

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	23 May 2016
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, Lancashire BB4 6HR

Responsible individual	Nicola Simmonds
Registered manager	Louise Tolley
Inspector	Hannah Bates

Inspection date	23 May 2016
Previous inspection judgement	Improved effectiveness
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.	
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good

SC362094

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Young people's risk-taking behaviours, such as missing incidents, have reduced.
- Good quality individualised care helps young people to make progress from their starting points.
- Young people have positive daily experiences. They get to take part in new activities.
- Staff support and promote the relationships between young people and their families.
- Staff are committed to the young people in their care. They are child-focused.
- Young people say that they feel safe, and that staff help them and listen to them.
- There is a stable and consistent staff team, the members of which know the young people.
- Good communication with other professionals supports consistent care provided to young people.
- The registered manager is tenacious at advocating on behalf of young people. She escalates any concerns appropriately.
- A requirement and two recommendations have been raised in this inspection. These are in respect of ensuring that staff use other professionals' input appropriately and ensuring that staff seek outcomes from placing authorities when young people have raised concerns.

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 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 must comply with the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
5: In order to meet the engaging with the wider system standard, the registered person must ensure that staff: (a) seek to involve each child's placing authority effectively in the child's care, in accordance with the child's relevant plans (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.	4 July 2016

Recommendations

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

- 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 must provide an opportunity for the child to have an independent return home interview. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.30)
- Ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies on record keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective, and clear recording. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

Full report

Information about this children's home

This is a privately owned children's home. It 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 January 2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
6 August 2015	Full	Requires improvement
18 March 2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
16 January 2015	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
A stable and consistent staff team provides good quality individualised care to young people. This supports their progress within the home. Young people have individualised behaviour management plans, which they have been involved in putting together with staff. Incentive plans are reviewed regularly and young people work towards targets, such as trips to the zoo and ice-hockey matches. For some young people who choose not to engage at times, staff are tenacious at trying to motivate and inspire them to achieve, although this is not always successful. Young people feel listened to and cared for. They are able to identify the support that staff give them, stating that, 'Staff try to help me with revision and stuff but I'm not really interested. I feel safe and I can talk to any of them but I choose not to sometimes.' Staff use their good relationships with young people to talk to them about sensitive issues, such as family relationships and keeping safe. Staff spend time with young people. Another young person said, 'I spend loads of time with staff, playing football, swingball and board games. I like them all.' Young people make progress from their starting points. One young person is due to start school after a significant period of time without a placement, which the registered manager escalated appropriately and with effective results. Staff try to engage and motivate both young people in their education, although their levels of engagement differ. Staff help young people to revise and to complete studies at home. Staff are proud of young people's achievements and frame their certificates, as well as a letter from the Queen's lady-in-waiting after a young person had written to the Queen to find out more about her role. Staff ensure that young people receive the specialist input they need, such as child and adolescent mental health services, the youth offending service and substance misuse. However, they do not always ensure that feedback is sought and integrated in young people's behaviour management plans. They work with other professionals, such as the local police and placing authorities, to reduce risks for young people in the community. A social worker said, 'My young person is safe, and in a stable placement. However, he isn't moving forward as I would like and this isn't about staff but this is about him. Staff are so tolerant of his behaviours. He sees the children's home as his safe place.' Young people's daily experiences are positive. They engage in activities, and staff enjoy spending time with the young people. Staff encourage young people to invest in their home. For example, staff and young people have planted sunflowers in the garden and also recently bought a trampoline. Young people continue to	

enjoy time with their families, which staff promote. Staff try to communicate with young people's families regularly to arrange for young people to see them and to talk about their progress. They keep families involved in their child's care. A family member said that they always call her and that communication is good.

Independence work is a strength of the home. For some young people who have recently disengaged, staff are encouraging them to prepare for their futures. They complete independence work with young people on a weekly basis. Young people say they enjoy this. Young people learn skills, such as changing a plug, writing a CV, knowing how to dress appropriately for different social settings and budgeting.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
Young people are safe. Staff understand young people's risk-taking behaviours and exhaust every avenue in trying to keep them safe and to reduce risks in the community. For example, they work with local police officers to gain further information regarding young people's friends in the community to make sure that they are safe. They talk openly with young people about their risk-taking behaviours, such as substance misuse and stranger danger. Staff adhere to risk management plans and make sure that they refer any concerns to the appropriate safeguarding professionals. However, they do not always ensure that they seek or document outcomes from placing authorities about young people's disclosures or concerns. Regular communication with other professionals, such as placing authority social workers, means that risk intervention strategies are regularly reviewed. Young people's risk-taking behaviours reduce from their starting points. Missing episodes are rare, which for some young people is a significant achievement. On occasions when young people do go missing, they do not always have an independent return interview. Physical interventions are rare, as staff talk to young people and know how to respond to them prior to a situation escalating. While some young people still display risk-taking behaviours, such as offending behaviour and substance misuse, staff are tenacious at trying to reduce the risks for them. For example, young people have allocated free time, which staff transport them to and from, as well as ensuring that young people do not have large amounts of money. They exhaust every avenue to try to reduce risks for young people. A social worker said, 'There has definitely been a reduction in behaviours he was displaying. I can't think of anywhere that may have managed his behaviours better. I am happy with communication from staff and they all know him so well.'	

A stable staff team provide consistent boundaries. These consistent boundaries have helped young people's risk-taking behaviours to decrease. There are clear rules and expectations in place for young people. Young people are clear about expectations of their behaviour.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
There is a registered manager in post who is qualified up to national vocational qualification (NVQ) level 4 in leadership and management and has the RMC level five. She has 24 years' experience of working within residential childcare, and has been registered manager of the home for a significant period of time. An experienced deputy supports the registered manager. The deputy is qualified up to NVQ level 5. The staff team consists of seven members of staff, two of whom joined the team in March 2016. They are enrolled onto the CWDC. The five members of staff are all qualified up to NVQ level 3. The registered manager is child-focused and committed to the young people in her care. She is a strong advocate for the children in her care and escalates any concerns appropriately and with rigour in order that young people get the services they need. She knows the young people, and regularly reviews their progress with the staff team and with other professionals. While some young people have made excellent progress, others have made less substantial progress. However, she effectively reviews behaviour management strategies and continues to motivate staff to be reflective in their interventions with young people in order to support young people's progress. Supervision provided to staff and staff training are good. Staff are trained in the complex needs of young people, such as missing and substance misuse. As a result, they are able to meet young people's needs and to deliver the home's statement of purpose. New staff members receive an informative induction to the home, with the registered manager training them in record keeping and behaviour management. As it is a small team they are able to offer each other close support and to share their experience and skills with new members of staff. A new staff member said, 'Everyone works as a team here. Everyone communicates well so they know what is going on. No one does half an effort and everyone puts full effort in.' The registered manager is a strong and effective leader. She is proactive and responds to change. For example, she has implemented a new way of documenting safeguarding issues to ensure that information does not get missed. She recognises the strengths and areas of development of the home, and she is	

committed to safeguarding. She says, 'We have all got to make sure we look after the kids safely. We have to know how to talk to them and how to be with them to support them and keep them safe.'

Partnership working is a strength of the home. The registered manager advocates strongly on behalf of young people around issues such as transition plans and education. Where necessary, she escalates her concerns in order for young people to receive the services they need. She effectively shares concerns with placing social workers to try to achieve positive outcomes for young people. She works closely with placing authorities as well as other professionals.

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 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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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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