

# 1256795

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 registered to provide care and accommodation for up to four children or young people who may exhibit emotional and behavioural difficulties and mild or moderate learning disabilities. The home offers short-, medium- or long-term residential placements for children and young people aged eight to 18 years of age.

The aim is to provide a period of stability to allow children and young people to reflect on their difficulties and make future plans based on a comprehensive assessment of their social, emotional/behavioural, physical and educational needs and a dynamic care plan.

The previous registered manager left the home in May 2018. The manager of the service has applied for registration with Ofsted. The manager has over 10 years of experience of working with children and young people. This includes experience in a residential setting in a supervisory capacity.

**Inspection dates:** 9 to 10 January 2019

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

**requires improvement to be good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected

requires improvement to be good

The effectiveness of leaders and managers

requires improvement to be good

The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

**Date of last inspection:** 28 November 2017

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## **Recent inspection history**

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>Inspection type</b>	<b>Inspection judgement</b>
28/11/2017	Full	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
<p>In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff—</p> <p>if the registered person considers, or staff consider, a placing authority's or a relevant person's performance or response to be inadequate in relation to their role, challenge the placing authority or the relevant person to seek to ensure that each child's needs are met in accordance with the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 5(c))</p>	28/02/2019
<p>The education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>help each child to achieve the child's education and training targets, as recorded in the child's relevant plans;</p> <p>help a child who is excluded from school, or who is of compulsory school age but not attending school, to access educational and training support throughout the period of exclusion or non-attendance and to return to school as soon as possible. (Regulation 8(1)(2)(a)(i)(viii))</p>	28/02/2019
<p>The health and well-being standard is that—</p> <p>the health and well-being needs of children are met.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff help each child to—</p>	28/02/2019

<p>achieve the health and well-being outcomes that are recorded in the child's relevant plans.</p> <p>that each child is registered as a patient with a general medical practitioner and a registered dental practitioner. (Regulation 10(1)(a)(2)(a)(i)(b))</p>	
<p>The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare. (Regulation 12(1)(2)(vi))</p>	28/02/2019
<p>The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that—</p> <p>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and</p> <p>promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13(1)(2)(h))</p>	28/02/2019
<p>The care planning standard is that children—</p> <p>receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that arrangements are in place to—</p> <p>manage and review the placement of each child in the home. (Regulation 14(1)(a)(2)(b)(ii))</p>	28/02/2019

<p>The registered person must ensure that—</p> <p>within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ('the authorised person')—</p> <p>has spoken to the user about the measure; and</p> <p>has signed the record to confirm it is accurate: and</p> <p>within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35(3)(b)(i)(ii)(c))</p>	28/02/2019
<p>The registered person must ensure that a record is made of any complaint, the action taken in response, and the outcome of any investigation. (Regulation 39(3))</p>	28/02/2019

## Recommendations

- Staff should have an understanding of how schools function, including the processes for admissions to schools, the role of designated teachers for looked-after children and the role of the Virtual School Head, SENCO, learning mentor or teacher. Staff must challenge the child's education or training provider if the child does not receive sufficient support to progress as outlined in their relevant plans. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 27, paragraph 5.10)
- Homes have a key role in organising and ensuring each child's attendance at the necessary primary and secondary health services. Most health services that a child needs to access will be provided by other organisations. If these services are not accessible, or are withdrawn, staff should inform and engage with those who also hold a responsibility for the child's health to ensure their health needs are met under regulation 5 – engaging with the wider system to ensure children's needs are met. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 34, paragraph 7.11)
- Expectations of standards of behaviour should be high for all staff and children in the home. These standards should be clear and unambiguous. Children should be supported to develop understanding and empathy towards each other. Positive behaviour and relationships should be reinforced, praised and encouraged; poor behaviour should be challenged and discussed. The development of safe, stable and secure relationships with staff in the home should be central to the ethos of the home and support 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)

- The registered person should ensure that all incidents of control, discipline and restraint are subject to systems of regular scrutiny to ensure that their use is fair and the above principles as set out in 9.35 are respected. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.36)
- Staff should be familiar with the home's policies on record keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. Staff should record information on individual children in a non-stigmatising way that distinguishes between fact, opinion and third-party information. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good**

Since the last inspection, four children and young people have left the home; three of those were unplanned endings following safeguarding incidents. Three children and young people are currently living at the home. Children and young people have built close and trusting relationships with a stable and consistent staff team.

