

SC356864

Registered provider: Time-Out Children's Homes Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is one of several children's homes operated by a private company. The home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to two children who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

If required, children can access the organisation's school and therapy department.

The manager has been in post since October 2017 and was registered with Ofsted in January 2018.

Inspection dates: 18 to 19 December 2019

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **good**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **requires improvement to be good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 15 January 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
15/01/2019	Full	Good
23/05/2017	Full	Good
18/01/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
24/05/2016	Full	Good

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to meet 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(s) must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b)(2)(a)(h)) Specifically, the registered manager should ensure that he maintains enough of an oversight of day-to-day practice to recognise when standards of care are deteriorating due to the demands placed on the staff team, and that he takes suitable action to compensate for these demands and address shortfalls.	23/01/2020
The registered person must make arrangements for the handling, recording, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of medicines received into the children's home. In particular the registered person must ensure that— a record is kept of the administration of medicine to each child. (Regulation 23 (1)(2)(c)) Specifically, ensure that the reason for non-prescribed medication being given to a child is included in the home's medication records, and that these records accurately reflect the medication stock that is held in the home.	23/01/2020
The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which are kept up to date. (Regulation 36 (1)(b))	23/01/2020

Specifically, ensure that each risk management plan only contains information pertaining to the child for whom the plan has been written.	
---	--

Recommendations

- Establish routines to allow for rooms to be cleaned. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 16, paragraph 3.20)
Specifically, ensure that staff have enough time allocated to complete household chores including thoroughly cleaning children's bedrooms.
- The child should be supported to sustain or regain their confidence in education and be engaged in suitable structured activities. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 28, paragraph 5.15)
Specifically, ensure that learning opportunities are delivered as part of a timetable that is known and implemented by staff.
- Staff should continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)
Specifically, review the practice of replacing metal cutlery with plastic knives and forks, and ensure that future responses to self-harming behaviour are proportionate to the level of risk presented by the child and do not unnecessarily impact on other children living in the home.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The experience of living at this home has had a positive impact on the three children who have lived there since the last inspection. This is because the manager and staff provide care and support that focus on each child's individual and unique needs. Staff demonstrate a good understanding of each child's needs and show a commitment to ensuring that these are met on a day-to-day basis. As a result, children make good progress overall, relative to their individual starting points.

One child has left the home since the last inspection. Good transition planning has enabled this child to successfully move into post-16 accommodation and start a college placement. More pertinently, staff have worked hard to establish essential support networks through important people in the child's life. This, combined with the supportive links that staff have maintained with the child since he left, has enabled the child to settle into living independently.

Transitions into the home are equally well planned. Compatibility risk assessments have been used to ensure that the admission of another child would not be detrimental to the

child already living in the home. This has proven effective in matching two children who clearly regard this as their home. This was noticeable during the inspection when both children were seen to be very relaxed in the company of staff and could be heard giggling and having fun as they prepared for the organisation's Christmas party.

Children are given plenty of opportunity to express their views and opinions, make choices and be involved in decisions about their lives. When talking about a particularly difficult time, a social worker said, 'Staff were really supportive of [name]. They talked to him and helped him to understand the situation. They made sure that his views were heard during all the changes to his plan. Staff are committed to [name] and have done everything they can to get him back on track and to invest in the new plan.'

There is good evidence that education is valued and encouraged by staff. However, despite staff's best efforts, education is presenting a significant challenge. This is because one child does not have a school placement currently and the other is refusing to attend his school. Staff are working hard to overcome these barriers to participation. They are working collaboratively with education professionals and trying different approaches and curriculums, for example a home tuition approach that provides learning opportunities for both children. While this is an extremely positive initiative, it would benefit from being delivered in a more planned way that promotes good routines during the school day.

Staff promote and support opportunities for positive contact. They help children to rebuild and maintain relationships through good emotional support. This is helping children to manage the complexities presented by some relationships with the people they care about.

Several improvements have been made to the home as part of the ongoing refurbishment plan. However, both children show a tendency to cause damage when frustrated or upset. Repairs are carried out, but this is a constant challenge for staff. Torn wallpaper and graffiti on bedroom walls, as well as the need to limit access to items that can be smashed, such as crockery and ornaments, detract from what is, overall, a homely environment.

