

1229762

Registered provider: Horizon Care And Education Group Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is privately owned. It provides care and accommodation for up to three young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Inspection dates: 12 to 13 December 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: 9 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:

- The nurturing environment suits young people's needs very well. Young people have benefited from a careful, kind and considerate approach.
- Young people have great relationships with staff. They can talk to them about anything they like, be it their education, safety issues or their health. This helps young people to make good progress.

- Young people who had no sense of direction on their arrival are now looking forward to a brighter future.
- All young people attend school. Staff are very good at encouraging and supporting them to attend. Young people learn that their education is very important.
- Staff support young people very well in their preparation for adulthood. Young people are allowed to experience age-appropriate risk. They learn from their experiences first-hand and learn how to manage risk better.
- Young people develop a sense of safety. Some risk-taking behaviours reduce during their time at the home. For example, there are fewer instances of self-harm.
- The relatively new staff team is developing all of the time. Its members continue to provide a good level of care to young people.
- The home is well led. Despite the manager being responsible for two settings, the operation of the home is good.
- The registered manager, deputy manager and responsible individual are very aware of the strengths and weaknesses of this home. They have plans in place to make sure that it continues to develop.

The children's home's areas for development:

- Some records need improvement. In particular, to provide fuller details of incidents of young people being missing from the home.
- When young people have an independent return interview after they have been missing, managers should obtain a copy of the interview report. This will make sure that lessons can be learned for next time.
- Following a young person having been restrained, they need to be asked for their view about how the restraint was carried out.
- Staff training needs to be improved to ensure that all staff are knowledgeable and skilled in supporting young people when they self-harm, and when they take drugs and use alcohol. Staff should also have training about female genital mutilation. They are not knowledgeable about how they can support and protect young people in relation to this.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/01/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
01/09/2016	Full	Outstanding

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

Recommendations

- Staff should be familiar with the home's policies on record keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4) This is in relation to the quality of records and the need for finer detail of what happened and when, during incidents of going missing from the home.
- Any child who has been restrained should be given the opportunity to express their feelings about the experience of the restraint. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 49, paragraph 9.60)
- The registered person should ensure that staff can access appropriate facilities and resources to support their training needs. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.11) This is in relation to continued training for staff on self-harm, drugs awareness and female genital mutilation.
- When a child returns to the home after being missing from care or away from the home without permission, the responsible local authority must provide an opportunity for the child to have an independent return home interview. Homes should take account of information provided by such interviews when assessing risks and putting arrangements in place to protect each child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.30) This is in relation to challenging local authorities who do not share this key information.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Young people's experiences of living at this home are positive. Their aspirations develop and they start to look forward to their future. Young people who have struggled to attend education in the past are now doing well. They are achieving the grades and qualifications they need to progress in their chosen career. When young people are new to the home, their school placement is sourced extremely quickly. Staff put a lot of effort into working alongside young people. They make sure that young people attend school. Even when they are adamant that they are not going, staff encourage them to go and manage to talk them around. Young people proudly told the inspector about their achievements and one said: 'Staff want you to do well.'

Young people's emotional well-being is a top priority. Their confidence develops and this makes a very positive difference to their welfare. The environment is nurturing and

caring. This has worked well for young people, some of whom came to the home in crisis. Young people have seen a reduction in their self-harming behaviour, due to young people feeling better about themselves. Staff training is not provided for staff on how to help and support young people in this area. This would be helpful in ensuring that staff know how to help young people to develop more positive strategies to deal with their feelings. This has not affected the young people, but has the potential to do so if not put right. Young people feel that their emotional needs are well met. One young person said: 'Staff have done everything they can.'

Physical health is well considered. Young people's medical needs are monitored very closely. Every opportunity for improvement is sought. Staff regularly talk to young people and remind them about their health. Staff are not afraid of having more difficult conversations about personal issues such as sexual health. Staff make sure that young people have a very good understanding about how to keep themselves healthy.

When a young person has taken drugs and/or used alcohol, staff work closely with them to make sure that they receive the help they need. Outside agencies are regularly used to support young people with their issues. Staff have a basic understanding of the dangers of taking drugs. They regularly remind young people about these dangers. However, their knowledge does not extend to what different drugs might be available to young people, what the packaging might look like, and the negative impact that drugs can have on health. Therefore a recommendation to address training needs has been made.

Young people's admission into the home is well planned. Even when there is an emergency admission, the manager makes sure that staff have up-to-date and relevant information. From day one, staff know how to meet young people's needs and how to keep them safe. This means that young people make good progress from the first day of their placement. Care plans are developed as time goes by, and contain comprehensive information. Staff's knowledge about care plans is good. Care plans are not just documents; they are implemented very well and provide opportunities for more progress.

