

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 children. The provider states in their statement of purpose that they specialise in working with children who sometimes present challenging and difficult behaviour including offending behaviour.

This home 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, such as residential family centres, supported living provisions, outreach support, family support in the community and community-based parenting assessments.

The manager registered with Ofsted in April 2000.

The registered manager and the deputy manager have been absent from the home in recent weeks due to circumstances beyond their control. In their absence, the organisation's consultant manager and the registered manager from the sister-home have overseen the management of this home and facilitated this inspection.

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.

Inspection dates: 8 and 9 March 2022

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
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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: 7 October 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
07/10/2019	Full	Outstanding
11/12/2018	Full	Outstanding
14/11/2017	Full	Outstanding
23/03/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

The home has a transformative impact on children's lives. Staff are consistently able to help children to free themselves from the negative impact of their past traumas and thrive. One child reported that being at this home had changed his life and is like a stepping stone to being closer to where he wants to be.

All six children living at the home spoke highly about their experience and the progress that they have made. When the inspection judgement was shared with them, they said that the outstanding judgment for this home is 100% right.

Staff establish trusting relationships with children regardless of the nature and complexity of their needs. Children described the staff members as really caring, kind and thoughtful. Both mothers spoken to, talked about staff looking after their children as if they were their family.

The close relationships enable staff to gain an in-depth understanding of children in their care and tailor their support accordingly. As a result of the highly individualised support that children receive, they make exceptional levels of progress across many areas of their lives.

Children enjoy having positive peer relationships and friendships within the home. Several children spoke about how just spending time together with staff and other children makes them happy. They also talked about the importance of respect, tolerance and kindness towards each other. When one child expressed sadness to be celebrating Eid for the first time without his family, other children and staff joined him in the celebrations as if they were his family. He later stated that this was his best Eid ever.

Children are appreciative of the home's spacious, clean and comfortable environment. They like their bedrooms which they are able to personalise to reflect their interests. Examples include a bedroom full of trainers, a bedroom with football trophies displayed and a bedroom which looks like a place of prayer. One child stated that he felt like he lived a 'rich child's life'. Another child talked about togetherness and having quality time together at weekends, just like any family.

Staff enable children to find their voice and identity. One child said that being supported to reflect on his life and make the right choices was the best thing about the home. He said that staff helped him to find himself and understand who he really is and what he wants from life.

Understanding the importance of education and engaging in learning plays an important part in the children's exceptional progress. All children attend their education and are working towards obtaining good results and grades. This includes

one child, who was not in education for a year and a half before coming to live at this home. Several children talked about how much they enjoy learning about new things.

The home provides stability in the lives of children, including those who have experienced multiple placement breakdowns. One child has lived in this home for over five years. He was placed in a children's home at such a young age because of his complex needs. He is now doing exceptionally well and is looking positively towards his future.

Staff enable children to prepare well for their adulthood in many different ways. One child said that when he asks the staff something, they do not just give him an answer but show him how he can do the research himself to find the answer. He really appreciates staff empowering him to be a self-learner and develop self-reliance. Other children talked highly about the support they get to develop their practical life skills.

Children said that staff are amazing cooks and one child said that the food in the home is to 'die for'. The enjoyment of food has inspired some children to take on a professional career in catering and this has included working in some well-known restaurants. Other children described themselves as more entrepreneurial and business orientated. One child has set his mind on working in the rail industry. Another child wants to become a motivational speaker. All children are confidently working towards fulfilling their ambitions, while receiving staff's encouragement and excellent support.

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

Staff create an environment that gives children a sense of safety. All children said that they feel very safe at the home. This is how one child expressed his feelings: 'When I enter these doors, I am utterly protected. This is the safest place for me to be'.

The trusting relationships between children and staff are the linchpin of excellent safeguarding in the home. Staff help children to understand the risks and co-create strategies to keep themselves safe. For example staff helped children, who came to the home with suspected involvement in gangs and county lines, to keep themselves away from the harmful influences and crime.

The home's risk assessment of the risks to children of being sexually and criminally exploited are detailed, insightful and impactful. Staff base these assessments and management plans on the dynamic analysis of children's vulnerabilities and strengths. Excellent safeguarding practices lead to a decrease in the risk of children being victims of exploitation.

