

## Children's homes inspection – Full

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|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Inspection date</b>             | <b>24 May 2016</b>                                      |
| <b>Unique reference number</b>     | <b>SC356864</b>                                         |
| <b>Type of inspection</b>          | <b>Full</b>                                             |
| <b>Provision subtype</b>           | <b>Children's home</b>                                  |
| <b>Registered provider</b>         | <b>Timeout Children's Homes Ltd</b>                     |
| <b>Registered provider address</b> | <b>7 St Petersgate, Stockport,<br/>Cheshire SK1 1EB</b> |

|                               |                        |
|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>Responsible individual</b> | <b>Janet Lumb</b>      |
| <b>Registered manager</b>     | <b>Sarah Watkinson</b> |
| <b>Inspector</b>              | <b>Jo Hornby</b>       |

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| <b>Inspection date</b>                                                                          | <b>24 May 2016</b>             |
| <b>Previous inspection judgement</b>                                                            | <b>Sustained effectiveness</b> |
| <b>Enforcement action since last inspection</b>                                                 | <b>None</b>                    |
| <b>This inspection</b>                                                                          |                                |
| <b>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</b> | <b>Good</b>                    |
| The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.            |                                |
| <b>How well children and young people are helped and protected</b>                              | <b>Good</b>                    |
| <b>The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>                                     | <b>Outstanding</b>             |

**SC356864**

## **Summary of findings**

### **The children's home provision is good because:**

- The young people living in the home are making good progress since their admission. Staff know them well and provide support and encouragement to help them to reach achievable goals.
- Well-planned and thoughtful admissions assist staff in building trusted and secure relationships with each young person. Consistent care has resulted in stability and security, which are helping to develop positive relationships between staff and young people, and increase their self-confidence and self-esteem.
- Staff encourage and support young people to engage with their individual educational provision. They work collectively with education providers to promote educational progress.
- Young people who have a history of risk-taking behaviours such as going missing are becoming increasingly safe. Staff consistently follow robust behaviour management plans to ensure that young people are safeguarded.
- Young people's safety is given a high priority. Staff have an excellent knowledge and understanding of young people's risks and vulnerabilities and make sure that the right action is taken to keep young people safe from harm.
- The manager regularly identifies any risks by the home's location and strategies for managing these. She is keen to improve this further by evaluating the risks related to sexual exploitation and radicalisation.
- The manager has high ambitions for her staff team and is committed to promoting good outcomes for young people. She is dedicated to driving improvement to ensure that young people receive highly individual care and support.
- A combined approach is used to meet young people's needs, including links between education and healthcare professionals. These links are used well to ensure that young people are offered the appropriate level of care and support to meet their needs holistically.
- The home needs to record clearly staff discussions with young people in relation to the reasons for room searches.

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

### Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person(s) meets 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 with the given timescales.

| Requirement                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Due date    |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to —<br><br>help each child to understand how the child's privacy will be respected and the circumstances when it may have to be limited (Regulation 7 (2)(v)). | 19 Aug 2016 |

### Recommendations

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

- The review of the home's premises includes the identification of any risks and opportunities presented by the home's location in relation to child sexual exploitation and radicalisation, and the strategies for managing these. (Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 64, paragraph 15.1)

## Full report

### Information about this children's home

This children's home is privately run. It provides care and accommodation for up to two young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

### Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement    |
|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------------|
| 10 Feb 2016     | Interim         | Sustained effectiveness |
| 27 Oct 2015     | Full            | Good                    |
| 19 Mar 2015     | Interim         | Sustained effectiveness |
| 17 Dec 2014     | Full            | Good                    |

