

SC008600

Registered provider: New Horizons (Stockport) Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is registered for six children or young people who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The home forms part of a small social care company.

Inspection dates: 26 to 27 September 2017

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **good**

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

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 21 March 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: None

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because:

- Young people receive consistent care from a well-established and stable staff team.
- Young people have positive attendance at, and engagement with, school and college, and their outcomes improve.
- Young people benefit from opportunities to enjoy their individual hobbies and interests.
- Missing young people receive a well-coordinated response from home staff, the police and young people's families.

The children's home's areas for development:

- The registered manager does not ensure that impact risk assessments reflect her evaluation of how staff are able to meet new young people's risks and behaviours, or whether new young people are compatible with the existing group.
- The registered manager does not always ensure that risk assessments are in place, and accurately reflect the current management of risks.
- Staff do not support young people to learn to manage their behaviour and time by having an individualised approach to each young person's access to televisions and the internet.
- The registered manager does not have effective monitoring and reviewing systems in place. This means there are shortfalls in young people's essential case records held in the home, a lack of oversight of patterns and trends of young people's behaviour and a lack of progress in responding to young people's wishes and feelings about their environment.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/03/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
23/11/2016	Full	Good
24/03/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
11/08/2015	Full	Good

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
The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on – (a) mutual respect and trust; (b) an understanding of acceptable behaviour; and (c) positive responses to other children and adults. In order to meet the positive relationships standard the registered provider must ensure that staff communicate to each child expectations about the child's behaviour and ensure that the child understands those expectations in accordance with the child's age and understanding. (Regulation 11 (a) (b) (c)) In particular, communicating with young people regarding strategies to manage their leisure time including time watching television, spending money, or safely accessing the internet.	30/11/2017
7(1) The children's views, wishes and feelings standard is that children receive care from staff who – (a) develop positive relationships with them; (b) engage with them; and (c) take their views, wishes and feelings into account in relation to matters affecting the children's care and welfare and their lives. (2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered provider to- (a) ensure that staff- (iv) regularly consult children, and seek their feedback, about the quality of the home's care. (Regulation 7 (2) (a)(iv)) In particular, that young people's views regarding their environment are taken into account so they can see the results of being listened to.	30/10/2017
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that – (a) helps children aspire to fulfil their potential: and (b) promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided	30/11/2017

in the home. (Regulation 13 (2)(h))	
The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure staff assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child. (Regulation 12 (2)(a)(i)) In particular, ensuring that risk assessments are accurate and up to date.	30/10/2017
The registered person must maintain records for each child which- (a) include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child; and (b) are kept up to date; and (c) are signed and dated by the author of each entry. (Regulation 36 (1) (a) (b) and (c))	30/11/2017
The registered person must- (a) maintain in the home the records in Schedule 4; (b) ensure that the records are kept up to date. (Regulation 37 (2) (a) (b)) With particular reference to staff rotas.	30/11/2017

Recommendations

- The registered person should only accept placements for children where they are satisfied that the home can respond effectively to the child's assessed needs as recorded in the child's relevant plans and where they have fully considered the impact that the placement will have on the existing group of children. In particular, that the registered manager records their evaluation of young people's compatibility to each other and the home in an impact risk assessment. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 56, paragraph 11.4)
- The registered person must challenge (under regulation 5(c)) any placing authority who asks them to accept a child in the absence of a complete and current relevant plan, as the expectation that a placement of a child without the necessary information would go ahead is inadequate in relation to their role. It is essential that homes understand what will be required of them before they accept responsibility for a child's placement, to avoid disruption and instability for the child in future and for other children in the home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 56, paragraph 11.5)
- Homes have a key role in organising and ensuring each child's attendance at the necessary primary and secondary health care appointments. In particular, that each young person attends the dentist. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 34, paragraph 7.11)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Most young people make good progress. They benefit from receiving individualised care from staff who really care about them. Staff spend time with them and understand what is important to them. The staff team is well established and is skilled in working collaboratively with young people to develop positive relationships. As a result, most young people invest in the home and make progress from their starting points.

