

SC356864

Registered provider: Time-Out Children's Homes Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

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

Inspection dates: 23 to 24 May 2017

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 **outstanding**

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

Date of last inspection: 18 January 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: Sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection

None

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because

- Young people have good relationships with their staff and receive consistent care, which is having a positive effect on their lives.
- Staff have a thorough understanding of young people's complex needs and

devise plans designed to support them to manage their anxieties and behaviours.

- There are a wide range of activities on offer to young people that also help with their anger and frustrations, such as boxing.
- The manager and staff are proactive, working with other professionals that are in young people's lives to provide holistic care and support.
- The manager is committed to staff development and has been active in improving the staff induction process, which is structured and robust.

The children's home's areas for development

- Some areas within the home remain in need of improvement. This will help young people to invest and take pride in their environment.
- Arrangements need to be in place for young people who have been missing from the home to receive return home interviews from an independent person.
- Information on the home's electronic system needs to be accessible to designated staff in the absence of the manager. This is in relation to staff recruitment.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
18/01/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
24/05/2016	Full	Good
10/02/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
27/10/2015	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
Ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to– (i) meet the needs of each child; and (ii) enable each child to participate in the daily life of the home. (Regulation 6 (c))	24/07/2017

Recommendations

- 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 home's regulations including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.30)
- Some records may be kept electronically (regulation 38) provided that this information can be easily accessed by anyone with a legitimate need to view it. ('Guide to the children's home's regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 14.1)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Staff provide young people with clear, consistent and age-appropriate boundaries which support them to develop positive relationships with their staff. Staff use these methods effectively in managing young people's challenging and risk-taking behaviour, such as going missing from the home. A social worker said, 'I believe that [name] is provided with a good standard of overall care at this home.'

Staff understand how young people's history and past experiences cause them anxiety and frustration. Staff ensure that professionals involved in the young people's lives regularly discuss how best to manage these frustrations and feelings; for example, using strategy meetings and key conversations to help young people understand the reasons for changes in their lives. Staff seek advice and support from the organisational therapist and child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS). The input from these services enables staff to support young people with their emotional health and well-being.

A requirement made at the last inspection has been repeated. The conservatory door leading to the dining room remains missing, which causes it to be cold in the winter months. Some of the floors in the office and living room are worn and need replacing. The manager has escalated these issues with the organisation and will ensure that these improvements are made swiftly. It is anticipated that these improvements will help young people to invest in their home and care about their environment.

Staff value and promote educational attendance and achievement by providing the right level of support that promotes progress. Staff understand the barriers to learning and work collaboratively with educational staff and virtual heads to provide any required additional support needed. Staff link rewards and positive praise to educational attendance. This has proved effective and has assisted some young people to gain certificates for good attendance, positive behaviour and hard work in school.

Staff have high expectations for young people. They help young people to develop positive relationships with each other and use praise and encouragement to reinforce this. When young people struggle to get along, staff challenge this behaviour and talk to them. They explore the reasons for this behaviour and design strategies to assist them with their anger and frustration; for example, some young people enjoy boxing, which also helps expel their anger. Some young people have joined the local youth club. This community activity has helped them to make positive relationships with other young people of a similar age group and has increased their self-confidence and self-esteem.

Young people have carefully assessed and supported contact with their families and other people who are important to them, in line with their individual care plans. Staff recognise the impact that contact may have on individual young people and group living. They encourage and promote family ties. They have a good understanding of young people's history and are able to identify when contact is unsafe. They collaborate with placing authorities and families to ensure that contact is a positive experience and that there is an adequate level of supervision.

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

Young people are well protected because staff give their safety and well-being high priority. Staff are suitably trained in safeguarding and understand their roles and responsibilities in keeping young people safe. Established systems are followed effectively in response to any arising allegations, unsafe practice or suspicion of abuse.

There have been two episodes when young people have gone missing from the home.

These incidents were for short periods of time and not overnight. Staff follow procedures and are proactive in their efforts to locate young people. They immediately search for them, looking in the places that they are likely to be. They escalate their concerns with placing authorities, host authority, police and parents. Staff discourage these behaviours and educate young people on the dangers of going missing from their home. They keep young people busy, encouraging them to engage in their individual interests and activities. Young people's social workers visit them on their return to the home, to talk to them about their experiences, anxieties and concerns. These interviews are not undertaken by an independent person, which could cause barriers to young people giving information about their experiences while they were away from the home. The manager is keen to raise this with the local authorities concerned.