Staff have created an environment where children like to be. This has led to the reduction of children going missing from the home. The reduced missing from home incidents in turn leads to children being less exposed to risks and being safer.

Strong partnerships with other professionals ensures that staff have an up-to-date understanding of the risks in the local and the wider community. A highly collaborative annual review of the home's location explores the impact of the pandemic on the local services and the criminal activities in the area, and what it means for the safeguarding of children who live in the home.

Staff have extensive conversations with children to help them understand the risks of COVID-19 and how to safeguard their physical and mental health during lockdowns. A COVID-19 outbreak at the home was managed well and all five children recovered fully. These experiences have kindled children's interest in health and led to their better understanding of the government's positive role in public life. Children talked about wanting to contribute to making the world a better place.

The home's safeguarding practices are deeply child-centred, confident, mature and continually evolving. Staff have the confidence to work with children who are at high risk and help them to be safer. When a child presented with extreme views, staff calmly made appropriate referrals and engaged with a whole host of relevant professionals to ensure that the protective measures were immediately put in place. Staff approached the child with an open mind and professional curiosity to try to truly understand where exactly the child's views were coming from and what is their function in the child's psyche. While the child's specialist psychological assessment was in progress, staff worked in close partnership with a local faith leader to help the child to develop healthy religious discernment, emotional resilience and more constructive ways of dealing with his anxieties and anger. As a result, the child is beginning to show more flexibility, acceptance and tolerance. He talked about the mutual respect for one another as one of the best aspects of the home.

Many children said that better management of anger is their best achievement. They recognise that better emotional awareness and regulation have a profound positive impact on their character and life chances. The behaviour management practices in the home are highly effective not only in increasing children's safety for now but helping them to develop skills for life.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The organisation provides an extraordinary level of stability in leadership and management. The registered manager has extensive experience and has been in his role for well over two decades.

A positive working environment with a sharp focus on compassion towards children secures high retention and motivation of staff in all roles. No staff members have left their employment in over two years.

Staff are supported very well and have access to many learning and development opportunities. Monthly supervisions and team meetings provide safe spaces for genuine reflection on the practices in the home and exploration of further improvement possibilities. Some of the areas of research that the home has particularly considered since the last inspection relate to COVID-19 and its impact on children's mental well-being, and the impact of parental rejection on children and how this was played out during the lockdowns. Staff's theoretical understanding of the complexities of children's relationships with their families is another area of strength.

The stability of the workforce coupled with the culture of continued improvement leads to excellence in practice. This is the home's 11th consecutive outstanding Ofsted inspection judgement.

The home has highly developed systems, policies, procedures and practices to ensure that children receive the best care. Many elements of the practices are worthy of a wider professional dissemination. Examples include the tools for the assessments of children's needs relating to equality and diversity, risks of child sexual and criminal exploitation and risks in the home's locality. However, it is the insightful, dynamic and holistic nature of the actual staff practices and the relationships with children that ensure that the good standard is consistently exceeded and that the positive impact of the home on children is extraordinary.

The home is exceptionally well resourced and managed at all times. A strong leadership and management team across the organisation means that there is an effective contingency in place, as well as high levels of shared professional experience and expertise. In the absence of the home's management, other leaders and managers were able to provide all the information for the inspection without delay. This demonstrates how well organised the records are. Additionally, it was clear that children know well and trust the leaders and managers who are not usually based at this home.

Leaders and managers monitor closely the care provided and its impact on children's experiences, progress and outcomes. The responsible individual demonstrates maintaining strong oversight, modelling excellence and driving continued improvement.

Working effectively together with other professionals is a particular strength. Staff have a proactive role within the network around the child. Staff are able to constructively challenge other professionals' views and practices when this is in the best interest of the child. Staff give constructive feedback to the placing authorities on how they can improve their practices.

All eight professionals spoken to talked highly about the home, its leaders and managers, and its impact on children's lives. This children's home is a beacon of excellence in children's residential care and its leaders and managers are widely respected for their work.

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: 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 Simmons Muhammad

Inspector

Seka Graovac, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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