

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	4 May 2016
Unique reference number	SC020608
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	New Horizons (Child Care) Limited
Registered person address	Hurstwood Court, New Hall Hey Road, Rawtenstall, Rawtenstall, Lancashire BB4 6HR

Responsible individual	Christine Bird
Registered manager	Karla Dovey
Inspector	Louise Battersby

Inspection date	4 May 2016
Previous inspection judgement	Sustained effectiveness
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Requires improvement
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.	
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Requires improvement
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Requires improvement

SC020608

Summary of findings

The children's home provision requires improvement because:

- Young people do not live in a homely environment.
- Agency staff are not appropriately vetted.
- Not all young people have access to the education and specialised provisions that they require.
- Staff do not always fully implement their responsibility for maintaining the health and well-being of all young people, by sufficiently monitoring smoking and adhering to risk assessments.
- Staff do not stay well informed of emerging changes in young people's risk assessments. This hinders staff ensuring young people stay safe.
- The manager is not proactive in sending consistent messages in relation to 'play fighting'.
- The continuity of care for young people is hindered by the heavy reliance on the use of agency staff.
- Staff do not receive regular supervision or oversight of their work.
- Young people do not have independent return-to-care interviews.

The children's home strengths

- Managers recognise weaknesses in areas of practice and are working hard to address them.
- Young people are supported to have meaningful contact with important people in their lives.
- The staff support young people to have interests and to take part in activities.
- The young people know how to complain.

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 persons 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 persons must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
5: Engaging with the wider system to ensure that children's needs are met In order to meet the engaging with the wider system standard, the registered person must ensure that staff – (b) seek to secure the input and services required to meet each child's needs.	8 July 2016
6: The quality and purpose of care standard In order to meet the quality and purpose of care standard, the registered person must ensure that staff – (2)(c)(i) ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to meet the needs of each child.	8 July 2016
8: The education standard In order to meet the education standard, the registered person must ensure that staff (2)(a)(i) help each child to achieve the child's education and training targets, as recorded in the child's relevant plans.	8 July 2016
10: The health and well-being standard In order to meet the health and well-being standard, the registered person must ensure that staff- (2)(i) achieve the health and well-being outcomes that are recorded in the child's relevant plans.	8 July 2016

12: The protection of children standard In order to meet the protection of children standard, the registered person must ensure – (2)(a)(iv) that staff manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other. (b) that the home’s day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm.	8 July 2016
13: The leadership and management standard In order to meet the leadership and management standard the registered person must - (2)(e) ensure that the home’s workforce provides continuity of care to each child.	8 July 2016
The registered person must ensure that full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each matter in schedule 2. Specifically, this is with reference to references for agency staff. (Regulation 32 (3) (d) (4) (a) (b)).	8 July 2016
The registered person must ensure that staff undertake appropriate continuing professional development and receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33(4)(a)(b)).	8 July 2016
The registered person must ensure individuals working in the home in a care role has the appropriate qualification by the relevant date. (Regulation 32 (4))	31 July 2016

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further, the service should take account of the following recommendations:

- Ensure the home frequently seek the views and involvement of parents/carers and others with a significant relationship to the child as relevant persons in that child's care. In following regulation 7(2)(e) in this situation, the relevant persons will always include parents ('Guide to children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 22, paragraph 4.8).
- Ensure that, when a child returns to the home after being missing from care or away from the home without permission, the responsible local authority provides an opportunity for the child to have an independent return home interview. Homes should take account of information provided by such interviews when assessing risks and putting arrangements in place to protect each child. ('Guide to children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.30).

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home is registered for up to three young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties. It has a satellite home situated away from the home. This is registered for one young person. This is a privately owned home.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
9 February 2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
20 October 2015	Full	Requires improvement
4 March 2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
2 July 2014	Full	Adequate

