

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	06/08/2015
Unique reference number	SC362094
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, Rossendale, BB4 6HR

Responsible individual	Nicola Simmonds
Registered manager	Louise Tolley
Inspector	Hannah Bates

Inspection date	06/08/2015
Previous inspection judgement	N/A
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

SC362094

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is requires improvement because:

- The provider and senior management have not taken due care and attention to the way in which young people have been placed in the home. Senior management and the responsible individual have disregarded the registered manager's assessments of the ability of the placement to keep young people safe.
- Young people are not kept consistently safe. Staff do not consistently challenge young people's risk taking behaviours regarding substance misuse.
- Admissions have not been conducive to young people's complex needs and emotional wellbeing. Due to poorly planned admissions, young people have been exposed to significant incidents of violence and aggression within the home.
- The environment is currently in need of maintenance. Repairs have not kept pace with young people's violent behaviour in times of crisis.

The children's home strengths

The registered manager and staff team are child focused and committed to ensuring that young people receive the right care in a suitable placement.

- Young people make some progress in their lives. Their education attendance has increased. Staff encourage young people to be involved within their care planning. This empowers them.
- Partnership working is a strength of the home. Staff work collaboratively with other agencies to ensure there is a multiagency approach to risk management.
- The registered manager and staff advocate on behalf of young people. They listen to young people and escalate their complaints. They escalate concerns regarding admissions where appropriate.
- Staff support young people to engage in the support provided by specialist services, such as mental health services.
- Young people receive care from a stable, consistent and committed staff team. They enjoy positive relationships with staff who provide individualised care.
- Staff receive regular and good quality supervision. They say the support they receive from the registered manager is 'fantastic'.

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 with the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
6: The quality and purpose of care standard In order to meet the quality and purpose of care standard in relation to the premises, substance misuse and implementing specialist advice, the registered person must (2) (b) ensure that staff— (ii) protect and promote each child's welfare. (iv) provide personalised care that meets each child's needs, as recorded in the child's relevant plans, taking account of the child's background. (c) ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to (ii) enable each child to participate in the daily life of the home	29/09/2015
14: The care planning standard In order to meet the care planning standard in respect of the admissions of young people to the home, the registered person must ensure that young people (1)(b) have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home	29/09/2015

Full report

Information about this children's home

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

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
18/03/2015	CH - Interim	Sustained effectiveness
16/01/2015	CH - Full	Good
25/03/2014	CH - Interim	Good Progress
05/12/2013	CH - Full	Outstanding

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	requires improvement
Young people do not have consistently positive daily experiences. Due to poorly planned admissions and unsuitable placements, young people do not live in a stable environment. They are witness to, and involved in, extreme levels of violence and aggression, bullying and police involvement. This does not promote their self-esteem, resilience, or emotional wellbeing. Staff advocate strongly on behalf of young people. They share their views regarding placement suitability with leaders and managers. Staff are child focused and want young people to have positive experiences and to make progress in their lives. Staff try to minimise the impact of the instability within the placement through day trips, activities and the use of behaviour management rewards and sanctions. The home environment does not promote the emotional wellbeing of young people. Due to poor admission decisions by senior management, repairs to the house are not able to keep up with the level of damage caused by young people in periods of crisis. The outcome of this is that young people live in a home that is in need of maintenance. For example: there is minimal furnishing to reduce opportunities for damage; communal walls are marked; cupboard doors are missing; the fridge is kept in the office to prevent damage, and a bedroom door is boarded up. Young people's behaviour in moments of crisis leads to damage of the home. Staff are consistent in addressing this with senior management, young people and placing authorities. Despite the challenges, young people's care is individualised. Staff take time to try to get to know them and find the most effective way of communicating. Staff promote a non-judgemental and open environment where they encourage young people to talk openly and freely about issues such as substance misuse, sexual health and their feelings. Staff are interested in young people's hobbies and encourage them to maintain them through taking them to places of interest, such as railways and record shops. A member of staff says: 'We encourage them to do things that they would do if they were a normal teenager at home'. One-to-one key working sessions with young people are regular. However, they	

lack purpose and do not focus on the recommended work outlined within their care plans, such as safe relationships.

Young people make some progress within their lives. They attend education. Their attendance increases from their starting points. Staff work collaboratively with education professionals to ensure that young people start to enjoy school. A social worker said; 'One of the strengths of the home is the staff and their attitude towards my young person. They get down to his level and are child focused'. Staff promote independence work with young people in a way which is aimed at their level of understanding and complexity. This means that young people start to learn skills for their futures.

