

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	21/09/2016
Unique reference number	SC020606
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	New Horizons (Child Care) Limited
Registered provider address	Hurstwood Court, New Hall Hey Road, Rawtenstall, Lancashire BB4 6HR

Responsible individual	Nicola Simmonds
Registered manager	Louise Tolley
Inspector	Hannah Bates

Inspection date	21/09/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Improved effectiveness
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Outstanding
The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the home contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help, protection and care.	
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Outstanding
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Outstanding

SC020606

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is outstanding because:

- Young people make exceptional progress across all areas of their development.
- The staff team is determined to ensure that young people are afforded every opportunity to thrive educationally, socially, emotionally and physically.
- Young people's safety and well-being is of paramount importance to the staff.
- Young people's previous high-risk behaviours such as child sexual exploitation are significantly decreased as a direct result of their placement.
- Young people experience a genuine, caring, consistent and secure relationship with staff who are committed, trained, experienced and supported themselves.
- Young people achieve beyond the expectations of their social workers and other professionals. With staff support and encouragement, young people have clear aspirations for their futures.
- The registered manager secures excellent inter-agency working, which means that the needs of young people are fully recognised and comprehensively met.
- The registered manager is dedicated to the young people in her care.
- The registered manager uses research to help inform her everyday practice.

Full report

Information about this children's home

This is a privately owned children's home registered to provide care and accommodation for up to three young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/02/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
07/07/2015	Full	Good
09/02/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness
08/10/2014	Full	Adequate

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Outstanding
Young people make exceptional and sustained progress across all areas of their lives. Some young people, who have missed significant lengths of time from education due to their emotional well-being, have completed and achieved GCSEs. They now attend college, which from their starting points is an exceptional achievement. A therapist said, 'My young person is doing remarkably. I was quite worried about her when she arrived in the home due to her high risk-taking behaviours but to think she is now at college is remarkable. I would not have thought that would have been possible a while ago. They are a good team here. They absorb high levels of disturbance.' Staff are committed to ensuring that young people receive good-quality education and that young people make sustained academic progress. For example, staff worked with young people to revise for their GCSEs, setting up individualised revision plans and guides. One young person arrived at the home being unable to read and staff taught them how to read. The young person has received a school award for the progress that he has made. Staff complete extracurricular work with young people around topics such as the solar system, using arts and crafts in order to engage them. Young people have excellent relationships with staff. Staff are committed and go above and beyond for the young people in their care. For example, staff come in to see young people on their days off, recognising that this is essential for some young people with attachment difficulties. Staff treat young people with dignity and respect in times of crisis. They celebrate with pride young people's achievements, such as their first day at a new school or passing their GCSEs. They arrange exciting days out and parties at the home. For example, they have recently enjoyed a themed beach party in their back garden. Young people feel cared for, which is exceptional progress for them. They feel able to trust staff and share with them their feelings and traumatic past experiences. Some young people have started to feel able to question their past experiences due to feeling safe and cared for in this home. A social worker said, 'The staff know my young person really well and they really know how to manage him. You can see he is settled here and he doesn't want to move. He knows the staff care for him and he cares for them. He gets lots of hugs and appropriate affection.' Staff encourage young people to have hobbies and develop links with their local communities. Despite young people facing significant social and emotional difficulties, their confidence has increased and they are now able to volunteer at horse stables and cat shelters, as well as taking part in clubs such as swimming, cubs and football. A young person said, 'It's great here. Look at everything I have	

done here. I have done things that I would never have been able to do if I had stayed at home, like learning to swim, going on holiday, going to college.'

Behaviour management plans are personalised and underpinned by research, such as attachment theory and the impact of early life trauma. Young people are involved in their plans. Staff are innovative in finding new ways of managing young people's complex behaviours and they consult with young people as to what they think will work. For example, staff have made a laminated visual guide of strategies for a young person when he becomes angry, such as pulling funny faces with staff. Staff review the effectiveness of the behaviour management plans. They consistently reflect on their practice and look for ways of working with the cause of young people's behaviours rather than just trying to manage the behaviours on their own. They effectively use therapeutic tools such as kinetic sandboxes and animal figures for some young people. A therapist said, 'I can't speak highly enough of the staff. They support therapy. They are meticulous in their feedback to me and supportive of the process. I wish all my carers were like that.'

Admissions are well planned and the matching of the young people is excellent. They enjoy happy, safe and positive relationships with one another in the home. A young person who recently moved into the home said, 'I haven't been in care before so didn't know what it would be like. I love it here. Everyone has a laugh and gets on. I have someone who I can talk to always and someone to go to for a cuddle too. I like all of the people I live with.' When young people leave the home, this is done in a well-planned way. Staff help young people to prepare for their transitions. Independence work is started early with young people and staff put together individualised independence plans suited to the young people and their needs. Young people visit their new home before they move in. Staff make sure that young people have college placements in their new area. Young people have successful conclusions to their time at this home.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Outstanding
Young people feel safe and are safe. They are thriving in this home. Staff are highly proactive. They pre-empt potential risk-taking behaviours through looking at potential triggers for young people, and then put into place strategies to manage this. For example, after seeing their families, young people spend time with staff before coming back to their home, which allows them some time and space to talk. This reduces the likelihood of incidents happening. When young people make complaints or allegations, staff follow these up and make the appropriate referrals. Staff ensure that they consistently listen to young people and that they take the appropriate action needed. Staff, including very new staff, are knowledgeable across all areas of safeguarding. This means that staff are alert to young people's vulnerabilities and the risk of harm.	

