

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	7 July 2016
Unique reference number	SC020611
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, Rawtenstall, Lancashire BB4 6HR

Responsible individual	Nicola Simmonds
Registered manager	Brenda Nurse
Inspector	Hannah Bates and Sandra King

Inspection date	7 July 2016
Previous inspection judgement	Declined effectiveness
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home	Inadequate
There are serious and widespread failures that mean that children and young people are not protected, their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded, their care and experiences are poor and they are not making progress.	
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Inadequate
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Inadequate

SC020611

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is inadequate because:

- Young people are not safe in this home. Staff do not adequately safeguard young people when they go out on free time into the community. Consequently, young people have been involved in high-risk situations.
- Staff do not learn from previous safeguarding incidents. They do not adequately monitor young people in the home despite previous safeguarding incidents.
- Young people's risk-taking behaviour such as substance misuse is increasing. They do not have the support that they need to tackle behaviour such as substance misuse.
- Staff do not challenge young people when they have been involved in buying drugs or when they bring drugs into the home.
- Fire prevention is inadequate. Young people who have a history of fire setting are allowed to have lighters. There have been occasions when they have tried to set fire to other residents
- Young people experience poor relationships with other residents in the home. They have experienced physical assaults from other young people. Staff do not robustly de-escalate or prevent such situations from occurring.
- Risk management plans are poor. They do not provide staff with adequate guidance to be able to keep young people safe.
- Young people do not have sufficient opportunity to learn from incidents of physical aggression. Key-working sessions are of poor quality and staff do not implement sanctions.
- Staff do not recognise bullying. They do not follow the company's bullying policy. Young people have been victims and perpetrators of bullying in the home.
- Independence work is inadequate. Young people do not learn new skills to help them in adulthood or in future placements.
- Young people are disengaged from their placements. They are not encouraged to invest in them. They do not take part in activities with staff in or outside of the home.
- Management oversight is weak. The manager does not oversee safeguarding incidents or implement new ways of working to help young people to make progress. She does not challenge staff members' poor recording of incidents.
- Partnership working is poor. Staff do not pass important information about

young people's welfare onto relevant professionals.

- The home's risk assessments, such as the location risk assessment and fire risk assessment, are deficient. They do not take account of the individual needs and histories of young people.
- The registered manager does not provide staff with the skills and knowledge that they need to be able to manage young people's complex behaviours.
- Staff are not suitably qualified to work in the home. For example, not all staff have completed their national vocational qualification in residential childcare in line with regulation.
- The registered manager has failed to ensure that the requirements from the last inspection have been met.
- The registered person has not met the needs of the young people in their care. The registered person has failed to learn from previous inspections, has failed to implement the necessary changes to keep young people safe and is not enabling young people to make positive progress.

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that 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 children's needs are met In order to meet the engaging with the wider system standard, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff (b) seek to secure the input and services required to meet each child's needs; (c) if the registered person considers, or staff consider, a placing authority's or a relevant person's performance or response to be inadequate in relation to their role, challenge the placing authority or the relevant person to seek to ensure that each child's needs are met in accordance with the child's relevant plans; and (d) seek to develop and maintain effective professional relationships with such persons, bodies or organisations as the registered person considers appropriate having regard to the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the children's home is to provide care and accommodation.	12 August 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 (1)(a) children receive care from staff who understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; and who (b) use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. (2)(b)(ii) staff protect and promote each child's welfare; (iv) staff provide personalised care that meets each child's needs, as recorded in the child's relevant plans, taking account of the child's background;	7 October 2016

(vi) staff help each child to develop resilience and skills that prepare the child to return home, to live in a new placement or to live independently as an adult.	
11: The positive relationships standard In order to meet the positive relationships standard the registered person must ensure that (1)(a) children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on mutual respect and trust; (b) an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and (c) positive responses to other children and adults. (2)(a)(i) staff meet each child's behavioural and emotional needs, as set out in the child's relevant plans; (ii) staff help each child to develop socially aware behaviour; (iii) staff encourage each child to take responsibility for the child's behaviour, in accordance with the child's age and understanding; (iv) staff help each child to develop and practise skills to resolve conflicts positively and without harm to anyone; (v) 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; (vi) staff help each child to understand, in a way that is appropriate according to the child's age and understanding, personal, sexual and social relationships, and how those relationships can be supportive or harmful; and (xiii) staff have the skills to recognise incidents or indications of bullying and how to deal with them.	7 October 2016
12: The protection of children standard In order to meet the protection of children standard, the registered person must ensure that (1) children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe; *(a)(i) 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	12 August 2016

the child; (ii) staff help each child to understand how to keep safe; (iii) staff have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; (iv) staff manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other; (v) staff understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; (vi) staff take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and (b) 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.	
13: The leadership and management standard In order to meet the leadership and management standard, the registered person must ensure that they enable, inspire and lead a culture in relation to the children's home that (a) helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and (b) promotes their welfare. (2) the registered person must (a) 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; (c) ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; *(f) 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; (g)(ii) 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; (h) use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home.	12 August 2016

