

1235384

Registered provider: New Horizons (NW) Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately owned home provides care for up to two children who may have social, emotional and learning difficulties.

At the time of the inspection, two children were living at the home. Both children spoke to the inspector as part of the inspection.

The manager registered with Ofsted on 16 January 2024. They took up their post on the same date.

Inspection dates: 3 and 4 March 2025

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: 5 December 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
05/12/2023	Full	Outstanding
01/03/2023	Full	Good
23/02/2022	Full	Good
08/10/2019	Full	Good
08/02/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children live in the home for a long time. Both children have lived in the home for over four years as part of their long-term plans. They have positive and stable relationships with staff. Staff are committed to children, ensuring that they feel cared for and valued. Staff take their responsibilities to care for the children seriously and demonstrate this to the children through their actions, such as sitting with children overnight in hospital. Children feel safe and loved.

The home has a family ethos. Staff prioritise spending time with children. The provider organises family days, where children and staff bring their families and pets for activities and fun. Children and staff have set evenings weekly, where they spend time together as a group engaging in activities. One child wanted to see a staff member who was off work for an extended period, and this was facilitated. Children feel important to staff and are treated as such.

The home is beautifully decorated and furnished. Staff support children to personalise their bedrooms in line with their personalities, interests and tastes. There are photos of the children throughout the home, showing their special memories over the years they have lived there. Children's achievements are celebrated, and certificates and awards take pride of place in the home. Children have pets in the home and are supported to care for them. The home is a natural, comfortable environment and children are relaxed and happy in their space.

Staff know the children and their interests well. Children have busy and active lives engaging in the activities they most enjoy. One child particularly enjoys animal care. A member of staff who cares for a horse takes the child with them when they go to the stables, regardless of whether they are at the home that day. Staff take children on annual holidays abroad, to places such as Spain and an entertainment resort in France. Staff plan special trips for children for their birthdays, such as to their favourite artist's concerts. Children have exceptional experiences and are making happy childhood memories.

Children have suitable school places. Staff understand children's individual challenges within education and liaise closely with their schools. One child has made a successful transition to secondary education during the inspection period. Another child has been made head girl of their school and recently sat their mock GCSEs. The support of staff and joined-up working between home and schools have enabled children to make excellent progress from their individual starting points.

Staff encourage children to live healthy lifestyles. As well as their routine engagement in activities such as swimming, trampolining and going to the gym, staff and children also set fitness challenges. Children and staff are training for an obstacle challenge event as a whole home. They are tracking their training and

water intake collectively in the run-up to the event. Children and staff are enthusiastic about maintaining good health and routines.

Staff ensure that children maintain their relationships with those important to them. Staff have strong, positive relationships with children's families. Their brothers and sisters come to the home to spend time with them, and some brothers and sisters stay overnight. Staff know children's friends well and they are also welcome in the home. Staff advocate for children to have family time in line with their wishes. As a result, both children's recent time with their families has progressed.

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

Plans for children are detailed and show thorough understanding of their individual needs. The manager chooses staff whose professional and life experiences have given them skill sets that match the needs of the children. For example, one staff member worked for 12 years supporting children with special educational needs before joining the home. Staff understand how best to support the children they care for.

Risk assessments are current and have clear strategies in place for staff to follow. Staff know how to keep children safe. Staff responses to safeguarding concerns are prompt and effective. They work with children to help them understand the risks to them, as well as supporting wider issues which contribute to risk, such as issues regarding self-esteem and peer relationships. The holistic approach taken to risk ensures that risks to the children are low and/or reducing.

Staff do not use formal consequences for children. They manage behaviour through their strong relationships and by educating the children about the impact of their behaviour on themselves and others. Staff compile monthly reports on the children's behaviour, analysing data and tracking patterns. The manager and staff have detailed insight into the children's needs and behaviour and understand where children are making progress or are struggling.

