

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC362094
Inspector	Matthew Hedges
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	New Horizons (Child Care) Limited
Registered person address	The Keys Group, Laganwood House Newforge Lane BELFAST BT9 5NW
Responsible individual	Heather Ann Laffin
Registered manager	Louise Ann Tolley
Date of last inspection	25/03/2014

Inspection date	16/01/2015
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Previous inspection	good progress
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

This inspection	
Overall effectiveness	good
Outcomes for children and young people	good
Quality of care	outstanding
Keeping children and young people safe	good
Leadership and management	outstanding

Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	good
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Young people feel safe within the home. This has helped them to feel more confident and secure which in turn has ensured that they make good progress in important areas of their life. This progress is underpinned by effective, high quality support from a consistent and committed staff team. Young people are actively encouraged to participate in their care planning. Due to this young people's care is highly individualised.

Staff show a good awareness of safe working practice and actively use this knowledge to support young people. In addition, staff help to increase young people's own awareness of risk. This helps young people to be safer.

Staff are well supported by an effective Registered Manager who strongly leads the team. The Registered Manager effectively tackles weaknesses and strives for continuous improvement.

Full report

Information about this children's home

This home is one of a number of children's homes operated by a private provider organisation. The home is registered to accommodate two young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
25/03/2014	Interim	good progress
05/12/2013	Full	outstanding
08/01/2013	Interim	good progress
20/08/2012	Full	good

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for children and young people **good**

Young people make good progress in key areas of their life. They develop a positive self-view and are able to make and sustain attachments. This helps young people to feel more confident and secure.

Young people's behaviour improves and they do not engage in offending behaviour. As a result, young people are able to focus on the positive aspects of their life. For some young people, their improving behaviour has led to better relationships with their family. Young people see their families and spend time with friends in the local community. This ensures that young people stay in touch with people who are important to them and helps them to understand their background. Young people talk enthusiastically about this.

Some young people continue to engage in risk taking behaviours but these are reducing. Young people understand the importance of healthy lifestyles and take increasing responsibility for their own physical health. Young people do not misuse drugs or alcohol. Some young people smoke but this has decreased overall. Some young people also show an active interest in physical exercise. This helps to improve young people's health.

Young people's confidence increases. They are able to participate in day to day and more complex decisions about their life. This allows young people to take increasing responsibility for their care and shows them that their views are valued. In addition, young people's independence skills grow, equipping them with the skills they need for later life. For some young people this has enabled them to secure employment and to live independently on leaving the home.

Young people's educational attendance improves dramatically from their starting points. This improves their attainment significantly and increases the options available to them. Young people are proud of their achievements in this area. This improves young people's self-esteem and their self-confidence. A number of professionals talk positively about this. For example, an education provider explained that one young person now attends school every day; they are staying in lessons and achieve more because of this.

Quality of care **outstanding**

A small, stable, consistent staff team have consistently high aspirations for young people and encourage them to succeed. Young people's achievements are highlighted and celebrated. This develops young people's belief in themselves and in

what they can aspire to. Staff advocate strongly for young people and challenge barriers that they face. This includes barriers in relation to education. Staff support young people to attend school and are committed to ensuring they remain in full time education.

The home has developed excellent working relationships with other partner agencies. When other agencies fail to meet young people's needs, the home challenges them rigorously. This makes young people safer and ensures they get the support they need.

Staff help young people to make progress in all aspects of their life. Staff understand young people's needs and are empathetic to their feelings. This ensures that the support staff provide is proactive, individualised and sensitivity offered. This support is underpinned by high quality, detailed, individualised care plans. These plans are written with young people and are regularly reviewed with them. This helps young people to shape the care they receive. It helps them to understand why decisions are made and why certain actions are taken.

Young people are central to practice within the home. Their views are sought and these are used to inform future practice. For example, young people help to write the home's development plan. They identify key areas for improvement and are kept updated with progress towards these. This empowers young people and helps them to feel part of the improvements made. Young people are aware of the home's complaints procedure and their complaints are taken seriously.

Relationships between staff and young people are strong. Young people are positive about the home, the staff, and the support provided. One young person commented that they liked all of the staff and was happy with the care they received. Parents and other professionals share this view. They praise the home for the support offered to young people and link this to the progress young people make. For example, a social worker stated that, 'the home has done an excellent job'. A parent stated, 'the staff team are great and you can talk to the Registered Manager about anything'.

The home is nicely maintained and decorated any maintenance issues are dealt with in a timely manner. This ensures that staff and young people take pride in the home.

Keeping children and young people safe good

Young people are safe and feel safe within the home. They are able to identify adults that they trust.

Behaviour management plans clearly identify risk and protective factors. These plans are individualised and written with young people. This helps young people to better understand risk and how to reduce this. Plans are kept up to date and reviewed regularly by the Registered Manager. This ensures that staff understand the actions

they should take.

Young people do not go missing from the home. On occasion, some young people may go missing from their family home or education placement. On these occasions, staff take swift and robust action. This has reduced the number of incidents and shows young people that staff care for them wherever they are. There is a clear protocol agreed between the home and the police. Staff show good awareness of this and the actions to take. This is also discussed with young people helping them to better understand the risks associated with going missing. In addition, staff have good knowledge regarding other key areas of safeguarding including issues surrounding exploitation. These issues are discussed openly with young people, further raising their awareness and helping to keep them safe. The home has strong relationships with the local police who visit the home regularly. This helps to foster positive relationships with staff and young people.

Positive behaviour management strategies are employed by all staff and are clearly outlined in young people's behaviour management plans. Boundaries are clear and young people's behaviour has improved because of this. There has been no use of physical intervention for over twelve months. This helps young people to better manage their own behaviour. Incidents of physical aggression are rare; this is a significant improvement for some young people.

Staff show a good awareness of the home's whistleblowing policy and are clear regarding actions they would take if they had a concern. In addition, managers show a good awareness of safe recruitment practices. These safeguards protect young people from unsafe adults.

Leadership and management

outstanding

The home is managed by an experienced, suitably qualified Registered Manager who has managed the home since 2007.

The Registered Manager uses a range of rigorous monitoring activities to ensure improvements within the home. The Registered Manager keeps up to date with changes to legislation and guidance and uses this knowledge to support improvement in the service. The Registered Manager is committed to driving improvement and has a clear development plan in place. The Registered Manager is aware of the home's strengths and builds on these systematically to address weaknesses. Targets set are realistic but challenging. The quality of the service is measured against the progress young people make. This focus supports improved outcomes for young people.

The Registered Manager consistently communicates high expectations to staff about their performance, the progress of young people and the development of the service. This motivates staff and channels their efforts effectively. This has helped to maintain a consistent staff team and has improved the service young people and their families

receive.

The home employs a suitable number of staff to meet the needs of the young people. Staff shift patterns are designed to optimise consistency for young people. Staff and young people are positive about this.

Staff receive good support from the Registered Manager and comment positively about this. Staff receive regular, good quality supervisions and their performance is regularly assessed. This helps to improve practice. Staff also receive regular training in key areas. This helps staff to feel confident in their role and enables them to better support young people.

What inspection judgements mean

Judgement	Description
Outstanding	A service of exceptional quality that significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Good	A service of high quality that exceeds minimum requirements.
Adequate	A service that only meets minimum requirements.
Inadequate	A service that does not meet minimum requirements.

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The 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 relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the framework of inspection for children's homes.