The registered person must compile in relation to the children's home a statement ('the statement of purpose') which covers the matters listed in Schedule 1. (Regulation 16(1))	7 October 2016
The registered person must ensure that an individual who works in the home in a care role has the appropriate qualification, the level 3 diploma for residential childcare (England) ('the Level 3 Diploma'), by the relevant date. (Regulation 32(4)(a))	7 October 2016
The registered person must maintain records ('case records') for each child which include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child. (Regulation 36(1)(a))	7 October 2016

* These requirements are subject to statutory requirement notice.

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
27 January 2016	Interim	Declined effectiveness
23 September 2015	Full	Requires improvement
30 March 2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness
24 September 2014	Full	Adequate

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Inadequate
Behaviour management plans are of poor quality. They lack any sort of individualisation and do not contain enough guidance for staff to be able to provide personalised care to young people. Young people are not involved in preparing their behaviour management plans and they have no input into how staff care for them. Staff do not help young people to understand about socially acceptable behaviour. After aggressive and violent outbursts, staff do not put sanctions in place. Staff allow young people to continue to display violent and threatening behaviour. Young people's daily experiences are poor. They are disengaged from their placements and staff make little attempt to re-engage them. Young people do not take part in activities and they do not have hobbies. They do not have any input regarding gaining independence skills. They are ill equipped for their future. Staff and managers do not consult young people. The registered provider does not seek their feedback about their experiences in the home. For example, managers take no action when young people tell them about poor behaviour management by staff. Young people make limited progress across all areas of their development. They do not spend time in the home, instead choosing to be out in the community for significant periods of time. Staff do not know where young people are or who they are with. They do not share information with the police regarding young people's associates in the community, despite young people having been placed at significant risk of harm. Staff do not work with other professionals to adopt multi-agency strategies for behaviour management in the home and wider community. Staff work in isolation, and do not provide informed and proactive care to young people. The registered provider does not ensure that young people receive the support that they need to be able to tackle some of their risk-taking behaviour. For example, young people do not have help with issues such as substance misuse, anger management or sexually harmful behaviour. Key-working sessions are poor. The sessions are short conversations between staff and young people and they do not link with young people's care plans or the aims and purpose of the placement. Staff do not follow up actions from key-working sessions and do not revisit behaviour identified as needing further discussion. Peer relationships in the home are dangerous. Young people physically assault one another and staff do not intervene prior to violence occurring. Staff do not attempt	

to de-escalate situations. Staff do not recognise incidents of bullying which are minimised by them as incidents of 'verbal abuse'. Staff do not robustly challenge young people when their behaviour is dangerous or inappropriate. As a result, young people have limited opportunity to learn new ways of resolving conflict with one another.

Despite these failings, young people are engaging with their education. They have sat their GCSE exams and are going onto further education.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Inadequate
Young people are not safe in the home or in the wider community. Staff do not keep young people safe. Poor risk management plans do not offer staff the guidance that they need to be able to manage young people's risks. For example, risk management plans are not relevant to individual young people's needs. The registered person does not take into account young people's histories and complex behaviour. Some young people do not have risk assessments relating to identified previous risks, such as self-harming behaviour. Staff do not have any guidance or clarification about how to keep one young person safe should he self-harm. Another young person has 23 risk assessments in place, all of which are poor quality. They do not assist staff to provide informed, personalised care that will keep him safe. This means that young people are not adequately protected from known vulnerabilities and risks. Young people's relationships with one another, and with people in the community, are unsafe. Young people experience violent and aggressive relationships with one another at home. Staff do not de-escalate situations to prevent young people from harming one another. Staff recording of incidents is poor. As a result, staff do not have an opportunity to learn from safeguarding incidents. Young people do not learn that resolving conflict through violence is unacceptable and unsafe. Some young people have posed a risk to one another due to sexually harmful behaviour. The registered person has failed to implement new behaviour management strategies or to make adjustments to the home environment to reduce risk. For example, young people who have posed a risk to one another have barricaded themselves into rooms. The registered person's response has been to break in rather than to make any proactive changes in the way in which staff intervene prior to crisis situations. Safeguarding practice is poor, and the registered person is failing to keep young people safe. Young people have been significantly harmed when on free time in	

