

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	10/10/2016
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, Lancashire BB4 6HR

Responsible individual	Nicola Simmonds
Registered manager	Brenda Nurse
Inspector	Hannah Bates

Inspection date	10/10/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Declined in 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

SC020611

Summary of findings

The children's home provision requires improvement because:

- Staff are not confident in understanding and knowing safeguarding protocols.
- Staff do not support young people enough in gaining independence skills that promote their health and well-being.
- There is a lack of partnership working with education providers. Staff do not have regular ongoing discussions with young people's colleges in order to support their progress.
- Boundaries and behaviour management strategies are not yet embedded into practice.
- The home does not have a manager in post. Management arrangements are not confirmed, and this creates instability.

The children's home strengths

- Young people are starting to make some progress educationally. Their attendance has improved.
- Young people have behaviour management plans in place, which are personalised. Staff now need to develop them further and to embed them into practice.
- Young people's risk-taking incidents have significantly reduced. Staff have followed young people's risk management plans.
- An experienced manager has been overseeing the home and has made significant changes to staff practice.
- The requirements from the last inspection are met.

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 within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
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; (vi) maintain regular contact with each child's education and training provider, including engaging with the provider and the placing authority to support the child's education and training and to maximise the child's achievement.	25/11/2016
10: The health and well-being standard In order to meet the health and well-being standard, the registered person must ensure that (1)(c) children are helped to lead healthy lifestyles.	25/11/2016
12: The protection of children standard In order to meet the protection of children standard, the registered person must ensure that staff (2)(a)(v) understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person.	25/11/2016

Recommendations

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

- For children's homes to be nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of their children, they will, in most cases, be homely, domestic environments. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

Full report

Information about this children's home

This home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to four young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties. The home specialises in providing a therapeutic environment for young people who display sexually harmful behaviours.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
16/08/2016	Monitoring visit	
07/07/2016	Full	Inadequate
27/01/2016	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
23/09/2015	Full	Requires improvement
30/03/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness
24/09/2014	Full	Adequate

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Requires improvement
Education attendance is much improved. Young people attend college and have good attendance. One young person has been picked to apply for an apprenticeship. Staff are encouraging some young people to look for part-time work. However, it is not always clear how staff work with education professionals to support young people's learning and attendance, or after there have been incidents in college. Young people are starting to make friendships with their peer groups in college. Staff have started to get to know the young people's friends and to gather more information about them to make sure that these are safe and appropriate friendships. Young people have much-improved personalised behaviour management plans in place. These need to be developed further to take into account young people's changing needs and behaviours. They provide staff with clear guidance on how to respond to, and manage, young people and their behaviours. Staff have had training in behaviour management and are starting to implement changes in the home in regards to daily routines and boundaries. Staff are much more consistent in their behaviour management. However, it is very early days, and this consistency in behaviour management is not yet embedded fully into practice, regarding issues such as mealtimes. Key-working sessions are regular and focus on a range of subjects. On occasions, they lack detail. However, key-working sessions are purposeful. Young people say that they get on well with their staff team. There have been many changes in the structure of the home since the last inspection. The changes were necessary in order to rectify previous failings in the home. Some young people have struggled to accept the new boundaries and house rules, and this has on occasion impacted on the relationships that young people have with some staff members. Staff offer young people activities, and young people are starting to engage with activities such as go karting and the cinema. They have also had a meal out together. One young person said that he is getting on better with his peers in the home and staff have also observed much improved relationships in the home. Independence work is improving, and young people are now starting to gain much-needed independence skills. For example, they have started to travel independently to college and they complete their own food shopping and cooking. On occasions, staff have not provided good enough guidance to young people regarding healthy food choices. This has resulted in young people eating unhealthy and inappropriate foods, and has not promoted their well-being or health. Plans are in place for staff	

to start teaching young people how to cook healthy and good-value meals.

The home is welcoming. Damaged areas have been mended, and the home has a new kitchen. Young people's bedrooms are personalised. However, the rest of the home lacks personalisation and does not have a feeling of being a 'home'.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Requires improvement
Safeguarding is much improved. After safeguarding incidents, the overseeing manager makes sure that safeguarding protocols are followed. She reports incidents to the police and placing authorities appropriately. The overseeing manager has sought training for staff in safeguarding and regularly discusses issues, such as whistle-blowing, safeguarding, complaints and allegations, in staff meetings. However, staff are not always confident in their safeguarding knowledge or in following up actions and decisions after they have sent information to placing authorities. Young people rarely go missing. When they have walked away from the home, staff have followed them and implemented young people's risk management plans. Young people are abiding by their curfew times and are engaging with the new protocols in place. Staff make sure that they complete regular checks on the young people when they are out on free time. They document their phone calls to young people as well as occasions when they go and meet them in the community, to check that they are safe. Boundaries are consistent. A social worker said: 'Generally things are good for my young person. He didn't have boundaries until a few months ago. It was quite hard for him with all the boundaries they have been putting into place. However, there is improvement now in his behaviour.' Some young people have struggled to accept new rules and curfew times, and, on occasion, this has resulted in incidents of verbal and physical aggression towards staff. Staff have remained consistent in their approach. There has been a focus on de-escalation and staff using their relationships with young people to de-escalate the situation. After physical interventions, young people have opportunity to talk about how they feel about the restraint. There is an emphasis on staff learning after incidents. The overseeing manager regularly discusses with staff what was effective and what other risk management strategies could be implemented in the future.	

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Requires improvement
There is a registered manager in post who is qualified to national vocational qualification (NVQ) level 5 in leadership and management. She is not in day-to-day charge of the home. Ofsted has not yet received her formal resignation from her position as registered manager. An overseeing manager has been managing the home on a daily basis. She has the residential managers' award level 4 as well as NVQ level 4 in leadership and management. At the time of the inspection, an acting manager had started in post and the overseeing manager was supporting her in her role. Long-term management arrangements are not yet established in the home. Consequently, the home does not yet have stable management arrangements. Management oversight is good. The overseeing manager has implemented many new changes to staff practice and the systems in the home. She has trained staff and developed their skills in weekly team meetings. She encourages staff to have autonomy in making safe decisions in the everyday care of young people, and for being accountable for those decisions. A staff member said: 'I feel more supported now as a member of staff than before. Now, I feel I can make my own decisions.' Staff are now more confident in their roles. However, this is not yet embedded into practice, and the staff team is not yet a strong, well-established and confident team. Partnership working supports a consistent approach to behaviour management. The overseeing manager has had regular contact with placing authorities and other professionals, such as the police. She has reviewed young people's risk management plans with placing authorities and has worked with them to establish risk management plans regarding issues such as young people's free time and family contact. A social worker said: 'The home has improved significantly. Communication is good. Every time either a small or major incident happens, then I know straight away. It is definitely a big improvement.' The home is delivering its statement of purpose. Leaders and managers know the home, the staff team and the young people. They are aware of the strengths and areas for development in the home. There is an ongoing development plan, which has incorporated the requirements and findings from the last inspection. Although leaders and managers have made sure that they have met the requirements from the last inspection, they recognise that the staff team now needs to put the structures and their learnings into everyday practice.	

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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