Staff are extremely knowledgeable and use creative ways of working with young people around risk-taking behaviours. They find recommended resources to use with young people regarding risk-taking behaviours such as child sexual exploitation, internet safety and stranger danger. They work with young people in a personalised and age-appropriate way, discussing scenarios and what young people would or would not do in different situations. They draw on the advice and guidance of other professionals such as therapists, and are consistent in using strategies with young people to reduce their risk-taking behaviours such as anger and self-harm.

Young people's risk-taking behaviours have significantly decreased for a sustained period. Young people whose development in their lives has been hindered by risk-taking behaviours, such as self-harm and going missing, are now able to engage with their everyday lives, such as going to college, going to school, going swimming and playing football. On the extremely rare occasion when a young person has gone missing, staff are proactive in searching for them, involving all relevant professionals and maintaining ongoing communication with them. They ensure that return interviews are completed and they learn from these incidents. Staff are reflective across all areas of their practice. Staff encourage young people to take age-appropriate risks, such as going to free time and having a mobile phone. When safeguarding incidents do happen, staff review the incident and work with young people to prevent future occurrences. These measures strengthen safeguarding.

Staff are consistent in their behaviour management of young people. For some young people who required high levels of physical interventions at the start of their placement, these incidents have significantly reduced. Staff use innovative de-escalation techniques and physical interventions are a last resort. They review and debrief after every physical intervention and learn from them. During physical interventions, staff treat young people with care and dignity. After physical interventions, staff use key working sessions to talk to young people about the intervention and to look at what else they could have done to prevent it from happening. A young person said, 'Staff are great at looking after me. I feel safe. They talk to me and help me.'

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Outstanding
There is a suitably qualified registered manager in post. She has the residential manager's award level 4 as well as national vocational qualification level 4 in leadership and management. A strong and child-focused deputy manager supports the registered manager, who is qualified in national vocational qualification level 5 in leadership and management. All of the staff team except three members of staff are qualified up to national vocational qualification level 3 in residential childcare.	

Staff who have not yet completed their qualification are undertaking it. This helps to ensure that staff working with young people are suitably trained and experienced.

The registered manager and deputy manager are both extremely committed to the young people and staff. They keep young people at the forefront of any decisions that they make. They are strong advocates for their young people, expecting 'nothing less than you would want for your own child'. They openly share their views with other professionals regarding young people's care plans and appropriately challenge placing authorities when they do not feel that young people are receiving the service that they deserve. Their monitoring of the young people's progress is excellent. The registered manager and deputy manager know the young people and they consistently review behaviour management strategies, care plans, contact arrangements and local authority care plans to ensure that they are meeting their young people's needs. Partnership working is a strength of the home. The registered manager regularly liaises with the child and adolescent mental health service, therapists and other key professionals to review young people's emotional needs.

Staff are extremely well supported. The registered manager is excellent at providing staff with key responsibilities for young people. For example, staff who are key workers attend all of their young people's meetings, and one member of staff has taken on the role of finding research and disseminating this to the team. While she provides a supportive environment for staff, the registered manager has high expectations of the staff team and consequently staff deliver high-quality care to their young people.

Staff feel well supported and respected. The staff team is consistent and there is not a high turnover of staff. The registered manager said, 'We give the young people happy life experiences. They know who looks after them and cares for them. They are loved and nurtured, and a valued person while they live here.' The significant progress that young people have made is symptomatic of this ethos and approach of the management and staff team.

Supervisions are good quality and child-focused. Staff use reflective practice within their supervisions to review young people's behaviours and the behaviour management strategies. They consistently ask themselves what else they can do to support the young people in their care and use research to make sure that interventions are evidence based. New members of staff say that they feel well supported. A staff member said, 'Since being here I have learned that it is all about working with the children to get them to open up to you, all personalised and all individual. Some behaviour management strategies will work and others don't but it is about being child-focused and getting to know them before [we] can do any therapeutic work with them.'

There has been sustained improvement in this home since the last full inspection. The registered manager and deputy manager have driven improvement through challenging, monitoring and reflective work with the staff team. They have ensured that young people have had access to the services that they need in order to make

progress. A therapist told the inspector, 'One of the strengths of the home is that the staff team work as a team and they are good at their consistency and predictability of responses, and they can get in there and be nurturing. The registered manager is very experienced and there is not much she has not seen before. Staff are well held and people do not flap much and stay thinking. This is one of the homes that I can walk away from and feel confident that her high-risk behaviours are managed by staff.'

What the inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against 'Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection'.

An **outstanding** children's home provides highly effective services that contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help and protection and care. Their progress exceeds expectations and is sustained over time.

A **good** children's home provides effective services that help, protect and care for children and young people and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

In a children's home that **requires improvement**, there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. The welfare of looked after children is safeguarded and promoted. Minimum requirements are in place. However, the children's home is not yet delivering good protection, help and care for children and young people.

A children's home that is **inadequate** is providing services where there are widespread or serious failures that create or leave children and young people being harmed or at risk of harm or that result in children looked after not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

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 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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