Staff work effectively in partnership with professional stakeholders and families to provide continuity of care. One social worker commented:

'Staff have been proactive in trying to ascertain my young person's whereabouts when he has gone missing. They have used their knowledge of local people and places to try and identify a clear pattern of behaviour that can be shared with other professionals. Staff attend meetings and contribute to these appropriately and advocate well on behalf of the young person. They also work well with family members.'

Young people enjoy positive contact with family and friends when it is safe and in their best interests. Young people's families are welcomed into the home to maintain and develop young people's sense of identity. Parents are positive about the difference staff make to young people's lives. One parent said: 'Staff can't do any more for him. They always make me feel welcome and keep me up to date.'

Young people have positive attendance at, and engagement with, school and college, and their outcomes improve. Staff work well with schools, colleges, virtual school headteachers and placing authority social workers to secure the most appropriate placement to meet each young person's needs. The registered manager employs a tutor to provide education in the home for those young people who do not have a permanent educational placement, either because they are new to the area or because they are excluded. This ensures that young people continue to engage and progress with their education. Staff are in regular contact with schools and colleges. This fosters the development of positive relationships. One teacher commented:

'I have always found their staff and managers to be extremely supportive of education. Communication between home and school is excellent. Staff contact me if they feel issues at home may cause conflict at school. The young person who is currently attending has good attendance.'

Some young people engage with specialist health care services to good effect. Staff have a positive relationship with the nurse for children looked after, who attends the home to support young people's health needs. Some young people do not attend health

appointments, and there is no evidence that staff are proactive in addressing this. For example, there is a lack of direct work to raise one young person's awareness of dental health.

Young people enjoy activities in the local community. Their activity programmes reflect their individual interests, such as having snooker lessons, going to the gym, swimming, boxing and attending cadets. Staff advocate for young people; they offer young people an independent visitor and prepare them for their looked-after child reviews. One young person said: 'I have staff who are nice. They prepare me well for my review. It's nice to have the heads-up on what will be happening.'

The home is lacking in soft furnishings and young people's photos to make it feel homely. Young people are asked their views of how they would like the home to look, but their views are not responded to promptly, which does not demonstrate to young people that they are listened to. Some young people are reaching the age when they will be moving on to semi-independent living. However, staff have not afforded them the opportunity to develop age-appropriate behaviours in managing their time and monies. This does not promote a positive transition into adulthood.

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

Most young people are becoming increasingly safer. Those young people spoken to during the inspection report feeling safe living in the home. Young people have developed strong, positive relationships with staff which mean they are confident that staff will listen to their concerns. One young person said: 'I get on with all the staff; I feel I could talk to them. I know how to complain but there is nothing to complain about.' There has been one complaint since the last inspection, which was promptly resolved to the young person's satisfaction. Staff understand how to manage child protection concerns. They respond promptly to ensure that young people are safe and to refer these concerns to the appropriate authorities.

Risk assessments are not sufficiently clear to be helpful in understanding the current risks posed to, and by, young people. For example, one young person's risk assessment had no details of what the level of risk was, and another young person had no risk assessment present in their file. For a third young person, the management of his risks involved performing direct work regarding his missing behaviour; however, there is no record of this work being completed. The lack of clarity and completeness in risk assessments does not safeguard young people or promote their welfare, especially when temporary staff work in the home, or when core staff return to work after a break, and risks have changed.

Organisation in the home does not encourage young people to take age-appropriate risks. Young people do not have access to the internet unless they use the classroom computer during school hours, which the registered manager informs me is currently broken, or when they are individually supervised on an iPad. This does not promote individual young people's needs, or prepare them for adulthood. Staff do not support young people to manage their own time effectively, as an electrical override system is

used regularly by staff to manage the level of television viewing in young people's bedrooms. In addition, the television in the lounge is similarly controlled. This does not promote young people's individual needs or prepare them to live independently.

