

SC007284

Registered provider: Horizon Residential Children's Home

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home provides long-term placements for up to six young people. The home's statement of purpose states that care will be provided to young people who may present with challenging and/or offending behaviours.

The home is privately owned and is one of three children's homes run by the same company. The company also provides a range of other services for children and adults.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since April 2000.

Inspection dates: 7 to 8 October 2019

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

How well children and young people are helped and protected outstanding

The effectiveness of leaders and managers outstanding

The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the staff within the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: 11 December 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/12/2018	Full	Outstanding
14/11/2017	Full	Outstanding
23/03/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
23/11/2016	Full	Outstanding

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>A person may only manage a children’s home if—</p> <p>having regard to the size of the home, its statement of purpose, and the number and needs (including any needs arising from any disability) of the children—</p> <p>the person has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills to manage the home effectively and lead the care of children; and</p> <p>by the relevant date, attained—</p> <p>the Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management for Residential Childcare (England) (‘the Level 5 Diploma’); or</p> <p>a qualification which the registered provider considers to be equivalent to the Level 5 Diploma.</p> <p>The relevant date is—</p> <p>in the case of a person who was managing a home on 1st April 2014, 1st April 2017. (Regulation 28 (1)(b)(i)(2)(c)(3)(b))</p>	<p>01/01/2020</p>

Recommendations

- Any home using CCTV or other monitoring equipment should have a written policy describing how this will support the safeguarding and well-being of those living and working in the home in accordance with regulation 24. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 16, paragraph 3.16)

Specifically, the registered person should review the use of the bedroom-door alarms and plan for the reduction in their use.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Young people receive care of excellent quality that has a profoundly positive effect on their lives. Staff's in-depth understanding of the impact of early experiences, neglect and trauma on a child's development is the essence of the exceptional effectiveness of their practices. Staff place a fundamental value on the voice of the young people and see their uniqueness in the context of their life-histories.

Staff always make an effort to see things from the perspective of a particular young person. Young people spoke about being respected for who they are. One young person described the best thing about the home as being given freedom to be themselves.

Members of staff and managers always make decisions that are in the best interest of the young people. Staff ensure that the young people can access independent advocacy services to further their causes. In one case, this has led to the court reversing the placing authority's decision to move a young person to a fostering placement from this home. This young person was making excellent progress and wished to remain in the home.

Staff are exceptionally skilled in forming positive relationships with the young people. One young person described how, as soon as he stepped into the home, he knew that this was the right home for him. Young people talked fondly about all the staff and one young person said that each staff member is his favourite.

Young people are proud of the physical environment in which they live. The home is well maintained, and the young people contribute to this. Young people and their social workers have consented to the use of alarms on their bedroom doors. The policy on surveillance is currently under review to make sure that, while keeping everyone safe, the environment is as homely as possible, and the rights of young people are appropriately respected.

Young people's behaviours improve significantly over time, and those with a history of offending have stopped engaging in offending behaviours. Parents talked about their children's behaviours improving 'beyond recognition'. Young people come across as open, polite, kind and friendly. They are interested in their own self-development and helping others do the same.

Young people are supported to make excellent progress in their learning and in the development of personal and life-skills. Some of the young people have made exceptional progress in their education engagement and attainment. Examples include 100% school attendance after a prolonged period of non-attendance, reintegration into mainstream education, engaging with a personal tutor for the first time after many years of non-engagement and being the top student in their class.

Comprehensive admission and matching procedures contribute to the young people

settling into the home with ease and developing lasting friendships with each other. High placement stability and shared positive experiences give the young people a sense of belonging and confidence to take life-changing steps. Many ex-residents keep in touch with staff and continue to draw strength from the transformational relationships that they have formed.

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

The home has a strong safeguarding culture. Staff use every opportunity to enable the young people to live safer lives. Staff respond with authentic warmth, calm, empathy, sensitivity and rational advice to the young people's views, feelings and behaviours, including those which may be fuelled by hurt, anger and mistrust.

Young people reported that they felt safe and protected. They trust staff's non-judgemental attitudes and their ability to help the young people with any worries that they may have. Discussions about keeping safe happen regularly in the home, and the young people are comfortable approaching staff for advice and help at any time.

