

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: 30 to 31 January 2020

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 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: 16 October 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
16/10/2018	Full	Good
05/09/2017	Full	Good
24/01/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
27/09/2016	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

The children are thriving and say that they feel happy and safe at the home. They are extremely responsive to the therapeutic approach that underpins the work of the team. Children have forged positive relationships with staff, particularly their key workers. One child referred to staff as their 'other family'.

There is warmth in the interactions between children and staff. Children identify with certain staff for certain things. Some of the children feel that shift changes are preferable to living with a single set of carers, as the staff shift pattern provides them with a change of face and makes each day a fresh start. The staff creatively use resources such as mood cards and notes to enable children to express themselves. This has been particularly helpful to a child who was unable to vocalise their mood or feelings. These positive interactions, and changes in children's behaviour, have enabled progress to be made in improving familial relationships and increasing the time that children spend with those important to them.

The children's participation and attendance at school, or in-home tuition, is continually improving. A tutor praised the staff for helping a child to be ready for lessons and describes how these improvements mean that he is now ready to sit exams.

Children have exciting opportunities, many of which are new experiences. A child described several activities that he had participated in for the first time. He beamed with pride as he spoke about the day that staff surprised him with a trip to watch his favourite football team play a match. These activities are developing children's confidence and their belief that positive things can happen for them.

Staff act as passionate advocates for children. This has meant that children's views are acted on and has enabled them to feel heard and included in the plans for their future.

Children experience a smooth transition into and out of the home. Several children are still in touch with the team, despite moving out some time ago. This demonstrates the important part that staff continue to play in the children's lives.

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

The manager has challenged the appropriateness of decision-making in relation to referrals to the home. This has led to a significantly improved matching process.

Prior to the change in admission processes, the home experienced a period when children were going missing regularly. This was, largely, a continuation of patterns of behaviours that children arrived with. Staff diligently followed the relevant protocols and worked tirelessly to help the children address the reasons why they were going missing. This included liaising with the local missing persons team to ensure that it remained abreast of local risks, processes and procedures. Missing from home episodes are no longer an issue. Staff are successfully using different strategies to ensure that children recognise when their behaviour is placing them or others at risk.

Staff provide consistent boundaries that enable children to understand what the expectations are regarding acceptable behaviour. Staff repeatedly highlight when behaviour such as swearing starts to occur. Children have access to therapy sessions and staff use input from the clinical team to identify suitable alternative strategies to address any negative behaviour. However, the most beneficial factor that is changing children's behaviour is their mutually respectful relationships with staff.

The team explores topics and uses training to broaden its knowledge. This includes conducting lessons-learned activities following significant events. This reflective approach, alongside regular refresher training and ongoing research, enhances staff's practice.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The staff speak positively and enthusiastically about the manager. They describe her as supportive. She leads by example and has high expectations of staff to ensure that the children receive the best possible care.

The manager's leadership style includes mentoring and encouraging staff development. This enables staff to learn new skills and enhance, and share, their individual areas of expertise.

The manager and team know all aspects of each child's progress and advocate for children very positively. The manager has actively challenged the decision-making in respect of referrals being received and the lack of accurate accompanying information from placing authorities. Her affirmative action is ensuring that the home provides the stability that children need.

Feedback received in relation to partnership working is positive. This joined-up approach promotes a consistent response to children from all the stakeholders involved in their lives.

Equality and diversity underpin every aspect of care. Staff ensure that they have a full understanding of each child's cultural needs, sometimes undertaking research, to enable them to meet those needs. One child said that he enjoyed teaching staff about his culture and he appreciated that they had taken the time to learn about his country and his religion.

The team ensures that children make lasting memories and have photographs and memorabilia that they can take with them when they move on. The manager carries out regular file audits to ensure that the children's information is accessible and meaningful, now and in the future, when they access their files as adults.

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: Emma Carrington

Registered manager: Kelly Ford

Inspector

Sonia Hay, Social Care Inspector

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