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Requires improvement
Young people form meaningful relationships with core staff and talk positively about them. They share common interests. For example, they go fishing together. However, the continuity of care for young people is hindered by the heavy reliance on the use of agency staff. This hinders the development of attachments. Although there are clear and individualised care plans in place, some young people require a range of specialist healthcare provisions to meet their needs. Unfortunately, the home has been unable to source such facilities as agreed during admission. This hinders the opportunity for the young people to develop emotional well-being. One professional commented, 'I was told that a clinical psychologist would support [the young person] and staff. This hasn't happened, which would have been beneficial.' Staff are making some efforts to meet the young people's educational needs. One young person commented, 'Staff really help me with my homework. I feel stressed about my exams and I can talk to staff and they help me.' However, promoting educational needs is not being done consistently for all young people in a timely manner. This has meant that educational placements have been delayed. This has had an impact on the young people's future opportunities and outcomes. Primary health appointments are arranged and promoted. When young people choose not to attend, key-worker sessions take place to help them to make an informed choice about this and to be aware of the possible consequences. However, staff do not always fully implement their responsibilities for maintaining all young people's health and well-being, by sufficiently monitoring smoking and adhering to the risk assessments. For example, young people have been allowed to smoke while standing partly in the building, thereby creating health risks through direct and passive smoking. This practice compromises the safety of young people and staff. Young people's meetings have taken place regularly. These are well attended, and the young people set the agenda, discuss issues that are important to them and, on occasions, take the notes. Staff listen and implement, where possible, the requests of the young people. Young people have access to advocacy services. Young people know how to make a complaint and feel able to do so. Young people do not live in a homely environment. For example, there are no pictures or soft furnishings. When young people have caused damage to the home during periods of crisis, this is not promptly repaired. For example, a cooker door has remained broken for a period of up to three weeks. This is not conducive to	

providing a warm and welcoming environment for young people nor giving them a positive message that they are valued. This is also in conflict with the aims and objectives as set out in the statement of purpose.

Staff ensure that young people are supported and encouraged to follow their independence plans. They help them to build their skills and resilience. For example, they teach them how to bake and to manage a budget.

Young people have meaningful contact with important people in their lives. This helps relationships to strengthen and deepens a sense of identity.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Requires improvement
The process for recruiting core permanent staff is robust. However, temporary staff employed through an agency are not subject to the same level of scrutiny. For example, there are incomplete references on file. As a result, the recruitment of temporary workers is not thorough enough to ensure that young people are protected. Allegations against staff and complaints are reported to the correct professionals without delay. This helps to keep young people safe. Restraint records have improved and meet the required standards. Young people's views are now gained. Young people's risk-taking behaviours such as missing, self-harm and putting themselves at risk of child sexual exploration has decreased from their starting points. When young people go missing, staff follow them and look for them. They complete key-worker sessions about safety and discuss reasons why they went missing. However, young people do not have independent return-to-care interviews. As a result, they do not have the opportunity to share any vital information with an independent person, which could prevent further instances of missing. There are clear risk-management plans in place. However, staff do not ensure they regularly review them. For example, a risk-management plan around missing is not known by all staff. This leaves young people vulnerable. Staff receive training in how to manage challenging behaviour and in countering bullying. However, 'play fighting' remains a concern. This has quickly escalated on occasions. The manager has not been proactive in sending consistent messages to the young people, and this leaves young people vulnerable to physical harm.	

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Requires improvement
There is a registered manager in place. She holds her National Vocational Qualification level 4 in leadership and management. She has been a registered manager for a significant period and knows the staff and young people. One experienced member of staff who has worked a number of years in the organisation has not yet completed the required level three diploma. All other staff are within regulatory timescales for achieving their qualifications. The home works closely with a number of other agencies, including the local fire service, police and social workers. One social worker spoke positively about the home. They commented, 'When [the young person] goes missing, they have a robust action plan which they follow. The monthly chronologies are helpful for us in understanding things'. Staff talk positively about the support that they receive, especially in relation to the deputy manager. However, staff supervisions do not take place regularly as required in the company policy. This limits managerial oversight, management and staff development. The registered manager is aware of the shortfalls and has been taking action to address these. For example, she plans to train senior staff to be able to conduct supervisions. The registered manager is not seeking views from other agencies and parents about the service that the home's provides. This has already been identified, and an action plan is in place to address this. The independent visitor's reports provide the registered manager with an overview of the home's operation, which the manager finds useful to drive forward improvement. Managers recognise weaknesses in areas of practice and are working hard to address them. The manager challenges when the responses from other services are not effective. Regular meetings are now held with placing authorities to aid this process. Young people are making progress within the home and managers have a clear understanding in respect to the plans for them. However, the lack of specific services means that young people do not have the full opportunity to continually make progress across all aspects of their development.	

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 children looked after 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 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 that 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 whom 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'.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance *raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted*, which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

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, workbased learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It inspects services for looked after children 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 4234, 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 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 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: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2016