

Children's homes - interim inspection

Inspection date	24/03/2016
Unique reference number	SC008600
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	New Horizons (Stockport) Ltd
Registered person address	New Horizons (Stockport) Ltd, 5 Bramhall Park Road, Bramhall, STOCKPORT, Cheshire, SK7 3DQ

Responsible individual	Bharati Parikh
Registered manager	Maria Simmons
Inspector	Stella Lovie

Inspection date	24/03/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Good
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection This home was judged Good at the full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has Sustained effectiveness. The home was last inspected in August 2015. It was found to be good in all areas. One requirement and two recommendations were made to further improve practice. These issues have all been satisfactorily addressed at the point of this interim inspection. This shows that the manager learns from inspection activity to promote the development of her service. Staff continue to work with each young person to raise both their own expectations of themselves, and the expectations of those who work with them. This gives young people a strong message about the value of education and the crucial impact it has on their future life chances. Achievements, however small, are recognised and celebrated. Staff promote young people's interest in their education by attending school events, assisting with homework and having education resources in the home. Young people's personal education plans inform targeted support from staff, and meetings with education professionals are held promptly where necessary. As one education professional commented: 'What we specifically found to be useful was that staff at the home understood and trusted the professionalism of school staff. If we were struggling to manage the young person, staff from the home didn't wash their hands of the problem. They tried to work with us to find a solution.' Young people are involved in meaningful activities, and independence skills are developed and achieved in line with individual abilities. They engage regularly in sports and other active pursuits, and receive good quality advice and support to do so. This promotes their physical health and well-being. Although young people's meetings are not held regularly, there is good evidence that young people's views about their experiences in the home are sought and taken seriously via informal discussions. They are encouraged to play an active part in their care planning so that they have some ownership of any decisions made. That said, some young people would benefit from access to independent advocacy to further promote their engagement with crucial decision-making forums. Since the last inspection, several young people have been able to make successful planned transitions either home or into various forms of independent living. This	

demonstrates good working together with families and placing authorities to secure positive outcomes. As one placing authority social worker confirmed: 'My young person was placed in this home for 12 months. While he was there, the staff fully supported his education, contact with family and the care plan. Staff worked closely with other professionals to provide him with a very positive experience in a very positive placement which improved his situation and relationships with his family facilitating his return home.'

Staff continue to establish positive relationships with the young people and there is considerable evidence of constructive interaction with them. Staff try to understand the situation from the young person's point of view and work with them to find solutions and choices. As a result, there is minimal use of restraint and sanctions. However, on the rare occasion that restraint has been used, the records fail to include the young person's views and comments as part of the dialogue with them about the reasons for the physical intervention.

The current group of young people in the home is going through an unsettled phase with increased levels of risk-taking behaviour associated with running away and substance abuse. The manager is both assertive and creative in dealing with such behaviours, including calling for review of young people's care plans when she feels the service can no longer meet specific young people's needs. She works closely with the police and other relevant agencies to bring in specialist advice and guidance for young people most in need. This has been instrumental thus far in preventing any serious consequences from this behaviour.

Staff take all reasonable steps to anticipate and manage the challenges some young people present. On occasions when young people have chosen to absent themselves or go missing from the home, staff have appropriately followed procedures and guidance to ensure their swift return. They go out and look for them and on occasions have been able to persuade them to return home. They are proactive in convening professionals meetings to explore strategies and to take on board any relevant information about push-pull factors that may be driving the risk-taking behaviour. It is clear that the manager and her staff are actively attempting to break an unhealthy dynamic in the current group of young people and are confident that they will achieve this.

The Registered Manager continues to lead a well-functioning establishment with a cohesive and stable staff team. Staff benefit from regular supervision and training which appropriately informs their practice in relation to the specific needs of the young people they care for. As a result, staff have a real sense of purpose in their role and are able to practice in a clearly defined, goal-orientated manner. Regular monitoring by the manager ensures that young people are safe and enjoy a good standard of care. This process helps to highlight the strengths of the home and areas for development. However, monitoring reports from the independent visitor lack robust evaluation of the home's safeguarding practice and promotion of welfare. This inhibits the provider's overall effective quality assurance of the service.

To conclude, the home continues to provide young people with a good experience that, on the whole, helps them to achieve positive outcomes. One requirement and two recommendations are made to improve practice further.

Information about this children's home

The home is privately owned and is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to six children and young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/08/2015	CH - Full	Good
09/02/2015	CH - Interim	sustained effectiveness
16/07/2014	CH - Full	Adequate
08/01/2014	CH - Interim	Good Progress

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Statutory Requirements

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person/s meets 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 with the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
44: Independent person: visits and reports The independent person must produce a report about a visit which sets out, in particular, the independent person's opinion as to whether children are effectively safeguarded and the conduct of the home promotes children's well-being. (Regulation 44 (4) (a) (b))	24/05/2016

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the service should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- All children must have access to appropriate advocacy support. Looked-after children are entitled to an independent advocate to advise them and ensure they have the support needed to express their views, wishes and feelings about their care and lives. (The Guide, page 23, paragraph 4.16)
- Children should be encouraged to add their views and comments to the record of restraint. Children should be offered the opportunity to access an advocacy support to help them with this. (The Guide, page 50, paragraph 9.60)

What the inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspection we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people living in the children's home. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference adults make to the lives of children and young people. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with children, young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care given to children and young people. Wherever possible, they talked to children, young people and their families. In addition the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people who it is trying to help, protect and look after.

This inspection focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service 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*.

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