Some areas of the home, in particular children's bedrooms, did not appear to have been cleaned for some time. This is possibly an unintended consequence of staff having to provide constant supervision and support for the children, with no time allocated to carry out daily chores.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: good

Children's safety and well-being are given a high priority. They have trusting relationships with staff who they can approach if they have any worries or concerns. Suitable training is provided for staff who demonstrate a good understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities. This means that staff know what to do if safeguarding concerns emerge such as allegations against staff.

The manager and staff have a good understanding of each child's risks and vulnerabilities. Handovers and team meetings are used effectively to discuss each child's known and emerging behaviours and risks. When required, staff will consult with the organisation's therapy department whose members are available to support children directly as well as provide advice and guidance for staff. This means that incidents such as self-harm are managed well. However, staff's overwhelming drive to protect children means that post-incident strategies are not always proportionate to the level of risk being presented, for example replacing metal cutlery with plastic knives and forks in response to an extremely minor incident of self-harm. This approach has been in place for several months without being reviewed or considered in relation to the impact on the other child living at the home.

Risk assessments require improvement. Staff are updating these regularly, but the quality of the updates is extremely poor. Documents seen during the inspection showed evidence of cut and paste from one child's risk assessment to another. Inspectors found it difficult to ascertain which child was being referred to without clarification from the manager and staff.

Staff provide children with high levels of supervision and support that serve as a preventative measure for behaviours such as going missing from home. On the rare occasions that children have absented themselves from the home, staff have followed protocols that have secured a quick and safe return.

Staff take an educational approach to helping children understand risk. They support children to reflect on their experiences and provide learning opportunities such as e-safety quizzes. This is helping children to make age-appropriate decisions about keeping safe.

Staff make good use of positive relationships to help children to manage their feelings and moderate their behaviour. They try to find out why the child is upset and find a solution. This patient and calm approach has been effective in limiting the need for the use of sanctions and physical restraint. A social worker said, '[Name] feels safe and has some very trusting relationships with staff who are reliable. Staff have had a tough time, but the way that they have stepped back and taken the time to understand his issues and behaviour and respond in a caring and supportive manner is absolutely fabulous.'

A range of health and safety procedures, risk assessments and checks are in place. Staff use these systems to maintain a safe environment for children to live in. However, it is concerning that staff had failed to report that a fire blanket had been damaged and discarded following an incident the previous week. The manager did take immediate steps to address this issue, and by doing so has avoided a requirement under regulation 25.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The home is run by an experienced registered manager who is well on the way to completing the level 5 diploma in leadership and management for residential care. The

manager is registered for a second home run by the organisation and splits his time between the two.

The complex needs of the children and the fact that neither child is attending school are placing a significant demand on staff. Staff are working exceptionally hard to ensure that each child's needs are met, but this is at the expense of other things. The manager has failed to provide enough oversight of the day-to-day running of the home. This is evident in slipping standards such as the safety and cleanliness of the environment, disproportionate risk management strategies that have not been reviewed, and exceedingly poor-quality risk assessments.

The manager has failed to make improvements to the procedures for managing and administering medication. This was a recommendation at the previous inspection. Records for non-prescribed medication still do not include the reasons why the medication is being given to the child. Furthermore, inspectors noted a discrepancy between the recorded balance and the actual number of tablets in stock, indicative of ineffective systems and poor management oversight.

Progress has been made in addressing the other recommendations from the previous inspection. This has resulted in a more focused approach to keyworking, better staff understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities, and a less risk-averse approach to the use of free time in the community.

Positive action has been taken to address the one requirement made at the last inspection. Better implementation of the home's escalation policy means that the underperformance of third-party stakeholders is challenged in a timely manner. This is better ensuring that statutory records are provided within reasonable timescales.

Staff are supportive of each other. They receive regular supervision and have their performance appraised every four months. They have access to training opportunities that help them to develop their practice.

Care planning is underpinned by effective partnerships with parents and professionals such as social workers, teachers and healthcare agencies. The manager is a strong advocate for each child and is proactive in ensuring that children receive the services and support they need to progress.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and 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 whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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: SC356864

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Time-Out Children's Homes Ltd

Registered provider address: Unit 2, Ripponden Mill, Mill Fold, Ripponden, Sowerby Bridge, West Yorkshire HX6 4DH

Responsible individual: Dominic Macauley

Registered manager: Stuart Duffy

Inspectors

Paul Scott, social care inspector

Cheryl Field, social care inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence>, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: <http://www.gov.uk/ofsted>

© Crown copyright 2020