

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC356864
Inspector	Sarah Oldham
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Time-Out Childrens Homes Limited
Registered person address	Timeout Childrens Homes Ltd, Unit 2 Mill Fold, Ripponden SOWERBY BRIDGE West Yorkshire HX6 4DH
Responsible individual	Debbie Rowlands
Registered manager	Alison Jane Heskett
Date of last inspection	13/02/2014

Inspection date	17/12/2014
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Previous inspection	satisfactory progress
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

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

Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	good
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Full report

Information about this children's home

The home is a privately run children's home, which provides care and accommodation for up to two young people who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
13/02/2014	Interim	satisfactory progress
24/05/2013	Full	good
24/01/2013	Interim	satisfactory progress
24/09/2012	Full	adequate

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

Recommendations

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

- ensure entries in records are clearly expressed, non-stigmatising and distinguish as far as possible between fact, opinion and third party information. This relates specifically to ensuring information in placement plans is accurately transferred (NMS 22.4)
- ensure the home provides a comfortable and homely environment and is well maintained and decorated - this is in particular reference to the stair carpeting which is showing signs of wear and tear (NMS 10.3).

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for children and young people **good**

Young people are making good progress in many aspects of their lives whilst living at the home, as well as learning positive strategies to continue to progress when they leave. They are supported by staff to have a good understanding of their background; this helps them to develop positive links and develop emotional resilience. Young people form good relations with staff. Previously there have been some minor changes within staff personnel and young people commented that this had been something that they had initially found slightly difficult. This has been resolved in recent months and young people are pleased that they have a regular staff team providing them with consistency of care and support.

Young people have their needs met well within the home. They access health care professionals, attending regular appointments and are supported to understand the importance of good health. They undertake a range of activities, including horse riding and use of leisure facilities. This also contributes to their overall good health. They are encouraged and supported to eat healthy food and contribute to planning, shopping and preparing meals. Young people do not smoke, misuse alcohol or use drugs. This further aids them to achieve positive outcomes in terms of their overall health care.

Young people are attending education and making good progress with their individual attainment taking into account their initial starting points. Young people who previously had poor attendance are attending on a regular basis, learning, making friends and enjoying the experience of school. They have aspirations for their futures and this is encouraged and supported by staff.

Young people have the opportunity to share their wishes and views with staff and say that they feel listened too. This enables them to have an input into the day-to-day running of the home.

Young people have regular contact with people who are important to them. This enables them to maintain relationships and have an understanding of their individual backgrounds. The home maintains details of contact as agreed within placement plans. However, previously some contact arrangements had not been confirmed with individual social workers. This was raised by the placing authority and the home has meetings with the placing authority social worker to promote contact as agreed. This is to ensure that all contact promotes well-being, safety and is in the best interest of the young person.

Quality of care **good**

Young people say that the staff at the home support them well and that they get on with staff for the majority of the time. There have been some recent changes within the staff team due to staff moving on. This was initially unsettling for young people but they confirm that the reasons for changes were explained and they feel settled with the staff at the home.

Staff enable young people to be consulted and fully involved in their care and individual plans. Regular review of individual plans are discussed with the young people and they confirm they understand their individual care plans. Young people have regular individual key worker sessions as well as taking part in house meetings. This enables their views to be taken into account and contribute to the running of the home. They have a range of information about how to complain or raise any concerns and they confirm they are able to do so. In addition, they have access to independent advocates to whom they can raise concerns.

Detailed placement plans set out the individual needs of young people and how these will be met. Staff have a good understanding of the plans and ensure that they remain updated. In addition to the placement plans, each young person has a detailed therapeutic plan identifying individual needs and risk assessments. These plans are shared and discussed with young people and placing social workers. One social worker commented 'planning for the young person I have placed is very detailed, providing a very good overview of the care provided and the progress that the young person is making.'

Staff promote the health care needs of young people well. All young people are registered with health care professionals and are supported to attend appointments. Young people do not smoke. They have not been involved in any substance or alcohol misuse during their time at the home. Staff promote positive health care and explain about the risks of substance misuse. Healthy eating is also promoted and young people are enabled to be fully involved in the planning and preparation of meals.

