

# 1245572

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 is operated by a private company. It provides care for up to four children who may experience emotional and/or social difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in May 2020.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021.

We last visited this home on 19 November 2020 to carry out a monitoring visit. The report is published on the Ofsted website.

### Inspection dates: 21 and 22 December 2021

<b>Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account</b>	<b>good</b>
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

**Date of last inspection:** 19 November 2019

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
19/11/2019	Full	Good
19/09/2018	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
12/06/2018	Full	Good
03/10/2017	Full	Requires improvement to be good

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good**

Children receive individualised care and support from nurturing and caring staff, which has allowed them to make good progress from their starting points. Children moving into the home are well prepared through introductory chats and visits to the home. Children are warmly welcomed by friendly staff and the existing child. This has helped a child who has moved into the home recently to feel comfortable and settle in quickly.

In the past year, three children have successfully transitioned out of the home. The continued support from the staff team has allowed the children to return to their birth and alternative families effectively. Some children remain in touch. One child's stay at the home ended prematurely. This was because the local authority failed to provide all necessary information for an appropriate match. The manager facilitated a smooth transition for the child and, despite the abrupt ending, the child made progress. The child's social worker said, 'I can clearly say that the staff were excellent with her in terms of understanding her trauma and lived experience.'

The staff show genuine affection towards the children and maintain clear boundaries to provide children with a sense of security. The staff understand the children's unique personalities and characteristics. The staff and the children have good relationships, and the children say that they like the staff. This enables the children to gain the trust of the staff, deal with sensitive issues and raise any complaints.

The staff talk to children individually and together about a range of topics that are relevant to their experiences, needs and wishes. Children are praised and rewarded in recognition of their achievements. Milestones in the children's lives are celebrated and marked by once-in-a-lifetime experiences, such as a helicopter ride. This respects the children's individual journeys.

Children are supported by the staff to attend their education settings. Effective links between the home and education providers have been created to help overcome any barriers to the children's attendance and learning outcomes. One child does not engage consistently in their education despite the encouragement from the staff. This could result in them not reaching their full potential.

The children have access to appropriate primary and specialist healthcare services that meet their specific physical and emotional health needs. Effective in-house clinical support is provided to the staff to help them to manage the children's behaviours.

Staff facilitate the interests and hobbies of the children, which enables children to create memories. Younger children enjoy childhood play, watching cartoons, playing on the games console and attending classes based on their talents. Older children

enjoy spending time with friends, shopping and watching films. One older child's interest in a sporting activity is growing and it could result in the provider sponsoring the child so that they can pursue this interest.

Children's time with family and friends is aided by the staff team, which ensures that children remain connected to their identity and the important people in their lives.

The support that children receive to develop their independence skills is helping them to make better choices and do more for themselves. In one example, a child showed exceedingly good cooking skills when preparing a meal for everyone in the home. Due to the innovative and creative method of the presentation, the meal looked exceptionally appetising.

The home has been refurbished in consultation with the children to a tasteful and comfortable standard. At the time of the inspection, the home was decorated with Christmas accessories, which added to the festive atmosphere. The Christmas 'mischievous elves' were strategically placed around the home, which was keeping everyone entertained.

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

The staff understand the children's vulnerabilities and behaviours that may place children in danger, and they act on any concerns as a responsible parent would.

The staff know how to manage the children's behaviours effectively, which has reduced the risks. The staff follow the children's individual written risk assessments, which are up to date. Consequently, good risk management strategies combined with educating the children about keeping themselves safe improve the children's sense of safety. One child rated their safety at the home as 'ten out of ten'. Similarly, professionals consider children to be safeguarded effectively at the home.

Children are protected from harm due to the strong partnerships that the staff team has with the police and social workers. Staff follow the children's individual safety plans. The manager and staff have been proactive in disrupting incidents in which children have been involved in the community and they report concerns promptly. These practices keep children at the centre of safeguarding practices at the home.