## Inspection judgements

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| <b>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <b>Good</b>     |
| <p>Young people are at the centre of this home. They are involved in planning the home's decor, recreational activities and menus. Staff support young people in maintaining a sense of identity by promoting contact with their families. They ensure that these sessions are safe, meaningful and in line with individual care plans. Staff work in partnership with families and professional stakeholders to ensure that the young people receive consistent care that meets their individual needs. This collaborative approach has helped young people to make good progress since their admission. For example, young people's risk-taking behaviour, such as going missing, has notably reduced.</p> <p>Staff form positive relationships with young people. They have a comprehensive knowledge of their diverse needs, gaining information from families and placing social workers. They are creative in obtaining young people's views on their individual preferences and care experiences. For example, young people who enjoy sports are encouraged and supported to participate in the local football club. This community engagement has helped to increase one young person's confidence and self-esteem, which has widened his interests in trying other community activities.</p> <p>There has been one admission since the previous inspection. The registered manager ensures that young people's admission to the home is a positive experience. She ensures that all the necessary paperwork is in place and that staff are able to meet each young person's specific needs. The home is welcoming, and staff ensure that the young person's room is ready for their arrival. The young person living in the home came from another of the organisation's homes. Prior to the transition, the young person had got to know the staff of this home and was happy to move. Staff spent time with her, getting to know her likes and dislikes, and in a short period of time, she had settled into her routine, making a positive friendship with the other young person living there. Since moving to the home, there has been a significant reduction in her unsafe behaviour, such as going missing. With encouragement and support from staff, she is starting to engage in her educational provision.</p> <p>Staff value young people's education, and their attendance and attainment are</p> |                 |

improving. The manager and staff work effectively with the virtual head to ensure that the right level of education is sourced so that young people have a better chance of achieving their goals and targets. The increase in educational engagement has decreased the frequency of challenging behaviour. A virtual head said, 'The manager and staff have been so supportive and have managed to keep him stable. They have worked hard to get [X] into the right school for his needs'.

Staff know the young people well and have a full understanding of how their experiences and frustrations can be communicated through behaviour. They consistently follow the young people's individual plans, supporting them to devise strategies to manage their behaviours in a more positive and safe way. The young people are becoming more resilient and are learning to manage their anxieties in a calmer manner. Staff empower the young people and support them in participating in review meetings and in sharing their views and opinions about their longer term futures. Consequently, the young people are developing confidence and self-worth.

Staff support and encourage the young people to enjoy a healthy lifestyle. All the young people are registered with routine health services and receive the support they require from specialised services. The home has good links with a variety of healthcare services, such as the child and adolescent mental health service (CAMHS) and the organisation's therapeutic service. This ensures that young people receive support to address their emotional and physical health needs, such as sexual health and behaviour. The combination of these support systems is successful in helping young people to reduce negative behaviours. A member of staff said, '[X] is learning more about how her behaviour can affect her health. It's difficult to get her to engage but we won't give up'.

Staff value and respect young people and strive to support them to reach their full potential. They care about young people and are confident that they provide a good level of care. Young people were observed having positive interactions with staff and were seen to be happy and comfortable in their home.

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                 |
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|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Judgement grade |
| <b>How well children and young people are helped and protected</b>                                                                                                                                                                     | <b>Good</b>     |
| Staff give young people's safety a high priority. Individual risks are clearly identified, understood and well managed. Interventions are thorough and supported by clear, individual risk assessments and behaviour management plans. |                 |

These strategies are regularly reviewed to ensure that they are current and effective. Staff are alert to the indicators of risk and are able to identify signs that young people are at risk of sexual exploitation, for example. They take immediate action to protect them, supporting them to engage in activities designed to discourage them from negative influences in their lives. They take a multi-agency approach, working with the police, the placing authority and the local authority for the home's location to ensure that young people are safe from harm.

The home has developed highly effective links with specialist agencies in respect of risk assessment and young people. The manager regularly reviews the home's area risk assessment and identifies risks within the community and strategies for managing these. She is keen to develop this document further by evaluating the risks associated with sexual exploitation and radicalisation within the home's locality. This improvement will provide staff with knowledge and understanding of the risks present in the locality, and the implementation of clear strategies will ensure that young people are safeguarded from risks.

