

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

This home provides care and accommodation for three children who may require emotional and/or social support. The manager registered in 2016 and possesses the required level 5 qualification.

Inspection dates: 16 to 17 October 2018

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 outstanding

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

Date of last inspection: 5 September 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
05/09/2017	Full	Good
24/01/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
27/09/2016	Full	Good

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

Recommendations

- The registered person must ensure that recruitment, supervision and performance management of staff safeguard children and minimise potential risks to them. ('Guide to the children's home regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1)

In particular, seek certificates of good conduct when staff have lived or worked overseas.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the last inspection, four children have moved into the home and two have moved out. This amount of change is unusual for this home, as children usually stay long term. One child has lived here for three years.

A social worker commended the staff for their persistence and consistency. The tenacity of staff has enabled a child to start college when this was not thought possible last year. This child had been out of education for some time. Attending college has enabled the child to make friends and become more independent.

The two other children in the home are relatively new. Staff are working closely with their schools to ensure that the children maintain their high level of attendance.

Children have positive and established routines. Staff and children eat together as a family. Children are encouraged to gradually become independent. This includes learning to budget, cook, iron and travel by public transport. These life skills will assist children in their adult lives. The children living at the home currently do not like to participate in children's meetings. One child said that he dislikes them and dislikes having to sign everything because 'you don't do that in a family home'.

Staff work with the therapeutic team to devise the children's behaviour support plans. This joint approach assists the staff in understanding the children's behaviour and their past trauma. The children's views, gained through discussion and key-work sessions, are incorporated into their plans. Staff work closely with the children to build in degrees of 'normal risk'. These include increasing amounts of free time and the use of public transport.

The children's personalised weekly planners include their chosen activities, such as guitar and drumming lessons. The children's memory books are used to capture these varied activities and experiences. The memory books provide the children with lasting pictures

and memories of their time living here.

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

The house is currently very settled following a period of instability earlier in the year. This instability was due to the behaviour of two children who have since moved on. Their behaviour led to concerns about how well the matching process was working when managers were considering new admissions. However, in reviewing the decision-making process for their admission, there was no information to suggest that they could not be successfully placed together. There have been no physical interventions in the past year. Staff use de-escalation and distraction techniques effectively.

Staff work tirelessly to reduce the children's risk-taking behaviour. There were concerns about a child who was going missing from the home, and their drug use and suspected county lines involvement. The children's key-work sessions are used to discuss areas of concern. They are also used to highlight concerns to the children that their families, the staff or social workers have. Sessions have included knife crime, staying safe and sexual health. These conversations help the children to recognise their behaviours and to prevent future incidents.

The children said that they can speak to staff about any worries. The staff respond sensitively and take appropriate action in response to the concerns raised.

If a child goes missing from the home, staff follow the child and try to maintain contact with them. They also liaise with the professionals who conduct the independent return home interviews. This ensures that staff can incorporate any pertinent information into the child's plans and risk assessments. The manager is still involved in strategy meetings concerning a child who has moved out of the home. This demonstrates her ongoing commitment to the children. Staff used their experience and expertise to support a local child's parents whose child was reported missing for the first time.

The location risk assessment is a live document. The risks are continually being considered. A recent update includes concerns about county lines activity in the local area.

Despite the overall robustness of the recruitment checks, a shortfall has been identified. This relates to the failure to secure some indication of staff conduct when staff originate from, or have had lengths of time working, overseas.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The manager has been in post for several years and she is suitably qualified. She is continually seeking ways to develop her team's skills. Her enthusiasm is mirrored by her staff. One member of staff said, 'I love it here. Every day is different.' Another said, 'It is a joy coming on shift.' Their passion is reflected through their rapport with the children.

The manager is ambitious for the children. A child sexual exploitation worker was full of

praise for the manager and her team. She stated that their work had enhanced a particular child's life chances.

Children have access to advocates, but the staff also advocate on their behalf. A social worker described the manager's reputation for always being forthcoming in voicing the child's needs and chasing the placing authority for missing paperwork. The manager often challenges professionals to ensure that the children's needs are met, particularly when their decision-making seems questionable. An example is challenging the decision to move a child to a school which Ofsted had judged as inadequate.

The manager is equally ambitious for her staff. Her encouragement enables her staff to flourish. She builds on their strengths and supports them to take on designated tasks and demonstrate their leadership skills. Her aim is to develop them into future managers.

Staff take part in a wide range of training, including courses identified by the manager. This recently included a training course about the dark web and associated mobile phone apps. This bespoke training helps the staff to stay aware of current risks.

All staff contribute to research and they share information that can be used to underpin their work and inform decision-making. This information provides staff with a range of resources that they are using to explore issues with the children.

The manager has a clear understanding of the strengths of the team. She has combined her understanding with the outcomes of the independent visitor reports to form a development plan for the team.

The manager has created a monthly 'Proud Cloud'. This is a creative way of sharing positive thoughts about colleagues and children. The children also share positive comments about the staff and each other.

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: Kenneth Farrimond

Registered manager: Kelly Ford

Inspector

Sonia Hay, social care regulatory inspector

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