Incidents of aggression from children have reduced significantly, particularly since the group dynamics have changed with children leaving the home. The positive relationships between the staff and children enable the staff to talk to the children when their behaviour has escalated, in a child-centred and nurturing way. This helps the children to reflect on their behaviour and learn to self-regulate. Clinical consultations and regular team discussions with the staff team provide supportive strategies that inform staff practice. Children rarely experience physical intervention because it is used only as a last resort.

No children have been missing from the home for several weeks. Appropriate missing-from-care procedures are followed when children have gone missing, and

the staff make every effort to locate the child to ensure their safe return. The discussions with children when they return home are thorough and intend to prevent further incidents of children going missing from care.

Allegations that children have made against staff have been managed appropriately.

Concerns in relation to bullying and child exploitation are not known to affect the children currently. Regular health and safety checks ensure that the home is safe and free from hazards.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good**

Leaders and managers have an ambitious yet realistic vision to create a pleasant and nurturing environment where children can flourish. This is projected through the manager's clear, child-focused leadership and high expectations of the staff team to deliver the best possible outcomes for the children.

Leaders and managers have a fully comprehensive understanding of the children's needs, progress and plans. The manager is well supported by the responsible individual and feels enabled to fulfil their role with skill and care. The manager leads by example and role models what is expected from the staff team. The manager ensures that the staff work together purposefully to achieve the aims and objectives of the statement of purpose.

Staff feel valued and supported by the manager and they are complimentary about the quality of the teamwork. One staff member described working at the home as a 'home from home'. The staff feel that the manager consults with them and listens to their views. This keeps everyone involved in the children's care plans and the running of the home.

Mandatory and bespoke training, regular staff meetings and daily handovers support the staff to share information, engage in learning and development opportunities and discuss and reflect on the children's progress.

Some staff have left the home. New staff have settled into the team and have built positive relationships with the children. However, the gap in one new recruit's employment history had not been checked prior to their appointment to ensure robust recruitment checks. The home has a vacancy for a senior staff member. Although this is placing some pressure on the staffing rota, a recruitment campaign intends to resolve this matter.

The registered manager understands the home's strengths and areas for development. Their internal monitoring system evaluates the children's quality of care and protection. The manager welcomes the external advice and scrutiny, which helps to facilitate the growth of the service. The visits that are conducted by the independent person act as a 'critical friend'. The findings in the reports following the monthly visits satisfy the provider and stakeholders that children are safeguarded effectively and that their well-being is promoted.

The registered manager acts as a strong advocate for the children. She ensures that she professionally challenges other agencies when they are not fulfilling their responsibilities to children effectively.

The three requirements have been addressed. These relate to matching children to the home and improving the quality of records. Although the statement of purpose has been amended to provide information about the practice of locking internal doors in the home, the information would benefit from being more explicit. The responsible individual and the manager are addressing this matter.

The recommendation in relation to reflective supervision with staff has been addressed. Staff receive regular supervision, and they confirm that they have opportunities to discuss the children and reflect on their practice. The staff say that they can approach the manager outside of formal supervision. The manager acknowledges that sufficient time should be consistently applied when supervising the staff.

The manager and the staff team have built positive working relationships with professionals and families. Professionals express gratitude for the care of the children. They consider that the children's needs are well met and describe the quality of communication from the home as 'excellent'. Similarly, a parent praised the staff team for its 'fantastic' support.

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

### **Recommendation**

- The registered person should ensure that, as set out in regulations 31 to 33, good employment practice is maintained. They must ensure that recruitment, supervision and performance management of staff safeguard children and minimise potential risks to them. This refers to ensuring that all gaps in employment are explained prior to appointing staff. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1)

### **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:** 1245572

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** Horizon Care and Education Group Limited

**Registered provider address:** Horizon Care and Education Group Limited,  
Venture House, Unit 12 Prospect Business Park, Longford Road, Cannock WS11 0LG

**Responsible individual:** Kate Somerside

**Registered manager:** Gemma Waddington

## Inspector

Jacqueline Malcolm, Social Care Inspector



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Manchester  
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