Educational progress is variable. One child is attending and engaging in education. The other child and young person had no current educational placement to attend at the time of the inspection. Staff have worked with placing authorities to identify appropriate provision. In one case, there have been some considerable delays and the manager of the home has worked with other professionals to seek appropriate resolution.

There is a lack of evidence of structure to children's and young people's daily routines and an absence of alternative educational support. The manager could not produce up-to-date educational plans and there is a lack of escalation where educational progress meetings have been delayed. This will make the transition of returning to education more difficult for those young people concerned and does not promote and ensure that children and young people reach their full academic potential.

Healthcare progress is also mixed. None of the children were registered with a dental practice at the time of the inspection. All of the children and young people had refused to attend appointments and had been deregistered from local practices. This matter was rectified by the manager immediately during the inspection.

Some children and young people had not had a recent health assessment within the last year. There is a history of non-engagement for some in this process, but there was a lack of evidence of escalation when appointments had not been forthcoming. There was

also an absence of key work evidencing encouragement to attend appointments and explaining the consequences of not doing so. One child who has historically refused to attend any healthcare appointments has had a very important blood test. This was reflected as excellent progress in the feedback obtained from one social worker.

Some children and young people have improved diets. The staff team is encouraging children and young people to engage in leading a healthy and active lifestyle. Some children and young people attend the local gym. Children and young people are socialising with appropriate friendship groups in the local area. Children and young people report that they are happy and feel settled at the home.

Staff ensure that children and young people have regular contact with their families and people who are important to them. Regular house meetings take place where children and young people have a say in their day-to-day care arrangements.

### **How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good**

There have been some significant safeguarding incidents that have occurred at the home. The incidents were not deemed to be predictable or preventable. The incidents have been well managed, and the leadership team has evaluated events to ensure that a culture of continuous learning exists in the home.

Children and young people are rarely missing from the home. On the occasions when this has occurred, the responses from the staff are well coordinated. The manager has sought independent return interviews.

Children and young people have individual therapeutic support plans that outline strategies for the staff team to manage their behaviour in a positive way. Key-work sessions are held with children and young people with a view to assisting them in reflecting on their behaviour. These sessions have not always been recorded fully, and those that have could be further enhanced to include the outcome of the session.

At least two complaints have been made to the setting. The manager explained the responses to the complaints and how satisfactory resolutions for all parties were reached. This had not been recorded in the manner required by regulation.

On one occasion, a safeguarding concern was raised by a professional from another agency about the practice of a member of staff. This was investigated and managed internally but was not raised with appropriate authorities in an expeditious manner. This does not ensure that practice concerns are afforded appropriate external scrutiny. The matter had already been referred to the designated officer by another agency and has since reached a satisfactory conclusion.

Physical interventions are rare. When they do occur, they are appropriate and proportionate given the context of the incident. Debriefings have not been held routinely with staff, children or young people by the manager or an authorised person within the

timescales outlined in the regulations.

The home is checked regularly for hazards to ensure that children and young people live in a safe environment. The physical environment in the home is welcoming, comfortable and well maintained.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good**

The interim manager has been leading the home since April 2018 and has applied for registration with Ofsted. The manager has 10 years of experience working in a variety of settings, which include residential care settings with children and young people. He is in the process of completing a level 5 leadership qualification.

Throughout the inspection, deficiencies in the quality of care and shortfalls in compliance with regulations were identified. The manager responded appropriately and took immediate action to rectify as many of them as possible.

Staff report that the service is well managed and that they feel well supported in their roles. Staff have accessed a variety of training opportunities and have had regular practice-based and clinical supervision sessions. This provides them with opportunities to reflect on and improve their practice.

Monitoring systems have not been sufficiently rigorous to identify missing statutory care planning documentation. Some deficiencies in record-keeping practices were identified. Children's and young people's care plans that are completed by the home to monitor any progress made have not been routinely updated. This means that children and young people are not receiving effectively planned care.

Placing authorities and other partners have provided positive feedback about the service. One social worker said: 'They have built good relationships with [name of young person]. I am happy they meet his needs as best as they can.' One independent reviewing officer said: '[Name of young person] is happy in placement, attending education and making good progress.'

## **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:** 1256795

**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:** Claire Holtby

**Registered manager:** post vacant

## Inspector

Nicola Thomas: social care inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence>, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at <http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: <http://www.gov.uk/ofsted>

© Crown copyright 2019