

SC008600

Registered provider: New Horizons (Stockport) Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and operated by a private provider. It is registered to provide care for up to six children with social and emotional difficulties. There were three children living at the home at the time of the inspection.

There is not currently a registered manager in post.

Inspection dates: 18 to 19 June 2024

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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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: 14 November 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/11/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
23/08/2023	Full	Inadequate
24/04/2023	Full	Inadequate
27/07/2022	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

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

Since the last inspection, two children have moved out of the home and two children have moved in. Children's moves into the home have been well planned with children being helped to understand what their new home will be like. However, for one child, the manager was unwilling to extend timescales to support a planned move. This resulted in the child moving twice in a short space of time.

The manager and staff care about children's education and want them to do well. One child has recently finished their exams and has secured a place at college. The manager advocates strongly for children to have access to appropriate education and challenges placing authorities when this is not in place. Children who are not currently in education are supported to learn at home.

Children's emotional and health needs are well met, and the staff respond appropriately to any issues that arise. All children have support from the external specialist services that they require. Additionally, the manager uses other professionals from within the organisation to offer their support to children, including speech and language therapists.

The home is a large, detached property with a large garden. The manager has made improvements to the home, and this has resulted in it being a more homely environment for children. There is now a new games area where children enjoy playing pool. Locks on communal areas were removed during the inspection and children's bedroom locks were changed so that they could each have their own key. The manager has identified that there is still some work to be completed and this has been planned for the summer.

Children enjoy a wide range of activities from go karting to playing board games with staff. Children are supported to enjoy the same experiences as peers and the staff ensure that these are memorable occasions for the children. However, children do not have access to the internet. This impacts their social and developmental needs.

Children are supported with their identity and cultural needs and the manager is creative with the ways that this support is offered. Children are supported to see their families, when it is agreed in their plan, and to maintain relationships that are important to them.

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

A new manager and several new staff members have started since the last inspection and children have formed positive relationships with the staff. One child said, 'There have been lots of changes for the best and I like the new staff.'

Incidents are generally well managed by the staff and the use of restraint is rarely used. However, one child was restrained in a way that was not necessary or proportionate. This resulted in the child attempting and threatening to self-injure. The manager and senior leaders had identified that this was an inappropriate use of restraint and worked with the organisation's behaviour lead, to support staff learning and reflection.

There has been one episode of a child being missing from home. However, this was for a short period of time and the staff acted appropriately. There are clear guidelines in place for staff to follow for each of the children should they go missing from home. Additionally, there are safety plans in place which inform children what they can expect from staff to keep them safe.

Allegations against staff are responded to quickly and appropriate action is taken to keep children safe. The manager is also keen to quickly address any complaints that children make about the staff through offering mediation and to repair the relationship in a timely manner.

There is a robust complaints process in place for children which they know how to use. Children are listened to, and their complaints are addressed quickly by the manager.

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

A new manager has been in post for two months, she has the relevant experience and is currently completing her qualification. The manager has an ambitious plan for improvement of the home and has begun to put new systems in place to improve the care provided to children. The changes are regarded as positive by the children, staff and leaders. One staff member shared that 'the atmosphere in the home is now totally different'.

Staff can attend a wide range of training. However, some training identified as mandatory, including first aid and fire safety has not been attended by all staff. Additionally, while staff know the children well, they do not all have the skills and knowledge to support children's individual needs effectively.

Team meetings are held regularly and are used as a forum for learning, staff can contribute to meetings, and these are child focused. The staff receive supervision regularly and this is an opportunity for them to reflect on their performance and practice. Staff say that they feel supported by the manager and the responsible individual.

The day-to-day management has improved since the appointment of the new manager. However, there have been occasions where consequences for children have not been identified or evaluated for their effectiveness. On one occasion when a child has made a comment about the use of restraint, this had not been considered by leaders. This means that the child had not had an opportunity to discuss further.

Children, parents and professionals were not encouraged to provide feedback for the most recent quality of care review. This means that opportunities to identify shortfalls and evaluate the effectiveness of the care provided to children have been missed.

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
Restraint in relation to a child must be necessary and proportionate. (Regulation 20 (2)) The registered person must ensure that restraint is only used when no other course of action is available and that the means of restraint used is the least restrictive.	9 August 2024
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— 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; that each child's relevant plans are followed.(Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(iii)(c)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that children moving out of the home, do so in a planned way that limits the amount of moves from home that a child has.	9 August 2024
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare.	9 August 2024

In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home’s statement of purpose; ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; 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; demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on— feedback on the experiences of children, including complaints received; and use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(c)(f)(g)(ii)(h)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that staff have the skills and knowledge to meet the needs of each child, including those with autism spectrum disorder. Additionally, the registered person must ensure that they have sufficient oversight of incidents and consequences and that these are evaluated to improve the care provided in the home.	
In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating— the quality of care provided for children; the feedback and opinions of children about the children’s home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it. (Regulation 45 (2)(a)(b))	9 August 2024

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure children are given an appropriate degree of freedom and choice in relation to day-to-day arrangements for their care, particularly in regards to access to the internet and technology. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 17, paragraph 3.21)

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: 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

Inspector

Kerri Lynch, Social Care Inspector
Eve Ostridge, Social Care Inspector

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