

1226975

Registered provider: Horizon Care And Education Group Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

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

Inspection dates: 5 to 6 September 2017

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected good

The effectiveness of leaders and managers good

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 24 January 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection:

None

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because:

- Young people benefit from strong relationships with a stable and consistent staff team. This has helped them make progress from difficult starting points.

- Young people receive high-quality, individualised care. The help and support that young people need to become safer is provided.
- Staff understand what actions they should take if they have any concerns about the safety and well-being of young people, especially in relation to going missing or being sexually exploited.
- Effective multi-agency working provides young people with the support and services they need. The quality of multi-agency working is a strength of the home.
- The manager and the staff team are ambitious for improvement. The manager is reflective and uses learning, from past placements and incidents of concern, to help improve staff practice.

The children’s home’s areas for development:

- There is a system in place to ensure that there is time for staff to hand over information between shifts. This could be further strengthened to ensure that those staff who have not worked at the home for some time receive a thorough handover of information.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
24/01/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
27/09/2016	Full	Good

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

Recommendation

- The registered person should make best use of information from internal monitoring to ensure continuous improvement. This relates to improving systems of handover of information between shifts. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

This home provides a secure, safe base for all the young people living there. Staff make every effort to help young people, who have complex needs, to stabilise their lives and make progress. Staff provide good-quality care and young people benefit from effective multi-agency working.

For most young people, the support provided by staff and other professionals is successful. For example, they make academic progress and gain qualifications. In other areas, such as learning independent living skills, despite high levels of help and encouragement the impact of this support is limited. Staff work hard to give young people every opportunity to succeed. A social worker said, 'I don't know what else they could have done for my young person. They've tried everything.' Leaders and managers regularly review whether the placement continues to meet young people's needs. When appropriate, they work with multi-agency partners to consider alternatives.

Young people are healthy. They are registered with doctors and dentists, and are supported by staff to attend health appointments. Staff do not give up on young people and are tenacious in their approach. For example, at the end of one young person's placement, sensitive and gentle persuasion from staff resulted in the young person attending a very important health appointment. As a result, the young person received the health care they needed.

The manager and staff understand the importance of education for young people's futures. Some young people have fluctuating engagement with education placements, and can struggle to engage regularly. Staff have persevered, and young people have plans for their further education. Staff work closely with multi-agency education partners to ensure that educational activities best meet young people's needs and interests.

Young people have regular contact with their friends and families when this is appropriate. This enables them to maintain important links with their home communities and further develop their relationships. This is important for their identity. Staff also maintain good relationships with family members and young people's friends. In the event of there being concerns about the whereabouts of young people, staff can use

information from friends and family to help to keep young people safe, and share information with the local police. This forms part of the home's risk management plans, and works effectively.

Young people's views and opinions are listened to and respected. They have opportunities to influence the running of the home through, for example, making menu choices and agreeing activities. Young people have the opportunity to express any concerns they may have regarding the running of the home to the manager or staff team at any time.

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

Young people are safely cared for. They have positive relationships with staff and they are able to talk to staff at times of distress or anxiety. The staff and the management team have a thorough understanding of the individual risks affecting young people.

Safeguarding practice is robust. Staff and managers work very closely with their multi-agency partners to keep young people safe. There are regular strategy or risk management meetings, as needed. During these meetings, plans and assessments are shared so that all multi-agency partners are aware of the risks, and have the opportunity to have some input into care planning.

There has been a recent increase in young people going missing from care and being at risk of sexual exploitation. The manager and staff understand the dangers to young people when they go missing, and understand the safeguarding protocol they need to follow. Effective action is taken, and key organisations, such as the police, are informed immediately. Staff will search for the young person and maintain contact with the police. When young people return to the home, they receive a warm welcome. Staff seek to understand the reasons behind incidents of going missing, and maintain their liaison with the police and sexual exploitation specialists if needed. They arrange for the young person to have a return interview with someone independent of the home. Direct work is undertaken with young people to help them understand the risks of going missing and how to keep themselves safe. Effective information sharing and management of risk helps to keep young people safer.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home's manager is enthusiastic and committed to the home. She holds an appropriate qualification to lead and manage a children's home. She is ambitious for staff, young people, and the functioning of the home. The manager's monitoring systems help to ensure that there is continued improvement. This benefits young people as they live in a home where the management team and staff are constantly considering ways to improve. The quality of multi-agency working is a key strength of the home. Social workers comment on excellent communication and information sharing.

A consistent, competent staff team is providing care and support. When there are any gaps in staffing, the manager uses regular agency workers who are known to the young

people. This helps to maintain consistency. Staff members report that they receive regular, good-quality supervision. They say that they feel supported by managers. Supervision focuses on the care of young people, the responsibilities of the role, and the development of the worker, including training. It gives staff the opportunity to reflect on their practice and consider ways in which care for young people can improve further. Most staff have completed mandatory training, and identified gaps in training are addressed promptly. Staff also benefit from regular opportunities for consultation with the company's clinical psychologist, who provides guidance about young people's needs.

The manager is skilled at using reflection and consultation with staff to influence care practice. For example, after placement breakdowns staff have the opportunity to discuss their feelings and look at how practice could improve. The manager does not shy away from considering what went wrong, as well as embracing what worked well. This reflective attitude helps to continuously develop care practice.

Staff have a good knowledge of young people's needs. Their knowledge of young people's care plans is kept up to date through regular staff meetings and handovers of information between shifts. Although there is a system in place to ensure that members of staff who work part-time or have been away on annual leave benefit from a handover, this is an area for improvement as it can be difficult for these staff to get up to date with any changes in young people's care plans quickly. There has been no negative impact on young people as a result of this.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and 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 whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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: 1226975

Provision sub-type: 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: Emma Green

Registered manager: Kelly Ford

Inspector

Catherine Honey, Social care inspector

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