

1185765

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 part of a large private organisation. The home provides care for up to four children who have experienced trauma.

There is a registered manager in post.

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 setting on 3 December 2020, to carry out a monitoring visit. The report is published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection dates: 9 and 10 March 2022

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

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers good

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 18 February 2020

Overall judgement at last inspection: sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
18/02/2020	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
25/07/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good
20/02/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good
07/11/2017	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Three children live in the home, and have done for some time. The atmosphere is calm and relaxed. The home has recently undergone redecoration and refurbishment. The children chose new colour schemes and new furniture. They feel proud of their home and their bedrooms, which they have personalised.

Staff form excellent relationships with children. As a result, children form healthy attachments with adults who they said they can trust. One child told the inspector that they trust staff to 'do right by me' and that they 'have never felt this way before'. As a result, children feel safe living in the home.

Children confide in staff and talk to them about personal and sensitive issues. Staff help children to understand the physical and emotional changes that happen during adolescence. They do this with care and reassurance. This helps children to make sense of what is happening to them.

Children enjoy spending time together, such as watching TV or going to the gym or cinema. Children and staff eat their evening meal together. This provides children with opportunities to talk about their day. As a result, they feel a sense of belonging, which encourages positive self-esteem.

Staff meet with children regularly to discuss the children's experience of living in the home. Staff facilitate these meetings in a way which encourages children to participate. As a result, staff hear the children's voices and value their views and opinions. This ensures that children actively contribute to the management of the home.

The registered manager is a strong advocate for children's education. They have good relationships with teachers and social workers. They strive to ensure that children receive appropriate support to meet their learning needs. Prior to moving into the home, one child's attendance at school was sporadic. Their social worker told the inspector, 'They are in nearly every day now, which is remarkable.'

Children enjoy new experiences, such as learning to ride a bike. One child has enjoyed camping overnight for the first time. Children invite their friends to visit them, or vice versa. These experiences help to create positive memories for children and a positive sense of self-worth.

The manager and staff escalate concerns to ensure that children receive specialist support. They also challenge professionals when they feel that children's needs are not understood. For example, one child's diagnosis has changed. This means that they no longer have to take medication. There is a clear plan in place to support another child's complex personal care needs. As a result, children are supported to make progress in all aspects of their lives.

Staff help children to keep in touch with people who are important to them. Parents said that staff keep their children safe. One parent said that their child sometimes self-harms. They said that staff 'keep their eye on her well', and that this makes them feel happy.

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

Overall, staff respond well to safeguarding concerns. They have a good understanding of the risks to children and the action they need to take to safeguard them. However, the inspector found that one safeguarding incident was not managed effectively. One child was physically assaulted while spending time with friends in the community. Prior to the incident, staff did not follow the steps outlined in the child's risk assessment to keep the child safe, such as making regular welfare calls to them. The incident was not shared with the manager until the next day. Poor decision-making by staff on this occasion placed this child at increased risk of harm.

Record-keeping practice in the home varies. The recording of significant incidents is good. However, the daily logs and reports do not correspond with each other. Some of these records are inaccurate and lack detail. As a result, it is not always clear what action the staff take after a significant incident. Consequently, the manager's review of these incidents may not always be effective.

Matching risk assessments are thorough. The manager prioritises children's stability. They carefully consider the impact of new children moving into the home. The process involves gathering children's views, wishes and feelings. Children feel involved in the decision-making process. As a result, children feel listened to and secure, and their needs are well matched.

When children make allegations, the manager and the staff take action to keep children safe. The manager completes a thorough investigation. There is good partnership working between the manager and external professionals. This oversight and scrutiny help to protect children from harm.

Children rarely go missing from home. There are clear plans in place for staff to follow in the event that this occurs. Staff are proactive in helping children to understand how to keep safe in the community. This encourages children to think for themselves and to make safe choices.

Staff help children to recognise and respond to their feelings safely. They help them to develop alternative strategies to regulate their feelings. These strategies include the use of self-soothe boxes which contain stress balls and other toys. As a result, self-harming behaviours have reduced for some children.

The manager did not notify Ofsted of a safeguarding incident. However, they did liaise with the child's social worker and other professionals. They took appropriate action to safeguard the child. The incident has not reoccurred since.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is ambitious and forward thinking. They have worked hard to improve the quality of care children receive. They are highly respected by their staff team. Staff were very complimentary about how they manage the home.

The home has a stable and consistent staff team in place. The home does not use agency staff. This promotes consistency and continuity of care for children.

The manager has effective systems to review and evaluate the care children receive. They identify shortfalls in staff practice and respond promptly. As a result, the manager has a good understanding of the care children receive and how this impacts on them. They have an action plan in place to address any shortfalls, such as the quality of the staff's record-keeping.

The manager completes staff supervision on a regular basis, and to a good standard. There is evidence of good support and challenge where necessary. They identify the staff's strengths and developmental needs well. Staff receive support and training that are pertinent to the children's needs. Consequently, children receive care from staff who understand their needs well.

The manager and staff have positive relationships with professionals such as social workers. The manager shares with them any concerns they have about children's safety. The manager also provides them with regular updates. This means that social workers can track the progress children are making. As a result, they feel satisfied that children are safe and well cared for.

There are improvements in the home's recruitment process. However, the manager does not record in detail when they verify the reasons why staff have left their previous employers.

The independent visitor does not always consult with children to gather their views. This hinders the external scrutiny of the home, and does not help the provider to improve the quality of care children receive.

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 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> <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>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;</p> <p>are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home’s child protection policies. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(v)(vi)(vii)(b))</p> <p>This specifically relates to the registered person ensuring that staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities. This includes understanding each child’s individual risk assessment and having the ability to undertake the necessary steps to keep children safe.</p>	<p>4 May 2022</p>
<p>The registered person must maintain records (“case records”) for each child which—</p>	<p>4 May 2022</p>

<p>include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child;</p> <p>are kept up to date; and</p> <p>are signed and dated by the author of each entry. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b)(c))</p> <p>The registered person should ensure that information recorded about children is accurate, correct and legible. This includes the recording of safeguarding incidents and when verifying references for new staff.</p>	
<p>The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if—</p> <p>there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious.</p> <p>A notification made under this regulation—</p> <p>must include details of—</p> <p>the matter;</p> <p>the other persons, bodies or organisations (if any) who or which have been notified;</p> <p>any actions taken by the registered person as a result of the matter;</p> <p>must be made or confirmed in writing. (Regulation 40 (4)(e) (5)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(b))</p> <p>This specifically relates to the registered person ensuring that they inform Ofsted in a timely manner of notifiable events.</p>	4 May 2022

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that the independent person appointed to carry out visits to the home does so in a way which enables them to consult with children and professionals. This includes ascertaining children's wishes and feelings in regard to the quality of care they receive. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.5)

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: 1185765

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: Prudence Shaw

Registered manager: Emily Bradley

Inspector

Sarah Berry, Social Care Inspector

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