

1256795

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 owned and managed by a private provider. It is registered to provide care for up to four children who may have social and emotional difficulties and/or mild to moderate learning disabilities. The home offers short-, medium- and long-term placements.

In April 2022, the three-month notice of the provider's intention to admit any children was assessed and lifted. The first and only child moved into this home in May 2022.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since April 2022.

Inspection dates: 30 November and 1 December 2022

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

How well children and young people are helped and protected **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: 3 March 2020

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: yes

At the quality assurance visit on 15 and 16 December 2020, the inspectors found serious and widespread concerns within several areas of practice relating to the care and support that children receive. As a result, children were found to be at risk of harm.

Ofsted issued two compliance notices under section 22 of the Care Standards Act 2000. These were in relation to regulation 12 and regulation 13. In addition, a condition was imposed, identifying that the provider must give Ofsted three months' notice of its intention to admit any children.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
03/03/2020	Full	Good
11/04/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
09/01/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good
28/11/2017	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

After a period of temporary closure, this home has reopened after the provider successfully recruited a manager and staff team.

The purpose of this home has been changed to meet the needs of one child. This group home now provides a solo placement for this child. Detailed and considered planning and preparation helped the child to manage their move. The child had time to become familiar with staff and this new environment prior to their move day. The child moved between homes with the same provider. Therefore, this child has maintained their relationship with the clinical team, which continues to provide the staff with guidance and support to help them to meet the child's needs.

The child's past traumas and care experiences have affected their emotional development and their sense of safety. The fear of separation significantly impacted on the child's personal care routine. The nurturing environment and the care approach from staff help the child to achieve positive outcomes.

School attendance has been a struggle for the child, but implemented routines help to remove potential barriers. This started with a well-executed transition plan from primary to secondary school. Then, each school day, the staff ensured that the child had clean and ironed clothes, had the right equipment and completed homework to ensure a positive start to their day. Struggles around breakfast time have been eradicated by the use of school breakfast clubs.

School professionals report that communication is key to the child's progress. At the slightest hint of a problem, staff liaise with the school and they work together to resolve the issue. Friendships are formed at school. The child's attendance at after-school and extra-curricular groups helps to forge friendships. The child wishes to keep their care status private, and therefore the manager needs to support the child to fulfil this wish.

The child is encouraged and guided by the staff to form hobbies and interests. The created activity planner provides the child with choice and new ideas for activities. The child enjoys going on activities, and they are gaining new experiences and making memories.

This home is well presented and welcoming. There are toys visible throughout the home, encouraging and providing time to play for the child. There is some required maintenance to the home's shower room. This was being responded to during the inspection, as the shower door leaked, and the window dressing was broken. The child chooses not to use this room, preferring the bathroom.

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

The ethos of this home is guided by a therapeutic parenting approach. The in-house clinical team helps the staff to understand how the child's life experience and diagnosis impact on their daily functioning and behavioural responses. The child's incidents of verbal and physical aggression have reduced as a result of the staff's improved understanding and responses to the child's needs. The manager's prompt and reflective oversight of incidents aids the staff to adapt their practice, preventing further incidents. The manager also ensures that the child's risk assessments are updated after every incident, providing staff with the necessary practice guidance.

There have been times when staff have deemed it necessary to physically hold the child to prevent immediate and significant harm to the child or others. The manager and, when necessary, the responsible individual have thorough oversight of restraint records. This is to ensure that staff response is necessary and proportionate. Detailed debriefs with the child and staff help the manager to implement learning opportunities.

There is a culture in this home that helps in the protection of children. This is about being open and transparent and learning from practice. Staff are open about their practice, and lessons are learned if improvement or change is necessary. The manager helps the staff to understand their roles and responsibilities to safeguard children. Therefore, when a child makes an allegation about being the victim of harm, they are responded to, and the required action is taken.

Children do not go missing from this home. The child has demonstrated that they are able to have some time away from the staff. The child is now confident to independently walk to the local shop to spend their pocket money. The manager has assessed that, on occasion, staff may work alone with the child. However, the child's missing from home plan does not detail the manager's expectation of this lone staff member should the child go missing. Staff need clear guidance to enable them to ensure the safety of the child in such events.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is developing this service to provide good outcomes for children. The manager, with his staff team, strives to improve standards. Staff said that they feel very supported by their manager, as he improves their practice through formal and informal training and development of their role.

The manager has formed positive relationships with professionals and the child's family. The feedback to the inspector was positive and recognises that the child's care experience is having a significant effect on their quality of life. Professionals have high regard for this home.

The recruitment and retention of staff has been difficult. Three staff have been recruited to fill staffing vacancies. These appointed staff await safer recruitment checks. On occasion, employed staff from within the provider's other children's

homes will support this child. The child is familiar with these staff, and the staff provide the child with a pen picture. The pen picture provides the child with a photograph of the staff member and some information about them. Statements within these pen pictures could unintentionally cause upset to the child.

The child is encouraged to express their wishes and feelings about their experience of living at the home. The manager provides the child with a written response to their feedback. This letter praises the child and there is a real sense of inclusivity, with identified actions on how the child's wishes and feelings will be responded to.

The manager has clear oversight of the day-to-day running of the home. Independent visitor reports provide external monitoring of this home. The independent person completing these reports is inconsistently consulting with children. These reports also lack independent evaluation of practice and procedures. The provider is currently commissioning a new independent person to complete these external audits.

The home's statement of purpose should reflect the ethos of this home. Currently, this document contains wording from organisational policies and procedures that is not child-focused.

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 the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(b))</p>	13 January 2023
<p>When the independent person is carrying out a visit, the registered person must help the independent person—</p> <p>if they consent, to interview in private such of the children, their parents, relatives and persons working at the home as the independent person requires.</p> <p>The independent person must produce a report about a visit ("the independent person's report") which sets out, in particular, the independent person's opinion as to whether—</p> <p>children are effectively safeguarded; and</p> <p>the conduct of the home promotes children's well-being. (Regulation 44 (2)(a) (4)(a)(b))</p>	13 January 2023

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the home's statement of purpose is child-focused, indicating how the home provides individualised care to children in line with the ethos of the home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 14, paragraph 3.5)
- The registered person should ensure that children's environment is welcoming, and shower room fixings are free from damage. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

- The registered person should ensure that staff understand the importance of careful recording. Staff should record information within staff pen pictures in a way that does not have a negative emotional effect on children. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)
- The registered person should ensure that they lead and manage the home in a way that delivers the ethos set out in the home's statement of purpose. They should help children to develop a considered response to support their decision to not divulge to their school friends that they live in care. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 52, paragraph 10.4)

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: 1256795

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Horizon Care and Education Group Limited

Registered provider address: Unit 12, Venture House, Prospect Business Park,
Longford Road, Cannock, Staffordshire WS11 0LG

Responsible individual: Oliver Scrimshaw

Registered manager: Richard Lewis

Inspector

Jennifer Fenlon, Social Care Inspector

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