Staff demonstrate a commitment to overcoming difficult and challenging behaviour. Clear, consistent, age-appropriate boundaries afford young people stability that contributes to their well-being and security. Staff have a good insight into young people's emotional needs and develop individual behaviour management plans that are implemented in practice. These plans include known risks and potential risks. Young people are consulted and give their views as to how they prefer staff to help them manage their behaviours; for example, some young people need space when they feel angry and frustrated. Physical restraint is rarely used and only when absolutely necessary to keep young people and staff safe.

There have been some recent difficulties in young people's relationships with each other, which has required staff to adjust and devise new strategies to manage these effectively. Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the reasons why relationships have deteriorated; for example, some young people's family contact has decreased, which has been out of their control. Staff are proactive in arranging meetings with the professionals involved in young people's lives, discussing methods and ways in which these can be improved, while keeping young people safe. For example, ensuring that young people understand what irritates and annoys others and how to avoid confrontation and arguments by ensuring that young people respect each other's space. This consistent and proactive approach is designed to help improve and strengthen the relationship difficulties between the young people.

Staff employed at the home are subject to organisational vetting procedures and do not start work in the home until all appropriate checks are complete. All fire, gas and electrical equipment is routinely serviced to ensure that it is in good working order. This ensures that the environment is safe and that young people are protected from persons who may present a risk to them.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The home's manager was registered in March 2015. She is highly child-focused and prioritises the young people's needs effectively. She has the necessary skills and qualifications to provide clear leadership and management to a motivated and committed staff team. She has an excellent understanding of the individual needs of

vulnerable young people, demonstrating a strong commitment to their individual development, safety and care.

Care planning is thoughtful and individually tailored to meet the specific needs of young people. The manager regularly monitors young people's progress and development, enabling her to identify any developing patterns or trends. This allows her to take action swiftly to address any areas of concern that she identifies. All significant events concerning the welfare of young people are reported to the appropriate authorities swiftly, to ensure that the right action is taken to protect them.

Staff gain historical information from the young person, their families and placing authorities. This provides them with good information with which to devise unique behaviour management plans and risk assessments. Care practice focuses on the young person's specific needs. Strong links and a universal approach with a wide range of external professionals mean that young people are afforded individual care and support to reach their full potential. A social worker commented, 'I find the manager approachable and open minded. She has paved the way for an effective working relationship that will serve [name] well in moving forward.'

Staff are highly valued and supported by the manager and receive regular supervision and support from her. Staff development is ongoing, through training and regular team meetings. All staff have completed mandatory safeguarding training and additional guidance which focuses on the needs of the young people, such as sexual exploitation and radicalisation. All staff are either appropriately qualified or are working towards the required qualifications within timescales. They are dedicated to supporting and helping the young people to achieve good outcomes in preparation for adulthood. A member of staff said, 'We want the very best for the young people. They are having some relationship problems between each other at the moment. We are all working consistently to improve these. They are doing well in school and have made a lot of progress.'

The manager is creative and strives to improve the service to young people. She has implemented a number of developments within the home. She has introduced a document containing procedures for staff to follow, which will enable them to deal with situations without the need for contact with senior members of staff. She has been pivotal in reviewing and amending the induction process for new staff. This process identifies clear tasks that staff must be capable of completing prior to coming out of their probation period, such as understanding the home's statement of purpose.

The home is consistently managed and effective in meeting the aims and objectives outlined in its statement of purpose. Child-focused practice is rooted within the home's philosophy and has resulted in the young people achieving positive outcomes in many aspects of their lives.

The home's electronic system holds all relevant information regarding the staff team. This is currently only accessible to the home's manager. Arrangements need to be put in place for alternative designated individuals to be able to view necessary information in

relation to staff in the manager's absence.

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 difference 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 Limited

Registered provider address: 7 St Petersgate, Stockport, Cheshire SK1 1EB

Responsible individual: Janet Lumb

Registered manager: Sarah Watkinson

Inspector

Jo Hornby, social care regulatory inspector

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