the community. Staff have failed to manage the risk in the community and have not followed safeguarding protocols, such as completing regular checks on one young person when he is on free time. This has left him at significant risk of harm. Staff do not share relevant safeguarding information with professionals. They do not work with other agencies to promote young people's safety and well-being. For example, the registered person has failed to share information with the police about with whom young people are associating in the community or when there are substance misuse incidents in the home.

Young people's risk-taking behaviour has increased. The registered person's response to exploitation is weak. Young people, whom staff have identified as at risk of exploitation, receive no direct work regarding this. The registered person has failed to work effectively with other agencies to reduce the risk of exploitation. The registered person has also failed to take into account young people's complex histories, such as sexually harmful behaviour. Staff use inadequate safeguarding protocols which means that some young people are at risk when on free time. Return home interviews are not completed when young people have been missing. The registered person has not completed any preventative work with young people to reduce risk-taking behaviour.

Staff responses to young people's risk-taking behaviour are ineffective. Staff do not set boundaries for young people which means that they do not learn about socially acceptable behaviour. Staff do not consistently implement consequences after young people display violent or aggressive behaviour. For example, there are no consequences for young people when they physically assault their peers. Poor management oversight means that staff are not challenged about this.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Inadequate
There is a registered manager in post. She holds a level 4 diploma in leadership and management and is currently completing her level 5 diploma. The registered manager has been in post since 2011. Out of the seven permanent members of staff and four bank staff, only three are qualified up to national vocational qualification level 3 in residential childcare. Staff receive inadequate training and guidance regarding young people's complex behaviour. For example, they have not been trained in areas such as substance misuse, autism and child sexual exploitation. Consequently, they are ill equipped to understand how to provide the care that young people need. The home's statement of purpose is out of date and does not contain up-to-date staffing information. Leadership and management of this home are ineffective. The registered manager	

does not understand risk and she has failed to keep young people safe. She has also failed to provide staff with adequate guidance about how to keep young people safe. Despite significant changes to young people's safety and behaviour, risk management and behaviour management strategies have not been reviewed. Young people make poor progress.

Young people have poor experiences. The registered manager has no insight into young people's everyday experiences or into the impact of staff practice failings have on them. As a result of a culture of complacency within the home, young people's experiences are minimised and risks are perceived as being part of young people's behaviour. For example, bullying is minimised and seen as 'only verbal abuse'. Staff practice is not reviewed and no changes are made to how staff work with young people. Consequently, young people have made minimal progress, and their risk-taking behaviour has increased.

Partnership working is poor. Young people do not have the services or support that they need to tackle their substance misuse and anger management. The registered manager has not challenged other professionals when young people have not had the right support. The registered manager has failed to escalate concerns in order to safeguard young people. For example, although the registered manager has identified that she is unable to keep young people safe, she has not escalated this to the young people's placing local authorities. Consequently, the young people remain in a placement where they cannot be kept safe and where they continue to be at risk. Senior manager oversight has been ineffective and the registered manager has been inadequately supported since the last inspection to make the much-needed changes in the home.

Management oversight is weak. The registered manager has failed to ensure that staff follow up actions after safeguarding incidents. She has not sufficiently monitored staff practice to ensure that safeguarding information has been shared with professionals about substance misuse incidents. She has failed to ensure that staff follow multi-agency safeguarding protocols to keep young people safe, such as checking on young people when they are out in the community. She has not adequately monitored the care that staff provide to young people or whether staff are following risk management protocols. When young people have raised concerns about staff practice, the registered manager does not follow up their feedback. Consequently, staff practice is not improved.

The registered manager has failed to ensure that young people's case files contain all relevant information to inform practice. For example, they do not contain young people's looked after review minutes. The registered provider does not make sure that staff complete direct work with young people relevant to their care plans. This has a negative impact on young people's progress and experiences.

As a result, Ofsted has significant concerns regarding the care provided to young people. Two compliance notices and a restriction notice have been served as a result of this inspection.

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 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 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'.

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