All young people attend education and staff promote this well. They have developed good relationships with school and ensure in the majority of cases, information sharing is positively promoted. Where there has been any concerns raised regarding this, the staff have responded by ensuring effective communication is maintained.

Leisure activities provide additional learning and development opportunities for young people. They have the opportunity to take part in a range of activities, including horse riding, visiting the library, using local leisure facilities and parks as well as going on holiday. Sometimes, young people have changed their interests and declined to attend pre-arranged activities. When this is the case, staff encourage and support young people to try a range of different activities. This means that young people are provided with a range of activities to develop interests and promote friendships.

The home is situated within a residential area. It is mainly decorated to a good standard throughout. However, the carpet on the stairs is showing signs of wear and tear and could increase risk of trips and falls. The manager has identified the carpet is scheduled for replacement but a timeframe has not been confirmed.

Keeping children and young people safe good

Young people are cared for by staff who demonstrate a good understanding of the importance of providing a safe, caring and nurturing home for children and young people. They work in accordance with the home's policies and procedures to contribute to the overall safety of young people. Young people's placement plans contain detailed risk assessments that provide clear details on how risks will be reduced. Staff have undertaken training to better understand the potential for bullying to occur within the home and remain vigilant to this. Where there has been some bullying behaviours, staff discuss this with the young people to help them understand that bullying is not acceptable. This has resulted in a decrease in these behaviours.

There are detailed missing from home protocols in place; these are known and followed by staff. The protocol underpins individual missing from home risk assessments. Staff works in partnership with the local police to reduce incidents of missing from home and explain to young people, the importance of remaining safe. Some young people are at risk of child sexual exploitation. Staff have undertaken training with regards this and demonstrate a good understanding of the overall risk factors and work with partner agencies to reduce this risk.

Therapeutic plans include individual behaviour support plans. They include de-escalation techniques as well as incentives, rewards and agreed sanctions to encourage young people's good behaviours. Evaluation of these plans demonstrates where there has been a fluctuation in behaviours, effective strategies are then implemented to address these. Physical intervention is only used when a young person is at risk of hurting themselves or others and young people are offered additional support following this.

Recruitment and selection of staff is robust, ensuring that staff only commence employment upon receipt of suitable references and satisfactory enhanced disclosure and barring checks being completed. This helps ensure that no unsuitable people are able to work with young people.

Health and safety checks are undertaken on a regular basis, including fire evacuation drills. This means that young people and staff know what to do in the event of a fire.

Leadership and management

outstanding

The Registered Manager has been registered since November 2013 and has the necessary qualifications, skills and experience to provide strong, effective leadership and management. She has previously managed children's homes and is the Registered Manager for this home and another home. She ensures that her management oversight of the home involves visiting the home each day during the week. To provide additional oversight, there is a senior team leader who supports the Registered Manager with her role and is based at the home on a full time basis. The Registered Manager undertakes additional training and research to ensure her practice is effective. It also enables her to provide additional training within team meetings to complement the on-going training and development of staff.

The home has a Statement of Purpose in place. This provides information about the home and its aims and objectives. This document is made available for placing social workers and other interested parties to enable them to have a clear understanding of the services provided. Young people receive a children's guide. This provides them with information about what to expect from the home as well as links to other organisations that can provide them with additional support; for example; independent advocates and children's rights officer.

Staff receive support through team meetings, regular supervision, appraisals and training. This provides them with knowledge and guidance to support young people effectively. Most staff hold a level 3 qualification in working with children and young people. Those without this qualification are working towards it. Mandatory training on safeguarding and child protection is in place. However, not all staff have undertaken training with regards to child sexual exploitation. Therefore, the manager has identified this as an area for additional training.

Monthly regulation 33 reports from an external visitor, along with regular monitoring by the manager, contribute to maintaining high quality standards and care within the home. This attention to monitoring, reviewing and evaluating has a positive impact on young people by ensuring their needs are central to all practice within the home.

At the last inspection, four recommendations were made. These were in relation to ensuring placement plans are monitored, details of reviews maintained on file, support to be provided to young people to manage finances and attendance at school placements on a consistent basis. These recommendations have been addressed and demonstrate the homes commitment to improving practice to support young people effectively.

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.