

# SC485956

Registered provider: New Horizons (NW) Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This home is owned and managed by a private organisation. It provides care for up to two children who have been, or who are, experiencing emotional and/or behavioural distress due to early life trauma, and children With special educational needs and/or disabilities

The manager registered with Ofsted in May 2020. She is suitably experienced.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021.

We last visited this setting on 18 February 2021 to carry out a monitoring visit. The report is published on the Ofsted website.

### Inspection dates: 9 and 10 March 2022

|                                                                                           |                    |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Overall experiences and progress of children and young people,</b> taking into account | <b>outstanding</b> |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|

|                                                             |             |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| How well children and young people are helped and protected | outstanding |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|

|                                           |             |
|-------------------------------------------|-------------|
| The effectiveness of leaders and managers | outstanding |
|-------------------------------------------|-------------|

The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

**Date of last inspection:** 8 May 2019

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## **Recent inspection history**

| <b>Inspection date</b> | <b>Inspection type</b> | <b>Inspection judgement</b> |
|------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 08/05/2019             | Full                   | Good                        |
| 15/05/2018             | Full                   | Good                        |
| 06/06/2017             | Full                   | Good                        |
| 23/02/2017             | Interim                | Declined in effectiveness   |

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding**

Two children were living at the home at the time of this inspection.

Children flourish as a direct result of the unwaveringly warm, nurturing care they receive from a skilled and dedicated team of staff. A child said, 'I love them, and they love me. They're my family.'

The stability and consistency both children are experiencing in this family environment are providing them with a strong foundation for their futures. Children's lives are transformed because of the consistently high standard of care they receive.

Children with additional learning needs and barriers to communication achieve and thrive in a culture of high aspiration embedded in the practice of staff. Both children have made exceptional progress since coming to live at the home. A social worker said, 'I'm staggered at the progress [name of child] has made. The home is a model for what residential care for children should be.'

Children are supported by staff to spend time with people who are important to them. Children's views and wishes are taken into account when staff are making these arrangements. They are encouraged to develop friendships outside of the home through attending youth clubs that meet many of their social and cognitive needs. Children are supported in their hobbies and interests. One child has become a proficient horse rider since coming to live at the home and may pursue a course in equine studies in the future. These achievements help children to develop a sense of self-belief and aspirations for their futures.

The home environment meets children's sensory and cognitive needs. Children, including those who are non-verbal, are encouraged to participate in decision-making about the decor of the home. In the garden, there is a sensory shed and sensory garden to support children's emotional well-being.

Each child is valued for what they contribute to the life of the home and to their community. Children who cannot communicate through speech are enabled to express their views, wishes and feelings using symbols, pictures and signing. All staff are trained to use Makaton to support one child to develop his communication skills. Symbols and signs throughout the home help the child to participate more in the day-to-day life of the household.

Both children are in full-time education and continue to make significant progress towards their individual goals. One child, who has previously struggled in school, is now described by his teacher as a model pupil. He has recently received the 'Superstar Award' from the virtual school team in recognition of his achievements.

This is proudly displayed in the kitchen alongside other certificates and awards that both children have received.

Staff have a good understanding of the health needs of children and the effects of medication on children with additional learning needs. They work well with health professionals to reduce children's medication when this is in their best interests. One child has now been taken off all night-time medication and is able to sleep throughout the night without this.

**How well children and young people are helped and protected:  
outstanding**

Staff know children extremely well. They have a detailed understanding of each child's individual needs. Staff take time to regularly reflect on the vulnerabilities and strengths of each child and seek to reduce risks and build resilience.

Children's written risk management plans are very detailed. Any changes to risks are considered and plans are amended accordingly. However, some signatures on case records are not legible.

Children's placement plans support staff to care for children in a way that promotes each child's needs and their longer-term goals. However, some written assessments and plans are lengthy and contain a lot of historical information. This practice has not impacted on the children currently living at the home.

Children are supported to understand the feelings of others. The use of discriminatory or offensive language is challenged in a way which meets children's cognitive needs. Children begin to see the impact of their behaviours on others and start to build positive and harmonious relationships.

Children make excellent progress in managing their feelings and behaviours. This is underpinned by the high quality of therapeutic care they receive from staff and the consistency of approach they experience.

Children are helped to achieve greater independence. One child, who initially always needed to be supported by two staff, no longer needs this support. He is now able to spend short periods on his own in the community and is learning to manage small amounts of money. This significant progress has been achieved by the child with the help and persistence of staff who know him and believe in him.

Children thrive in an environment where positive behaviour is promoted. There has only been one incident of physical intervention with a child in the reporting period. Recording and evaluation of this incident are detailed. The child spent time with staff after the event to reflect on the intervention and was given the opportunity to express his views. This contributes to children's sense of safety and security.

Although no new staff have been recruited in this reporting period, the managers have ensured that they are up to date with safer recruitment procedures and have attended further training.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding**

Leadership and management of the home are excellent. The registered manager is ambitious for the children in her care. She leads by example and instils this culture of high aspiration throughout the staff team.

Staff benefit from regular, reflective supervision sessions. Team meetings are used effectively to reflect on children's progress. Staff share information with the whole staff team about issues that are pertinent to the children. The team identifies how practice can be adapted to ensure that the children's individual needs are being met.

There is a strong learning culture across the team. Staff are expected to use research to inform their care of children. This learning is shared across the staff team through regular team meetings. Staff want to do their best for each of the children in their care. They use formal training alongside informal team activities to continually develop their practice. As a result, children are cared for by staff who are well informed, skilled and committed.

The registered manager ensures that children's voices are heard. Children are encouraged to contribute to the probationary reviews of staff, as well as annual appraisals of staff practice. One child has contributed to the delivery of training to the wider organisation about his experience as a child with autism spectrum disorder. This means that staff can develop a better understanding of the needs of children. Children's lived experiences are heard and valued.

Children are fully engaged in the processes that are used to plan their care. They share their views in statutory reviews and have their own in-house care plans which are child centred and accessible for children with differing communication needs. Children's contributions are evident and written into their plans and records in the home.

The registered manager has a detailed oversight of the running of the home. Effective monitoring and evaluation systems support the home's development. This enables leaders and managers to have a clear understanding of the home's strengths and weaknesses and to be able to take effective action when needed.

The home is visited once a month by an independent person to review the quality of the children's care and the arrangements to safeguard children and promote their well-being. These visits are not routinely undertaken unannounced. This is a missed opportunity to see how the home performs when visits are unannounced to ensure that scrutiny of the home is effective.

The registered manager has strong and effective relationships with placing authorities and a range of professionals involved in the care and education of the

children. She advocates for children and provides challenge, when required, to ensure that children's needs are met and that they make progress in line with their care plans.

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

### **Recommendations**

- The registered person should ensure that information about children is recorded in a way which is helpful to the child. Assessments and plans should be concise and not contain unnecessary historical information. The registered person should ensure that staff's signatures on children's case records are accompanied by the staff member's printed or typed name. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.3)
- The registered person should ensure that the independent person visits are unannounced. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24)

### **Information about this inspection**

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people, using the social care common inspection framework. This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service, how it meets the core functions of the service as set out in legislation, 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'.

## Children's home details

**Unique reference number:** SC485956

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** New Horizons (NW) Limited

**Registered provider address:** New Horizons (NW) Limited, Unit 12, Riversway Business Village, Navigation Way, Ashton-on-Ribble, Preston PR2 2YP

**Responsible individual:** Natalie Waterhouse

**Registered manager:** Nia Jones

## Inspector

Dawn Parton, Social Care Inspector



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