Staff are skilled in de-escalation techniques and have not needed to use physical intervention since the last inspection. Staff try to promote positive relationships between young people. At times this is successful, and young people engage together in activities in the community. Staff try and support young people to understand what constitutes bullying. They are constantly alert to these issues, and ensure that young people receive high levels of supervision so that staff are available to address any arguments quickly. When appropriate, staff use restorative practice to try and repair relationships. One young person told me they found this useful, although were not confident that their peer had responded as positively: 'Staff get us to discuss it if we argue – it's helpful for me but not the other young person as he just carries on.' Staff encourage positive behaviour through the use of incentives. This is effective for some young people, for example in addressing personal hygiene issues. Other young people don't respond to incentives or consequences. At such times consequences are ineffective, and staff repeat these to no effect as the risk-taking behaviour (smoking in bedrooms) continues. The sanction of placing young people on supervised spending money, does not prepare them for their imminent transition to semi-independent living.

Some young people's risk-taking behaviour escalates. Staff understand why that is, and attempt to try and re-engage with the young people. However, two young people have left the home because staff were unable to keep them safe due to their high level of missing-from-home episodes. The registered manager recognised this issue, and staff worked with the placing authority's social workers to support the young people to move on.

Staff are experienced in managing missing behaviour, and young people experience a well-coordinated approach. Staff always follow young people who go missing from the home, and if they lose sight of them they look for them in familiar places and try to contact them. Staff are resilient in pursuing all avenues to find where young people are and return them to the home. Staff work well with the police to ensure that young people are at risk for the minimum possible time. Young people take part in well-managed return home interviews, conducted by an independent person, which helps keep young people safe and informs individual care planning.

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

The registered manager is suitably qualified and experienced and has been in post for almost ten years. She has high expectations of how young people should be cared for, and is a visible presence in the home. At times she is robust in challenging services and placing authorities to progress young people's needs. However, at other times there is no effective strategy employed to secure essential information and documents, such as local authority care and placement plans. This means that some young people have been in placement for two months without appropriate information, including placement plans and care plans that are up to date and reflect the young people's correct legal status, in

place. This lack of monitoring is evident within the home's own placement plans too, with out-of-date plans on file which do not include any evidence of young people's involvement.

The registered manager assesses whether new referrals to the home will be compatible with the existing group. However, she does not record her evaluation with clarity. This means that when she admits young people with similar presenting risks to the existent group, it is not clear that she has understood how staff will meet their individual needs, or how their behaviour and risks could impact on the existing group.

The registered manager has a clear idea of how most young people have progressed. For some young people, it is evident that she has advocated successfully for them to access specialist services such as the child and adolescent mental health services. However, there are no robust monitoring systems in place to ensure that the quality of care is progressing. For example, it is unclear how many sanctions and incidents of missing there have been each month for each young person, or what records exist of how she ensures that temporary staff receive an induction to the home. This prevents the quality of care from continually improving.

The registered manager ensures that there are sufficient staff working in the home to meet young people's needs. There have been no new staff recruited since the last inspection, but temporary staff work in the home. The stability and consistency of the staff team in working collaboratively is a real strength of the home. However, the rotas have incomplete information regarding the temporary staff. Details regarding their suitability are not evident in the home, nor is evidence of whether the registered manager has provided them with an induction to the home and young people. The core staff team receives regular formal and informal supervision, which staff value in supporting them with the emotional impact of their work. They have recently received training in AIM2 (Initial Assessment for Adolescents Who Display Harmful Sexual Behaviour), and feel well prepared to work in partnership with the youth offending service and police to keep young people with sexually harmful behaviours safe.

The registered manager made progress in addressing the requirement raised at the last inspection regarding the independent visitor seeking more feedback from stakeholders. This demonstrates the home's capacity to improve.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and 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 whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC008600

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: New Horizons (Stockport) Ltd

Registered provider address: 5 Bramhall Park Road, Bramhall, Stockport SK7 3DQ

Responsible individual: Bharati Parikh

Registered manager: Maria Simmons

Inspector

Rebecca Quested, social care inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence>, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: <http://www.gov.uk/ofsted>

© Crown copyright 2017