A lot of planning goes into making sure that young people are ready for independence. Young people practise independence skills under the supervision of staff. This means that they are more likely to feel ready to be on their own when they leave care. Young people have memory boxes. Some young people treasure their memorabilia, and this is encouraged so that they can remember the good times after they have left care. Every effort goes into making sure that young people are ready for life on their own. One young person plans to take two recently purchased kittens with them, so that they don't feel so lonely to start with.

Young people feel valued and cared about. It is clear that they are cherished by the staff. There are extremely positive relationships between staff and young people. A young person spoke about a staff member, saying: 'You can rely on her, you can always have a good cry.' The home has a lovely atmosphere, where there is laughter and hugs, demonstrating a 'loving' childcare approach. One young person told the inspector: 'The

relationships with staff, and the atmosphere, makes up for the fact that I don't live in a family.'

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

Young people make the very best of the time that they have at the home when they are approaching the time to leave. This is because staff see this time as being a 'golden opportunity'. They make sure that young people can experience their own, age-appropriate risks. Young people are supported and helped to think about how they can manage risk, to be as safe as possible when they move out.

Staff are very familiar with what they need to do to protect young people, and do this through the use of comprehensive and clear risk assessments. Important safeguarding information is shared with appropriate professionals. Strong and effective decisions can be made about young people's safety, based on clear information.

When young people are missing from the home, staff do everything they can to look for them and to keep in touch with them. Staff also work to prevent incidents of going missing from the home. Risk reduces because young people learn about the dangers of going missing and how to keep themselves safe. One social worker was particularly happy with staff's work in this area, saying: 'They are good at reporting the young person as missing. We have put together a risk management plan, and she has not been missing since.' Independent return interviews take place, but a record of these is not always available for staff. The details of the interviews are not routinely shared with staff at the home. The responsible individual informed the inspector that they have challenged placing authorities regarding this. The home needs to continue to challenge this issue. Awareness of the content of return interviews is key. At the moment, staff have not got all the required knowledge about how to support young people to be safer the next time they go missing from the home, or understand what factors may make them want to leave the home. Documents are generally good, but there are several records that do not tell the story of what happened and when, following a young person being missing from the home. It is therefore difficult for leaders to monitor the response of staff to these situations, and assess staff practice.

Behaviour management is largely good, but the new staff team needs to continue to develop their confidence. Managers are fully aware of this and have provided training recently, which all staff attended. Managers continue to support staff in developing their skills. One young person confirmed that staff remain calm when young people get aggressive. They said: 'It doesn't spoil the day.'

Restraints are very rare, demonstrating a more positive, talking approach. Staff are very good at debriefing young people after behavioural incidents. However, they have omitted to ask the young person about the actual restraint that was used. This is a missed opportunity for staff to ascertain the young person's own views about how the restraint felt and hear any comments about staff performance.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager has shared her time between this home and another home a few miles away, which she is also registered to manage. This arrangement has proved difficult. The registered manager's time at this home has been restricted, because of her concentration on the other home. However, the deputy manager has helped to keep the home running smoothly. The quality of care provided to young people has not been compromised. One young person spoke about the deputy manager, saying: 'She has loads of experience and she doesn't judge.' A young person also reported that the registered manager is 'absolutely brilliant'. It is clear that young people feel like their home is well managed.

Several new staff have joined the home since the last inspection. Over half of the staff have worked at the home for less than a year. The team is still developing and need a lot of support. A newly admitted young person presented with behavioural needs that some staff did not feel very confident to manage. However, staff do receive the support they need and their expertise in this area is developing all the time.

Managers are very aware of the shortfalls raised in this inspection and were already aware of the improvements needed. This is very positive and shows that the home is well led.

Staff receive an induction when they first come to work at the home. They are given good support from their manager. Regular one-to-one sessions with a manager provide opportunities for staff to discuss their practice. They all have their performance monitored. Training is organised to make sure that staff are up to date with mandatory training, such as behaviour management, first aid and safeguarding. Some further training around young people's specific needs is required to make sure that staff have current knowledge of self-harm and drug use. It is also noted that training has not yet been provided on female genital mutilation. Staff may not be aware of how to safeguard young people in relation to this in the future.

Young people are always at the centre of the leadership decisions. They are fully involved in the operation of the home. Their choices about their day-to-day lives are fully taken into consideration. Young people's complaints are dealt with extremely well. This is a real strength. Their views are always seen as very important by managers. This builds young people's confidence and self-esteem. Young people learn that they can, and should, have their say about events in their own lives.

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: 1229762

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: Rosemary Densley

Inspector

Caroline Brailsford, social care regulatory inspector

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