The manager compiles relevant research regarding each issue faced by children, such as social comparison theory and the impact of puberty on serotonin in the body. They use the evidence base to understand the children's experiences and behaviour and make changes to the practice and strategies used in the home. The manager reviews outcomes for children at suitable intervals, and amends plans as a result. Staff practice is well informed and flexible and leads to positive outcomes for the children.

Staff know the individual missing-from-home protocols for each child. Staff responses when children are missing are tenacious and effective. The manager evaluates episodes of going missing promptly to understand the reasons for them and reviews staff practice. The manager and staff understand how to balance a child's need for safety with their need for growth and independence.

Staff teach the children how to manage their emotions and deal with difficult feelings. Children have learned strategies and use these to help themselves. Both children have made incredible progress in relation to their ability to regulate emotionally. One child has made such significant progress that they have been made a mental health ambassador at school and help other children to learn their own strategies. Staff have implemented time for reflection with staff for the child at bedtime, which has resulted in the child successfully ceasing to take medication for sleep.

Staff rarely hold children to keep them safe. When children are held, this is a last resort and proportionate to the risk faced by the child. Leaders and managers speak with children and staff after holds to gain their views and ensure their emotional well-being. The manager reviews the incidents and is thorough in identifying where staff practice could improve. Staff practice holds in team meetings to ensure that these are carried out safely in the event they are necessary.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The manager is inspirational and maintains a culture of high aspiration and commitment to the children. The manager was previously the deputy manager of the home and has worked in the setting for a significant period. They know the children, staff and home well. The manager is supported by an enthusiastic, dedicated deputy manager, who has also worked in the home for a significant period. The home benefits from strong, effective leadership.

The manager is selective in their recruitment of staff. They are adept at choosing people who are highly skilled in relevant areas or have life experiences and personal characteristics that make them a good fit for the children they care for. The manager is explicit in their rationale for choosing staff and carefully considers how they will use staff skills, knowledge and characteristics to further develop the home. Staff are safely recruited, and references are thoroughly explored.

Communication between staff is excellent. Staff work collaboratively and share their skills and knowledge with each other. They listen to each other and agree consistent approaches to the children and their work. They reflect when strategies are not successful and consider why this might be. One staff member said: 'The team truly operates as a unit; everyone is committed to working together, creating a strong and reliable environment.' The children have sensitive, informed and consistent care from their staff, and this contributes to their feelings of security and stability.

Staff have access to a comprehensive, high-quality training programme. Staff complete the training they are required to do. The manager identifies specific, and sometimes bespoke, training for staff to meet children's individual needs. The team is being trained over a year by a psychologist in trauma, attachment, adverse childhood experiences and brain development. Staff are trained to a high level and understand how their practice meets the needs of the children they care for.

Supervision sessions are regular and thorough. Managers encourage staff to complete self-reflections and supplement this with their own observations and thoughts. They identify any development needs and take action to meet these. Staff also have regular development sessions on specific topics or pieces of work. Managers undertake these sessions, or direct staff with specific skills, experience or knowledge to do so. Staff are supported to provide the best possible care.

The manager undertakes probationary reviews and appraisals in a timely way. They gather meaningful feedback from children and other professionals who have worked with the staff and use this to create individual development plans for staff. The manager has detailed insight into the progression and development needs of staff and uses the plans to keep staff on track to achieve their professional goals and targets.

Children's records are positive and accessible. They include photos, reflect the child's journey, and show the positive regard in which they are held by staff. The manager leads by example in relation to records, with sensitive and timely recordings. The records are helpful to children and will assist them to understand their time in the home when they are adults.

The managers and staff have strong, effective relationships with other agencies and professionals. One professional said of the staff team: 'They are the best home I work with in terms of their care and passion.' The links that staff develop and maintain with other professionals enable the children to have responsive, joined-up care that meets children's needs.

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: 1235384

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: New Horizons (NW) Limited

Registered provider address: Unit 17 & 18 Navigation Business Park, Navigation Way, Ashton-on-Ribble, Preston PR2 2YP

Responsible individual: Natalie Waterhouse

Manager: Sean Maloney

Inspector

Sarah Huntbatch, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
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Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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