The excellent relationships between the young people and staff underpin the young people's strong sense of safety and security. The stability provided by an orderly environment, regular routines and firm boundaries deepens this sense further. Knowing what is going to happen and the reliability of staff's mature and positive responses help the young people to engage and grow in confidence.

Staff empower the young people to make better choices and to develop resilience. Young people have excellent opportunities to contribute to creating solutions to any difficulties that they experience. Having a meaningful say in setting targets and rewards gives them a sense of control and responsibility.

The home's risk assessments and management plans are exceptionally thorough and effective. Staff have an excellent understanding of the risks of criminal and sexual exploitation. The assessments of young people's vulnerability to exploitation are particularly detailed and incisive. Young people are encouraged to complete online courses on a wide range of safeguarding topics, such as social networking and internet safety, gangs, risks associated with going missing and carrying a knife, first aid and sexual health.

Young people's improved understanding of contextual risks and the staff's consistent implementation of safeguarding strategies and procedures when young people go missing have had a positive impact on their safety. Young people with a history of going missing frequently and for extended periods of time have reduced these episodes. Young people break their curfews less frequently and to a much lesser degree.

Staff ensure that incidents are managed well. They finely balance the care and control of the young people with the desire not to criminalise them. Staff help the young people to understand the positive role that the police and probationary services play in keeping our society safe and help young people to engage constructively with them.

Staff work proactively with their safeguarding partners to enhance young people's safety. Substance-misuse specialists are currently running an intensive programme in the home. This includes workshops for all the young people as well as individually tailored specialist support to those young people who need it.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

Leaders and managers are highly ambitious for the young people and have an exceptional level of commitment towards providing the best care to them. They have developed a culture of high expectations and continuous service improvement. This is the home's 10th consecutive outstanding judgement under the same leadership and management team.

Leaders, managers and staff pay great attention to detail in all aspects of their work. They have implemented highly developed policies, processes, procedures and recording formats. The quality of records on the young people's files is exceptional and demonstrates that evidence-based care practices are fully embedded.

The excellent promotion and consideration of equality and diversity issues are intrinsic to the care provided. Care plans pay particular attention to the young people's needs relating to their ethnic and cultural background, including any disability that they may have or anything else that might disadvantage them. Young people's ability to see other points of view and respect other people who are different from them is increasing as staff work hard to raise this awareness. This is having a positive impact on their overall learning and the development of social skills and social integration.

The provider ensures that resources are available to enable the home to fulfil its commitment to continued improvement and excellence. The investment in the building fabric, including the fire-proofing of the basement, complements the significant human resource investment in developing staff and retaining managers.

Excellent training opportunities, regular updates on research and strong reflective practice contribute to the continued development of the expertise within the staff team. Evaluating care practices is a part of the team's life and happens during daily shift-handovers, team meetings and the completion of monthly key-workers' reports. Case-management discussions form an important part of the professional supervision that all staff receive on a frequent basis.

The provider is highly respected in the sector. One placement officer highlighted how the range of the different services that this organisation provides adds value to the young people's placements. He said that once young people are placed with this organisation they have a secure and positive future ahead of them. For example, some young people's journeys through care started at this organisation's emergency home, where they received a thorough assessment of needs and then continued through being placed long term in this home, before moving onto to the same organisation's semi-independent services.

The organisation's outreach and family support work helps leaders, managers and staff to develop expertise in these important aspects of social care. They promote young people's contact and relationships with their families exceptionally well. Examples include sensitively helping families to rebuild their broken relationships and enabling some of the young people to return to live with their families sooner than originally envisaged.

The registered manager is a highly experienced and qualified social worker, who has continued to provide excellent leadership and management. In May 2019, he submitted his final papers to obtain his qualification in management at an appropriate level. However, his training provider has failed to issue the certificate so far and, therefore, the requirement regarding the registered manager's qualification has been restated in this report.

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: SC007284

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Horizon Residential Children's Home

Registered provider address: 46 The Ridgeway, North Harrow, Harrow, Middlesex
HA2 7QN

Responsible individual: Mehnaaz Chaudhary

Registered manager: St Clair Simmons Muhammad

Inspector

Seka Graovac, social care inspector

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