

Children's homes – interim inspection

Inspection date	24/01/2017
Unique reference number	1226975
Type of inspection	Interim
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	Kelly Ford
Inspector	Mary Timms

Inspection date	24/01/2017
Previous inspection judgement	Good
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	
<p>This home was judged good at the full inspection. At this interim inspection, Ofsted judge that it has sustained effectiveness.</p> <p>There have been some improvements since the last inspection visit; however, care arrangements have not improved across the board. The outcomes for young people are mixed and in some areas have deteriorated. For example, a young person, who was very stable in the early months of her placement, has become unsettled and is engaging in behaviours which put her at risk of harm.</p> <p>One young person is said by an education professional to have improving school attendance, when compared with the start of this school year. Another young person is making progress within education when comparing against his starting point. While this is very positive, there are also times when young people opt not to attend school and sometimes remain in bed on a school day beyond midday. It is apparent that staff want the best for young people and do not give up easily when it comes to knocking on bedroom doors to wake young people. However, this is not always effective, which means that young people are not always accessing a full programme of education. The manager is discussing concerns with involved professionals in order to improve educational outcomes.</p> <p>The manager and staff team recognise safeguarding concerns promptly. Emerging concerns are shared with parents and social workers. Missing from care incidents are responded to promptly and are reported in line with individual risk assessments. This means that external agencies are able to respond appropriately when young people are found to be missing. The team adjust risk assessments and change practice to strengthen safeguarding arrangements when weaknesses are identified. This demonstrates that safeguarding is a focus within the home. Staff training has ensured that staff understand the potential for child sexual exploitation and notice increased risks and raise concerns with external agencies appropriately.</p> <p>Young people feel safe and are of the view that staff genuinely care about them. Comments from young people include: 'The staff are always there to hear what I have to say.' Also, young people confirm that they receive support and guidance from staff, emphasising that this is 'every day'. Opportunities to engage in community activities are promoted, although these are not always taken up by the young people. Some prefer to spend time building relationships with their friends in</p>	

the community.

There has been no change in residents since the full inspection in September 2016. Two of the young people have lived at the home for several years. They have good relationships with staff, are comfortable, and settled in their placement.

The team work openly with other professionals and seek guidance and support from external agencies to improve outcomes for each young person. An education professional commented that the service works extremely well with the school to promote attendance and achievement within education.

The provider organisation monitors and supports the quality of care in several different ways. For example, the regional management structure provides 24-hour oversight and support. Independent visits take place as required by children's home regulations. The regional manager monitors the implementation of action plans to address identified weaknesses. This demonstrates that monitoring, and addressing identified actions, are a priority for the organisation.

The two requirements and two recommendations set at the time of the last inspection have been addressed. As a result, the arrangements for the administration of medication are strengthened. As only one complaint, which is still under investigation, has been received since the last visit, there is limited scope to evaluate progress made with the requirement relating to complaints records. However, it is apparent that there is an improved audit trail of actions taken in response to complaints. The care-planning format has been updated to include more detail of individual needs and clarification as to how the needs will be met by the service. This means that staff have ready access to the level of information required to ensure that individual needs are fully met. This also supports managers to monitor the effectiveness of the way that plans are implemented within the service.

Information about this children's home

- The home is owned by a large private organisation, registered to provide care and accommodation for three children and/or young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
27/09/2016	Full	Good

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 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 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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