

1249184

Registered provider: Horizon Care And Education Group Limited

Interim inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is registered for up to three children or young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. It is part of a private company that provides children's homes and schools.

Inspection date: 25 October 2017

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Date of last inspection: 12 June 2017

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

The home was judged requires improvement to be good at the last full inspection. At the interim inspection, Ofsted judges that the home has sustained effectiveness.

Seven young people have lived at the home in the four months since the last inspection. Two young people have moved on following serious, unsafe incidents. In August, the young people called the police and the local authority to the home, as they were concerned that there were not enough staff on duty. The police and the local authority raised serious concerns over this incident to Ofsted and to the provider. One young person moved on because of this incident. Another young person's short-term placement ended when he went missing after a court appearance in his home authority area. Only one of the four young people have made good progress in the home. The manager has not kept records of addresses and contact details of where the young people have moved. This makes it difficult to return possessions to the young people or to maintain

any communication with them.

Despite these failings, the manager has worked hard over the past four months to improve the home environment and the skills of the staff team. The manager told the inspector that, 'Staff were feeling very raw about their experiences. I wanted to try to stop the rut of incident after incident – I felt staff needed to look harder for positives. That is why I introduced the young people's praise books and organised a team day with the head of staff training.'

Until recently, the manager has struggled to exercise control over admissions to the home. Leaders have imposed moves when things have gone wrong for young people in other homes within the organisation. This has sometimes resulted in young people being inappropriately matched. However, in the last six weeks, the manager has made the decisions to admit three young people whom he believes are well matched. He is confident that he and the staff team can support them all.

Two of the three young people have moved from other homes within the organisation. The staff team helps the young people to experience positive moves. For example, one young person visited the home before moving in. Staff from the young people's homes support their transition by accompanying them to the home. One young person's social worker said that she is pleased with how well her young person had re-engaged with school. His interaction with adults and peers had also improved. All three young people are making some progress. One of the young people said, 'The staff have made me feel welcome and made me feel safe. I can talk to anyone when I am upset or feeling down. All round, I am glad I am here. I actually feel cared for and loved and I would be proud to call them all family.'

There are not enough staff in post to provide consistent or high-quality individualised care. Over the last four months, young people have frequently needed more staff support than the small group can provide. As a result, young people sometimes have staff supporting them who do not know them. For example, in July and August 2017, 10 different agency staff worked at the home. On the day of the inspection, two agency staff worked during the day and a third worked overnight. They worked alongside one or two core staff and the manager.

Young people enjoy being with certain members of the staff team. For example, young people enjoy making music with one member of staff who brings in drums and guitars. The young people enjoy playing football, painting and watching films with other members of staff. Staff have recently started 'praise books' for each young person where they record how well young people are doing and any good things that young people do. The whole staff team has recently undertaken training in therapeutic care practice and the manager regularly consults with the home's clinician to support strategies for helping the young people.

Young people's progress and experiences still require improvement because they do not yet receive sufficient, skilled and consistent help. Senior staff are not leading shifts with sufficient skill, creativity or organisation. The manager said, 'I am struggling to entrust

staff with the big conversations. I want proactive, creative staff.’ For example, senior staff do not check the identity of agency staff and verify their suitability. They do not brief agency staff about young people’s needs and daily routines. They do not make enough effort to ensure that young people know who is looking after them. Senior staff do not know all the actions that they should take if a young person goes missing. Young people believe that the only person who can help them is the manager.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
15/11/2016	Registration	Not applicable
12/06/2017	Full	Requires improvement to be good

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, 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
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children’s home that helps children aspire to fulfil their potential and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child and ensure that the home’s workforce provides continuity of care to each child. (Regulation 13 (1) and (2)(d) and (e))	30/11/2017
The registered person must ensure that the employment of any person on a temporary basis at the children’s home does not prevent children from receiving such continuity of care as is reasonable to meet their needs. (Regulation 31 (1))	30/11/2017
If an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, the registered person may only allow that individual to work at the home if full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the	30/11/2017

individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (2)(b) and (3)(d))	
The registered person must maintain in the home the records in Schedule 4 and ensure that the records are kept up to date. In particular, ensure that the register of children includes each child's address on leaving the home. (Regulation 37, schedule 4, 1 (d))	30/11/2017

Recommendations

- Ensure that evaluation of missing incidents is undertaken to identify any gaps in training, skills or knowledge for staff or to record and retain evidence of what worked well. This evaluation should inform the review of the quality of care. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', pages 45 and 46, paragraph 9.31)
This is with particular respect to managers ensuring that all staff know what they should do if a young person goes missing, and that written procedures contain all the advice and information that staff need.
- Ensure that staff make informed professional judgements based on the individual child's needs and developmental stage about when to allow a child to take a particular risk or follow a particular course of action. Staff should discuss the decision with the child's placing authority where appropriate. If a child makes a choice that would place them or another person at significant risk of harm, staff should assist them to understand the risks and manage their risk-taking behaviour to keep themselves and others safe. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.7)
- Ensure that the development of safe, stable and secure relationships with staff in the home is central to the ethos of the home and supports the development of secure attachments that, where appropriate, persist over time. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 39, paragraph 8.11)

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.

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.

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: 1249184

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: Thomas Haire

Registered manager: Allan Shaw

Inspector

Rachel Britten, social care inspector

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