Partnership working is a strength of the home. Staff understand that information sharing is key to effective care planning for young people. They enable young people to have access to a range of specialist services such as substance misuse and mental health services. They encourage and support young people to engage within these processes. For example, staff have helped young people to research appropriate mental health medication. This empowers young people and means that they are involved in, rather than being the subject of, decision making.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement
Poorly planned admissions, resulting in violence and aggression, affect young people's emotional wellbeing. Staff try to minimise the impact of this upon young people. The registered manager and staff are open and honest with placing authorities and senior managers about their ability to keep young people, with significantly complex needs, safe. Where placements are untenable due to safeguarding reasons such as extreme violence, they inform the responsible individual and the placing authorities. Staff's ability to keep young people safe has been hindered by poor matching of young people and their placement within days of each other. They are unable to manage the challenging needs of both. Staff are subject to extreme violence and there is damage to the home. This has resulted in police involvement and the arrest of young people.	

Staff do not consistently address young people's risk taking behaviours. They do not manage drug abuse effectively. For example, they do not take a firm stance when they know young people have drug paraphernalia. Staff have missed opportunities to have important conversations with young people about their substance misuse and strategies were not implemented to try to reduce the risk of young people's cannabis use.

Young people disregard boundaries. Staff try to engage young people, offering them activities and they build positive relationships with them. However, young people continue to go missing from the placement. Staff are unable to keep them consistently safe when missing, despite good procedures and practice. They implement risk management plans, such as searching for young people when they do not return to the home. They review the effectiveness of these plans and engage professionals, such as the police within the risk management planning. They reward young people to try to encourage them to go off. Staff recognise the importance of return interviews and are proactive in trying to ensure young people receive them. They escalate their concerns to placing authorities when young people go missing frequently.

Partnership working is a strength of the home. Staff communicate with a multitude of professionals in order to implement risk management plans. There is a strong ethos of working with parents to promote a joined up approach.

Staff are child focused and want young people to be in the right placement with the right support. There is a proactive response to incidents of bullying. The registered manager and staff ensure that they escalate young people's complaints to the relevant people. They promote young people's wishes and feelings regarding their care planning and risk management. Staff encourage young people to gain insight into their risk taking behaviour. However, this has limited success.

Staff are safely recruited. There is a consistent staff team who are committed to wanting to keep young people safe. They receive relevant training specific to the complex needs of young people. For example, autism, substance misuse and bullying training. The use of agency staff is kept to a minimum and used only when necessary and in the best interests of young people.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement
There is a suitably qualified and experienced registered manager in post. She is child focused in her decision making and understands the needs of the young people in her care, for whom she strongly advocates. The registered manager has an good awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of the home. She assesses and identifies young people whose needs the placement is able to meet. The registered manager clearly and strongly shares her views with senior managers and the responsible individual, particularly around the admissions of young people and the appropriateness of their placement. The provider and the responsible individual have disregarded the recommendations of the registered manager and placed young people in contradiction with her assessment. They have not taken due care in the placing of young people in a way that is sensitive to their individual needs and complexities. For example, two young people were admitted to the home within days of each other, despite the registered manager clearly stating that the placement could not meet their needs, and voicing concerns about the pace of admissions. Placing authorities have provided limited referral information. The registered manager has challenged placing authorities about their lack of support and inadequate placement information and has advocated well for young people's needs prior to, and throughout their placements. Placing authorities did not provide enough information about significant risk management and mental health history for young people. Statutory documentation which made clear the real level of need was delayed. This has meant that young people have been placed in unsuitable placements that do not meet their needs and which have impacted on their emotional wellbeing. Mental health specialists have told the registered manager that the placement is not suitable. This information has been shared with senior managers and placing authorities with little change. As a result, young people remain in unsuitable placements. The registered manager works in partnership with other agencies such as mental health support services. She attends multi-agency meetings and is committed to working with young people to enable them to make progress in their lives. The registered manager has ensured that young people's views regarding their care planning have been heard through escalating complaints. The home is currently not achieving its aims and objectives as set out in the statement of purpose. Damage to the home, extreme violence from young people	

and high risk taking behaviour means they are unable to provide its aim of 'normalisation' or assist young people to achieve coping skills. The registered manager recognises that the admissions were inappropriate and has reported this in the most recent review of the quality of care.

Young people make some progress. The registered manager and staff celebrate young people's achievements, such as education. She consistently reviews the progress young people make and any barriers to this.

The registered manager provides regular and effective supervisions. The staff team describe the registered manager's support as 'fantastic'. Staff remain committed to the young people and the registered manager. In times of crisis, they remain consistent in their committed approach to the home. Staff sickness is low and staff retention within this home is high. This is in part due to the registered manager creating a positive and supportive environment: an environment in which staff are able to speak freely and feel listened to.

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 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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