

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 owned by a private company. It is registered to provide care for up to four children who may have experienced childhood instability which has resulted in trauma and associated complex behaviours.

The manager registered with Ofsted in February 2021 and is working towards a level 5 qualification.

Inspection dates: 8 and 9 February 2023

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account requires improvement to be good

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers requires improvement to be good

The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 9 March 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/03/2022	Full	Good
18/02/2020	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
25/07/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good
20/02/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

Since the last inspection, no children have moved into the home and one child has left the home. At the time of the inspection, two children were living at the home.

Care planning is not always appropriate or in the best interests of the children. On one occasion, leaders and managers made the decision to move a child to another of the company's homes. The rationale for this decision was not well evidenced, and leaders and managers were not able to demonstrate their consideration of the detrimental impact that this move may have had on the child. In addition, leaders and managers were not able to demonstrate the work that had taken place to support the child with their struggles in the home and to try and prevent this move. They have also not been able to demonstrate that this decision was made as a last resort.

There are areas of the home that are looking tired and require attention. In addition, the inspector identified a window restrictor and a bedroom fire door strip which appeared to have been tampered with. Aspects of the home are less homely, such as locks being on the doors of the lounge and the kitchen. Although the locks are not being used, they create an institutionalised and less homely feel that is not necessary in the home.

Staff invest in their relationships with children. One child told the inspector that they can speak to staff and feel that they are kept safe. The provider's internal clinical team provides regular consultation and supervision for leaders and the staff team. This enables the staff team to understand the behaviours and holistic needs of the children. As a result, children are provided with support from a team of staff who are equipped to support them effectively.

Staff help to facilitate family time between children and their families. Family time has increased for children since their starting points. One child has gone from having little contact with their family to having overnight stays. Where negative changes have occurred with family time, staff have supported children by providing a safe space and opportunities to express their emotions around the change. One child has been supported to create a memory box for their sibling. Due to children spending time with family, this creates a sense of family identity and belonging.

Staff encourage children to attend education, which has led to one child achieving 100% attendance. Leaders and staff supported another child to build the confidence to go back to college. This child is now completing qualifications in mathematics and English. Staff regularly liaise with education staff to ensure that they are aware of any areas where they can support the children. In addition, staff support children to make decisions around courses which will support their future aspirations. As a result, children make progress with their education.

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

Management oversight of safeguarding practice in the home requires improvement. Managers have failed to review records of incidents in the home in a timely manner. When incidents have been reviewed, including when children have made complaints, allegations or received consequences, the managers' evaluation has not identified shortfalls in practice or gaps in recording. As a result, concerns are not identified promptly, and it is not always clear if appropriate action has been taken. This risks poor practice not being addressed.

Although children know how to make complaints and have done so when they have not been happy with the quality of care, they are not consistently asked if they are happy with how their complaint has been managed and responded to. This is a missed opportunity to improve practice in the home. In addition, it is not always clear when actions to respond to complaints have taken place. This does not help managers and leaders to have oversight of whether responses to children's concerns have happened within the specified time frames.

Managers have not fully considered the risks presented by the home's local area. They have not consulted with external agencies for additional intelligence to inform their assessment of risk. This does not allow managers to have a full understanding of the risks in the local area and how these may impact on the children they care for.

Staff have a good understanding of the home's model of care. They implement this well to try and help de-escalate incidents and support children to manage their feelings in a more positive way. Consequently, there has been a low number of physical interventions for children.

Children do not go missing from this home. Staff are trained to support and respond to children who go missing. Staff work with children to help them understand the risks to them if they go missing and how to keep safe in the community. As a result, children are learning how to keep themselves safe.

Staff provide appropriate support to children at risk of substance misuse. Children are provided with detailed education and learning opportunities. External agencies are sourced to link in with the team. This enables children to learn from a range of expertise about the risks involved in substance misuse. As a result, incidents of children's substance misuse have reduced.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

After the last inspection, the registered manager went on maternity leave from August 2022. There have been a few changes of manager during the registered manager's absence. The change between interim managers has created

inconsistency among the team and children. As a result, the oversight of the quality of care requires improvement.

The interim managers' monitoring systems have not been effective in identifying or acting on shortfalls in practice. The independent visitor has raised several recommendations in recent visits to improve the standard of care provided. However, these have not been acted on. At present, the responsible individual is providing additional support to the home and has made improvements to monitoring systems. An action plan has been implemented to address areas of shortfall.

Staff do not receive regular supervision from leaders and managers. The inconsistency with supervision has created missed opportunities for staff to reflect on their practice or for areas of practice to be challenged. This does not support staff to improve their practice.

Safer recruitment practices are not always followed. On one occasion, managers did not thoroughly scrutinise the full employment history of a new staff member. As a result, managers did not have a full understanding of where the member of staff had previously worked or why there were gaps in their employment history. As a result, it is not evident how the manager was able to assure themselves that the staff member is safe to work with children.

Staff are suitably qualified to work with children. Leaders and managers ensure that staff are enrolled on a level 3 diploma following completion of their probation period. Currently, all staff are working towards or hold the required level 3 diploma.

Staff receive training in line with the children's needs. The clinical team supports the staff's understanding of children and how they can support them better. This ensures that children are cared for by staff who know them well.

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>ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to—</p> <p>meet the needs of each child; and</p> <p>enable each child to participate in the daily life of the home. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)(i)(ii))</p> <p>This specifically relates to the registered person ensuring that the home is clean and homely and that any damaged areas or items in the home are repaired or replaced in a timely manner. In addition, the registered person should ensure that door locks are not being used on communal doors, including the lounge and kitchen.</p>	<p>17 March 2023</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;</p> <p>and promotes their welfare.</p>	<p>17 March 2023</p>

<p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(f))</p> <p>In particular, the registered person must ensure that incident records are reviewed and that staff’s actions during the incident are evaluated without delay.</p> <p>The registered person should ensure that children are consulted following the outcome of their complaint.</p>	
<p>The care planning standard is that children—</p> <p>receive effectively planned care in or through the children’s home; and</p> <p>have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that arrangements are in place to—</p> <p>manage and review the placement of each child in the home; and</p> <p>plan for, and help, each child to prepare to leave the home or to move into adult care in a way that is consistent with arrangements agreed with the child’s placing authority. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(ii)(iii))</p> <p>In particular, the registered person must ensure that care planning arrangements are appropriate and in the best interests of the children.</p>	17 March 2023
<p>The registered person must ensure that all employees—</p> <p>receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(b))</p> <p>In particular, the registered person must ensure that all staff receive regular supervision.</p>	17 March 2023

<p>The registered person must review the appropriateness and suitability of the location of the premises used for the purposes of the children’s home at least once in each calendar year considering the requirement in regulation 12(2)(c) (the protection of children standard).</p> <p>When conducting the review, the registered person must consult, and take into account the views of, each relevant person. (Regulation 46 (1) (2))</p> <p>In particular, the registered person must ensure that they consult with external professionals when carrying out a review of the premises.</p>	<p>17 March 2023</p>
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Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that recruitment and performance management of staff safeguard children and minimise potential risks to them. In particular, the registered person should ensure that they carry out full recruitment checks to ensure that appropriate and safe individuals are recruited. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including quality standards’, page 61, paragraph 13.1)
- The registered person should ensure that staff understand the home’s policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. In particular, the registered person should ensure that children’s records are clear and completed. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including quality standards’, page 62, paragraph 14.4)

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: 1185765

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: Prudence Shaw

Registered manager: Emily Bradley

Inspector

Chanel Bryant, Social Care Inspector

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