There has been one incident of going missing from the home. This was for a short period of time and was not overnight. The home followed procedures and was highly proactive in its efforts to locate the young person. Staff immediately searched for them, looking in favourite locations and places they are more likely to be. Staff discourage these behaviours, encouraging young people to engage in activities with them and with other young people who live there. They escalate their concerns with the placing authorities, the hosting authority, the police and parents. Consequently, there has been a significant reduction in young people who have previous histories of going missing.

The home has developed strong links with specialist agencies such as Operation Phoenix in respect of risk assessment and young people who are subject to sexual exploitation. This helps to promote their safety and well-being. Positive behaviour is encouraged, with clear and consistent boundaries to help young people understand the effects of their behaviour on themselves and others. Young people are supported to express their feelings in positive ways, such as talking to staff about their emotions. Staff use a reward system to engage young people in positive behaviour; choosing their own rewards such as having their nails painted professionally also builds self-esteem and confidence. Overall, this is having a positive influence on young people and has resulted in a significant reduction in self-harming behaviour and a willingness to participate in education, for example.

One occasion arose when staff found it necessary to conduct a search of young

people's bedrooms. This intervention was used to safeguard young people. Records were found to lack clarity as to whether staff have discussed this measure with the young people. This shortfall has been raised at this inspection.

Staff employed at the home are subject to organisational vetting procedures and do not start work with young people until all appropriate checks are complete. All fire, gas and electrical equipment is routinely serviced to ensure 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.

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| <b>The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <b>Outstanding</b> |
| <p>The home's manager has been in post since March 2015 and was registered in May 2015. She has the necessary skills and experience to provide clear leadership and management for a highly motivated and committed staff team. She is exceptionally child-focused, confident and positive and has an excellent understanding of the specific needs of vulnerable children and young people.</p> <p>The registered manager has strong systems in the home that she uses effectively to monitor and review the quality of care provided to young people. She learns from feedback, the home's development plans and from the progress young people are making. Staff say that they are well supported and receive appropriate training, comprehensive supervision and annual appraisals. A member of staff said, 'We can have supervision at any time, formal and informal. We have appraisals every year and any training I identify as needing Sarah will put me forward for it'.</p> <p>The manager and staff work successfully with educational staff and healthcare professionals, providing a collaborative approach to ensure that young people receive care designed to support their physical and emotional needs. This has assisted in promoting young people's engagement with healthcare workers and educational staff. A member of educational staff commented, 'The manager, Sarah, has worked hard to get [X] the right education placement. She keeps me updated about his progress and it's amazing to see him so settled in a placement'.</p> <p>The registered manager promotes staff development with the use of team meetings. This forum provides an opportunity for staff to reflect on their practice and identify any gaps in training. For example, the organisation's therapeutic team</p> |                    |

attends the meetings to discuss issues such as attachment disorders, which assists staff with their practice and promotes further discussion. This ensures that the quality of care provided is continuously improving.

Care planning is individually tailored to meet the specific needs of young people and is of a high standard. The manager regularly monitors young people's progress and development, enabling her to identify any developing patterns or trends. This proactive approach allows her to take swift action to address any areas of concern that she identifies. A social worker said of the manager, 'Sarah is brilliant — she knows [X] well and she always has a plan B in place just in case current plans are unsuccessful'.

The manager and staff have a thorough knowledge and understanding of the young people in their care. They understand how past histories and experiences can contribute to young people's anxieties and frustrations. Staff consult young people, their families and placing authorities to gather important historical information. This provides staff with a good starting point from which to develop exclusive behaviour management plans and risk assessments. Consequently, young people are making steady progress and are more confident in managing their own behaviour. This means that young people are working towards gaining good outcomes in preparation for their adult lives.

The home is consistently managed and highly effective in meeting the aims and objectives outlined in its statement of purpose. Child-focused practice is rooted within the home's beliefs, which means that young people are achieving positive results in many aspects of their lives. A member of educational staff said, 'This home is absolutely wonderful. The support [X] has from the manager and staff is fantastic. They are very child centred. Staff have helped him make such progress here and that is brilliant for him'.

## 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 children looked after 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 that 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 whom 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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