

SC008600

Registered provider: New Horizons (Stockport) Limited

Assurance 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 six children who may experience social or emotional difficulties. At the time of the inspection, two children were living in the home. One child was present and spoke to the inspectors.

The manager post is currently vacant.

Inspection date: 17 February 2025

Date of last inspection: 18 June 2024

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Information about this inspection

At this inspection, the inspectors evaluated:

- the care of children
- the safety of children
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers.

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children, using the social care common inspection framework. This assurance 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'.

Findings from the inspection

We did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance inspection.

There is one child living in the home who was present at the last inspection. They are settled and have good relationships with staff. The child is making good progress in their education and relationships with peers. The child is being supported by staff to prepare for adulthood in a measured way that suits their needs.

Since the last inspection, three children have moved into the home. The children moved in close together, meaning that there was a lot of change in the home in a short space of time. At times, there has been a lack of clarity and direction in care planning from the local authority and this has contributed to difficulties in two of the children settling in. This has been compounded by children already living in the home becoming unsettled due to changes within their personal circumstances.

Four children moved out of the home during this period. For one child, this was managed in a measured and child-centred way. However, three children have moved out in an unplanned way. This has been due to incidents within the home or community and conditions put in place which meant that children were unable to return.

The home is spacious and is a welcoming environment. Children have been able to personalise their bedrooms. However, some areas would benefit from maintenance, such as the kitchen cupboard doors, which are scuffed and have become de-laminated in places.

Staff support children's health and well-being. Children's emotional health needs are supported and children have been encouraged to access specialist services when required.

Children are supported to spend time with those who are important to them. The staff work with children and professionals to attempt to balance children's need for independence and social interaction with effective safeguarding measures. There are comprehensive risk management plans in place that support staff to keep children safe.

There has been an increase in instances of children going missing from home. Staff follow established missing-from-home protocols and actively search for children. Two children have had prolonged periods of time where they were missing from the home. During these periods, leaders and managers made sure that they worked with the local authority and police to ensure a safe return of the children. Return home interviews are carried out by a person independent of the home.

There has been a reduction in the use of physical intervention. Staff have become better skilled at de-escalation techniques, which means that holding children is now only used as a last resort. However, there has been one occasion when the actions taken by staff when intervening were unclear and this has not been further explored by the manager.

There is a stable team of core staff that is growing in confidence and ability. Staff are committed to achieving positive outcomes for children. Staff report feeling well supported by managers and colleagues. Team meetings and staff supervision sessions are carried out regularly. Children's views, feelings and wishes are taken into account. Children know how to make a complaint and are supported to do this by staff.

More effective monitoring systems are now in place to maintain a comprehensive overview of the home and the progress of the children. The registered manager has recently left the company. The deputy manager is currently supporting the team with support from the head of care.

Most of the requirements raised at the last inspection have been met.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
18/06/2024	Full	Requires improvement to be good
14/11/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
23/08/2023	Full	Inadequate
24/04/2023	Full	Inadequate

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, The 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
The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that arrangements are in place to— manage and review the placement of each child in the home; and 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; and that each child's relevant plans are followed. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(ii)(iii)(c)) In particular, the registered person must only accept placements for children when they are satisfied that the team can respond effectively to the child's needs. Additionally, the registered person must consider the impact that new children may have on the stability of other children who have recently been moved into the home.	18 April 2025

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that records of restraint are kept and that these enable the registered person and staff to review the use of control, discipline and restraint to identify effective practice and respond promptly where

any issues or trends of concern emerge. The review should provide the opportunity for amending practice to ensure it meets the needs of each child. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 49, paragraph 9.59)

- The registered person should ensure that the home is a welcoming and homely environment. Specifically, that wear and tear in the home is identified and rectified in a timely manner. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC008600

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: New Horizons (Stockport) Limited

Registered provider address: 154-156 Buxton Road High Lane, Stockport,
Cheshire SK6 8EA

Responsible individual: Bharati Parikh

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Eve Ostridge, Social Care Inspector
Anthony Kyem, Social Care Inspector

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