

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	16/09/2015
Unique reference number	SC485956
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	New Horizons (NW) Ltd
Registered person address	17 Anchor Street, Southport, Merseyside, PR9 0UT

Responsible individual	Mrs Victoria Wilden
Registered manager	Mrs Paula Jennings
Inspector	Elaine Clare

Inspection date	16/09/2015
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	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

SC485956

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- The Registered Manager is knowledgeable and experienced. She works effectively in partnership with the staff team. She understands the strengths and weaknesses of the home and takes action to develop the service further.
- The children receive quality care delivered by staff with suitable qualifications and knowledge. Children develop meaningful relationships with staff they trust. They enjoy time spent with staff.
- Children make good progress emotionally, educationally and socially.
- A stable and consistent staff team have the needs of the children at the centre of their practice. They strongly advocate for the children. Children feel safe and supported at this service.
- Educational needs are supported and met. Children have good attendance and positive achievement levels.

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

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the service should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- staff should ensure that children understand what local leisure and other cultural services are on offer for them, support them to access any relevant leisure passes and encourage them to participate in activities in the community and wider if appropriate (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 31, paragraph 6.6)
- when a child returns to the home after being missing from care , the responsible local authority must provide an opportunity for the child to have an independent return home interview (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 45, paragraph 9.30)
- staff should be familiar with the home's policies on record keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective, and clear recording (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 62, paragraph 14.4)

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home is registered to accommodate up to 2 children of mixed gender aged 10 to 17 years old. The home specialises in the care of children who present with emotional and behavioural problems and/or a learning disability. It is operated by a private organisation.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
N/A		

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
Children make good progress at this service. In September they started to attend the organisation's school located close by, and during the last ten days attendance levels were excellent. Children make good progress as they are supported by the care staff during the school day and also after school with their homework. Children say they enjoy going to school. As a result of consistent boundaries, children make good progress in making healthy attachments, processing feelings and relating to others. A significant part of the home's ethos is for the children to gain confidence and build self-esteem. This aspect of care is very successful. The staff encourage children to make healthy life style choices, from exercise to healthy eating. Meal times are very social occasions with staff promoting social skills such as good table manners. Children respond extremely well to this practice. Children receive individualised sessions two or three times a day, these are recorded conversations children have with staff. There is no specific goal to these sessions, they are not evaluated and do not represent a significant contribution to their life history. This would appear to be a missed opportunity to demonstrate how reflection on the young person's life challenges could support their ongoing development. However all records are included into weekly placement reviews and information is shared with their social workers. The staff team provide a small range of activities that the children enjoy, such as swimming and going to a skate park. Other activities have been encouraged but have so far been declined by the children and as a result children have limited interactions with children their own age. They do not attend clubs or societies for example. All activities are age appropriate and risk assessed. Children have a strong voice in choosing activities they wish or do not wish to participate in.	

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
Safeguarding policies and procedures are clear and robust. Staff members are aware of the procedures and how they would be implemented in practice. Children are kept safe by a staff team who demonstrate good knowledge of safeguarding practices. Staff are trained in recognising actual or potential harm or abuse. The Registered Manager leads on safeguarding in relation to referrals and seeking advice from external safeguarding authorities. The senior leadership team keep safeguarding policies under review, so they remain clear and informative. Staff members have a good knowledge of e-safety and child sexual exploitation. Staff supervise children's use of the internet at all times due to their ages and potential vulnerabilities. Staff support children to understand the risks associated with all forms of social media. Risk assessment around e-safety and child sexual exploitation informs staff how to manage individual and group risk. Behaviour management systems ensure children are safely managed. A calm and skilled approach is adopted to diffuse evolving incidents. Children respond well to clear boundaries set by staff. Over time children develop more appropriate ways of communicating their feelings to others. Children are encouraged to raise matters that concern them in individual meetings. Individual risk assessments inform the staff of the behaviour management strategies to be used and contain the child's preferred method of control, if needed. Reflective work with the child and staff is firmly in place and overseen by the Registered Manager and senior leaders. Thirteen incidents of children going missing have occurred. A procedure is in place and is followed when an incident has occurred and this is known by staff. The police commented: 'the home and the staff have been very helpful and we have a good working relationship.' Independent return home interviews has not yet been commissioned by the placing authority, despite challenges from the Registered Manager to do so. Children live in a safe environment where all health and safety checks are carried out. Recruitment arrangements are robust. Only those adults assessed as suitable to work with children are appointed.	

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
The Registered Manager has over 10 years' experience of working as a manager in residential work. She has the Level 4 NVQ Children and Young People and a Registered Managers Award. Staffing is a strength of this service. The staff members form caring and professional relationships with the children and children respond well to these relationships. The staff are suitably trained to deliver care in line with the home's stated caring ethos as set out in the Statement of Purpose. Monitoring of the service is good. Auditing systems in place address any areas that require improvement and inform future planning. Senior managers and leaders across the organisation, together with the Registered Manager, have clear oversight and input into the structured quality assurance processes. They know the strengths and weakness of the home and have development plans in progress. An independent visitor provides an objective view; with recommendations that the Registered Manager then actions. The home's Statement of Purpose meets the required standard. It contains sufficient information to enable professionals have a clear overview of the service when making placement decisions. The home is well equipped, well maintained and homely. Facilities are up to date and meet the needs of the children. The garden offers a large area for children to play football and ride their bikes. The Registered Manager and staff continually strive to improve this setting to benefit children.	

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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