

1234243

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 is a privately owned home. It can provide care for up to three children with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in December 2018.

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of state, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

We last visited this setting on 9 December 2020 to carry out an assurance visit. The report is published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection dates: 28 to 29 September 2021

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

How well children and young people are helped and protected **inadequate**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **inadequate**

There are serious failures that mean children and young people are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded. The care and experiences of children and young people are poor and they are not making progress.

Date of last inspection: 11 December 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: Good

Enforcement action since last inspection: None

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/12/2019	Full	Good
26/02/2019	Full	Good
22/02/2018	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
19/09/2017	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

The overall experience of children is inadequate because the home's management has been poor. The conduct of the registered manager has been poor, and quality assurance systems have been ineffective.

One child's bedroom was unhygienic and potentially unsafe. Hazards in the room presented a potential risk to the child. The room had not been checked by staff. The failure to ensure a safe, nurturing environment does not promote the welfare of children.

One child does not yet have a school place. Although he is participating in structured educational activities in the home, provided by a commissioned tutor, he is missing the opportunity to interact with peers and to participate in school-based group activities. Leaders and managers have not escalated concerns with the placing local authority to ensure a school placement is prioritised for this child.

Staff have arranged health screening for children and supported children to attend appointments with primary health services. However, leaders and managers have not ensured that staff are proactively following up one child's significant dental health needs. They have also not sought advice promptly from opticians about another child who is not currently wearing the glasses that are prescribed for him.

Staff consult with children. However, there is little evidence of children's views and wishes informing the development of the home. There is no tracking of responses to concerns or requests raised by children. As a result, it is not clear how children's concerns are addressed.

One child's records did not include an up-to-date education, health and care plan or information about outcomes from a statutory looked after review. As a result, the child's placement plan is not informed by up-to-date multi-agency assessments and decisions.

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

Managers do not review risk management and behaviour support plans effectively, to ensure that they are suitable. For example, there was no detailed risk assessment in place, about children's contact with family members. This resulted in a child returning to the home with items that might have presented risks to the child or other children in the home.

The home has adopted a particular therapeutic parenting approach. However, this approach is not consistently applied by all staff. When there have been incidents of concern, there is little evidence that leaders and managers have reflected on the specific strategies and interventions used by staff. The clinical specialists, who support the approach within the home, have not always been consulted about care strategies. This means that therapeutic behaviour support plans and practice within the home are not always effective.

The quality of individual work with children is not being routinely monitored and evaluated by leaders and managers. Some individual work is not purposeful and is not informed by agreed behavioural targets.

In some cases when complaints and concerns have been raised about managers, these have not been reviewed or investigated properly. Significant concerns about a manager's conduct that had an impact on children, were not reported promptly. The impact on children of potentially inappropriate management conduct has not been recognised or addressed. Whistle-blowing procedures have not been used effectively to safeguard children.

At the time of the inspection, management arrangements had been changed, and oversight of the home had been enhanced. Children's welfare is currently being carefully monitored by senior leaders.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

Leaders and managers have not provided a supportive environment for staff. Some staff have not received supervision for over a year. This means that they have not had an opportunity to share concerns about practice with their manager, have not received professional guidance to develop practice and have not been asked about their welfare.

Staff have raised concerns about the style of management in the home. They did not feel that feedback about their practice was supportive or constructive. Management did not build staff confidence or support their professional development. When there were incidents involving a child's behaviour, staff did not have the opportunity to reflect on lessons learned but felt blamed and criticised. Senior managers did not have robust oversight of the effectiveness of management practice within the home.

Leaders and managers have not managed the home in a way that is consistent with the stated approach and ethos as set out in the home's statement of purpose. Staff report behaviours by managers that would have an impact on the welfare of the children witnessing those behaviours.

Although leaders and managers attended the majority of children's care planning meetings with social workers, the outcomes of the meetings were not shared with staff. Consequently, staff do not demonstrate a clear understanding of children's care plans. Up-to-date plans were not available in some children's records.

There has not been effective monitoring of the quality of care in the home by leaders and managers. Senior managers' audits and independent visitor reports have identified shortfalls in management oversight and quality of care in the home. However, senior managers have not ensured that effective action has been taken to address the shortfalls.

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>The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who—</p> <p>understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children;</p> <p>use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>understand and apply the home's statement of purpose;</p> <p>ensure that staff—</p> <p>understand and apply the home's statement of purpose;</p> <p>protect and promote each child's welfare;</p> <p>treat each child with dignity and respect. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(i)(ii)(iii))</p>	29/10 /2021
<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>assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child;</p>	29/10/2021

<p>help each child to understand how to keep safe;</p> <p>have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm;</p> <p>manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other;</p> <p>understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person;</p> <p>take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and</p> <p>are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii))</p>	
<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>lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose;</p> <p>ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate;</p> <p>ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child;</p> <p>ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(c)(e))</p>	<p>29/10/2021</p>
<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>29/10/2021</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)(a)(b)(2)(h))</p>	
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Recommendations

- Where children placed in a home are not participating in education because they have been excluded, or not on a school roll for some other reason, the registered person and staff must work closely with the placing authority so that the child is supported and enabled to resume full-time education as soon as possible. In the interim, the child should be supported to sustain or regain their confidence in education and be engaged in suitable structured activities. If no education place is identified by the placing authority, the registered person must challenge them to meet the child's needs under Regulation 5 (engaging with the wider system to ensure children's needs are being met). ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 28, paragraph 5.15)
- When a child needs additional health or well-being support staff should work with the child's placing authority to enable proper and immediate access to any specialist support required. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 34, paragraph 7.10)
- Supervision of staff practice should ensure that individual adults in the home are engaged in the safeguarding culture of the home so they understand what they would need to do if they found other staff misusing or abusing their position to the detriment and safety of a child. 'Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 43, paragraph 9.14)

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people, 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: 1234243

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: Luke Taylor

Registered manager: Daniel Wheatstone

Inspector

Cathey Moriarty, Social Care Inspector

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