires improvement

1234243

Summary of findings:

The children's home provision requires improvement because:

- The effectiveness of the improvements made by the provider organisation since the inadequate service judgement made in October 2016 is not yet fully apparent, as there are no current residents. Ofsted will continue to monitor the progress of improvements when children are in residence.

The children's home strengths:

- The provider has taken prompt and robust actions to strengthen service arrangements following the last inspection. The registered manager has spent a lot of time reflecting on the reasons leading to the previous inadequate judgement. She is now confident that the service will in future provide a high quality of care, which will impact positively on children's lives.
- The requirements set at the time of the last inspection have been addressed, although it has not been possible to fully assess the impact of improvements.
- The staff team has remained committed to the service through a difficult period. Staff are enthusiastic to receive new children into the home. The now full staff team has received additional training. The personal and team development opportunities provided mean that staff have the necessary knowledge and are confident in their roles and responsibilities.
- No additional requirements or recommendations have been set as a result of this inspection.

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home is registered to care for up to three children or young people with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The home is operated by a large privately owned organisation.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/10/2016	Full	Inadequate

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home	Requires improvement
<p>The provider organisation and registered manager have strengthened service arrangements to ensure that experiences and progress for children and young people are improved. Although the improvements appear robust and broad ranging, the impact of these changes is not yet clear and will be monitored by Ofsted when new residents move into the home.</p> <p>In the period before young people moved out, staff endeavoured to build improved relationships with them, to gather their views and to engage them in arrangements for their care. Young people did not always take up the opportunities offered to spend time with staff, but some productive work took place. This included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ looking at the importance of regular health checks ■ healthy eating ■ relationships and individual vulnerabilities when away from the home. <p>This means that young people were developing their knowledge and awareness in a variety of areas, which will aid them to make positive choices.</p> <p>Children and young people's care will in future be structured by a new care planning format. The potential for previous weaknesses in planning to reoccur is reduced by these new, well-thought-out planning documents. Children and young people will be involved from the start, identifying targets and areas of importance to them. This will result in children and young people feeling involved and that their views are valued.</p> <p>Children and young people's health needs are carefully identified, and care is structured to address individual needs and to promote good health. Mental health professionals employed by the organisation work alongside the manager and staff team to ensure that needs relating to emotional well-being, mental health and behaviours are understood by staff and are planned for appropriately. Recent training delivered by this team has promoted the link between personal histories and presenting behaviours.</p> <p>Staff understand the importance of promoting education. Their aim is to support children and young people who do not have a school placement by providing structured daily plans that incorporate elements of formal education and stimulating activities. However, staff have not been able to consistently engage young people in these daily plans. As a result, young people's learning and personal development have been restricted. The manager has built on existing</p>	

relationships with external agencies and worked hard to finalise an education placement for one young person. Although plans were moving forward, the young person had not returned to education by the time she left the home. The manager is confident that, after reflection, the team have identified improved strategies and procedures to ensure that in future young people engage appropriately in educational activities.

Staff have promoted young people's access to a broader range of leisure activities, in line with a requirement set on the last inspection. One young person took up the opportunity to follow a personal interest of fishing, supported by staff. This provided the young person with a new and enjoyable focus, which also improved self-confidence and self-esteem.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Requires improvement
<p>Broad-ranging actions have been taken by the registered provider to address safeguarding weaknesses identified on the last inspection. Individual risk assessments were promptly reviewed, updated and implemented. The inspector was able to track how improvements to the development of risk management strategies strengthened safeguarding arrangements.</p> <p>The team's ability to safeguard young people has been underpinned by actions taken to ensure that staff understand their roles and responsibilities. Progress includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Updated safeguarding children training, including a learning session facilitated by a police officer from the local missing person's team. A member of staff said that training had been thorough and enhanced previous learning. ■ Risk assessments have been reviewed and formats updated, together with focused training on the implementation of effective risk management strategies. ■ Policies and procedures and safe ways of working have been revisited in team meetings and one-to-one supervisions. <p>Following the last inspection, staff endeavoured to reaffirm boundaries in a consistent manner. It is apparent that this was not successful for the two young people in placement in the time prior to them both leaving the home. Staff also spent time raising young people's awareness of safeguarding issues. As a result,</p>	

they were more able to make informed choices in their day-to day-lives. Two serious incidents have taken place since the last visit, involving two different young people. The level of aggression towards staff resulted in one placement being terminated, after careful consideration. Learning points from behaviours and events have been identified and used to strengthen care arrangements for the future.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Requires improvement
<p>The registered manager is experienced and appropriately qualified. Whereas at the time of the last inspection she was managing two homes, the provider and manager together have opted to change this arrangement to allow her to focus solely on this home, going forward. This has allowed the manager to spend the time necessary to support required improvements following the last inspection. The manager is confident that the service is now in a position to provide a much-improved quality of care, in a manner which will promote positive outcomes for children and young people. She has been able to demonstrate that she has spent a lot of time reflecting on the reasons leading to the inadequate judgement, recognising areas of weakness and developing broad service development plans.</p> <p>There is now a full staff team of experienced staff, most of whom are appropriately qualified, while others are following induction or qualifying programmes of training. There is currently no use of agency staff, and the manager is confident that there will be adequate cover for holidays and training without resorting to introducing agency staff into the home. This means that children will be cared for by a consistent pool of staff who they know.</p> <p>Additional service monitoring tools have been introduced. One new process involves the oversight of care arrangement by senior staff members in the manager's absence. This reduces the potential for a deterioration in the quality of service when the manager is away from the home.</p> <p>The development of the staff team has been a priority for the manager. Team meetings and one-to-one supervision meetings have promoted individual and team learning. Additional training has been provided, which means that staff now fully understand their roles and responsibilities in the care of children. The organisation's 'clinician team' of mental health professionals has attended meetings to provide further training. Staff say that this has helped them to see children's behaviours in the context of their personal histories.</p> <p>Strengthened arrangements prioritise gathering and acting on children's views, and</p>	

promoting positive relationships between staff and children, both issues of weakness on the previous visit.

The structure of individual care planning has been improved. The manager has identified the need to strengthen planning arrangements at the point of referral and admission to ensure that appropriate consultation and collation of information underpins placement plans. Sampling of updated documents demonstrates that planning is likely to be robust and is linked to regular review and assessment of progress made by each child.

Record keeping has been improved. This includes report writing, restricting information reported on in the home's daily log and ensuring that a true record of staff working in the home is maintained.

What the inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against 'Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection'.

An **outstanding** children's home provides highly effective services that contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help and protection and care. Their progress exceeds expectations and is sustained over time.

A **good** children's home provides effective services that help, protect and care for children and young people and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

In a children's home that **requires improvement**, there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. The welfare of children looked after is safeguarded and promoted. Minimum requirements are in place. However, the children's home is not yet delivering good protection, help and care for children and young people.

A children's home that is **inadequate** is providing services where there are widespread or serious failures that create or leave children and young people being harmed or at risk of harm or that result in children looked after not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

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 that 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 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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