

SC357468

Registered provider: Timeout Children's Homes Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is one of a number of children's homes operated by a private company. The home is registered to provide care and accommodation for one young person who has emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

The organisation has a small therapy department as well as primary and secondary education provisions, which young people can access if appropriate.

Inspection dates: 11 to 12 September 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 **requires improvement to be good**

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

Date of last inspection: 31 January 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: Good

Enforcement action since last inspection:

None.

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because:

- The young person is making good progress relative to her individual needs and circumstances. She benefits from the care and support of a small team of staff who have a comprehensive understanding of her individual and unique needs.
- The needs of the young person are integral to all aspects of service delivery. Care practice is underpinned by strong attachments that provide the young person with a strong sense of stability, safety and belonging.
- Feedback from professionals about the care and support provided by the manager and her staff team is consistently positive.
- The young person confirms that she is happy living in this home and feels well supported in her life.
- The young person shows an age-appropriate understanding of her own behaviour, risks and vulnerabilities, as well as those general risks within society today. This is because staff provide parent-like support and are good at encouraging the young person to reflect and understand her own behaviours and make informed choices about how to keep herself safe.
- Staff recognise the limitations of one-to-one support and the need to promote a more independent lifestyle that enables the young person to safely develop her independence skills.
- The manager is exceedingly child focused and supports and promotes a strong child-focused approach to meeting this young person's needs.

The children's home's areas for development:

- The manager has failed to fully address the majority of the requirements from the previous inspection. This means that there continue to be shortfalls in relation to medication, the review of premises and the young person's case records.
- The manager has not followed her own plan to escalate and challenge the relevant agencies when they have failed to provide statutory records.
- The statement of purpose does not contain sufficient detail in relation to the experience and qualifications of staff. The manager's auditing of this document is insufficiently robust and has not picked this up, or the incorrect reference to another home.
- Some aspects of monitoring activity are weak. This includes the manager failing to ensure that tasks delegated to staff are complete.
- The manager has not ensured that the placing authority has provided the young person with an opportunity to have an independent return interview following her being missing from care.
- Mandatory training refreshers are overdue for some staff.
- Not all staff are competent in the use of the home's electronic recording system.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
31/01/2017	Full	Good
31/08/2016	Interim	Not judged
11/03/2016	Interim	Not judged
09/12/2015	Interim	Not judged

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
In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff— if the registered person considers, or staff consider, a placing authority's or a relevant person's performance or response to be inadequate in relation to their role, challenge the placing authority or the relevant person to seek to ensure that each child's needs are met in accordance with the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 5(c)) This is with specific reference to escalating concerns when relevant agencies have failed to provide a copy of the young person's statutory healthcare plan.	24/10/2017
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— 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(2)(h)) This is with reference to improving management oversight to ensure staff complete tasks and responsibilities delegated to them, including those relating to the statutory requirements made at inspection.	24/10/2017
The registered person must keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it. (Regulation 16(3)(a)) This is with specific reference to ensuring that the document accurately reflects the details of the experience and qualifications of all staff, and that the incorrect reference to any other home is removed.	24/10/2017
The registered person must make arrangements for the handling, recording, safekeeping, safe administration and	24/10/2017

disposal of medication received into the children's home. (Regulation 23(1)) This is with specific reference to implementing effectively the existing auditing arrangements to ensure that staff are recording when medication has not been given and unused medication is returned or disposed of in a timely fashion.	
The registered person must maintain ('case records') for each child which includes the information and documents listed in schedule 3 in relation to each child. (Regulation 36(1)(a)(Schedule 3(8)(19)(25)) This is with particular reference to ensuring that that a copy of the young person's statutory healthcare plan is available in the young person's case files.	24/10/2017
The registered person must consult and take into account the views of each relevant person when they conduct the review of the appropriateness and suitability of the location of the premises used for the purpose of the children's home. (Regulation 46(2))	24/10/2017

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff can access appropriate facilities and resources to support their training needs. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.11)

This is with specific reference to ensuring that any outstanding mandatory training is completed and that all staff are trained to be competent in the use of the organisation's electronic recording systems to ensure that they are able to access all records pertaining to the young person.
- 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 homes regulations including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.30)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The young person living at this home benefits from good-quality care that is making a difference to her life. The small team of staff has a comprehensive understanding of the young person's individual needs, behaviours, risks and vulnerabilities. Staff know how to support her effectively and provide well-planned care that is personalised to her individual and specific needs. The young person's social worker said, 'The best thing

about this home is that staff meet her needs. She is as settled as she can be and this is down to the efforts of the manager and staff.'

Care practice is underpinned by strong, reciprocal relationships, in particular the relationship the young person shares with her key worker, who has been involved in her care at her previous placement and since arriving here. The young person identifies the key worker as a significant person in her life and has benefited from positive role modelling and a parent-like approach to caring for her. This has contributed significantly to the young person finding stability, feeling safe and developing a sense of belonging that, over time, is improving her confidence to confront the challenges she faces in her life.

The young person benefits from being in a solo placement where her views and opinions are continually gathered and considered. Staff take a parent-like approach to encouraging the young person to make choices about how she spends her time, as well as gathering her perspective on the care and support she receives. They are constantly talking to her about her life and make every effort to ensure that her views are represented, heard and, wherever possible, acted on. For example, exploring the possibility of re-establishing contact with key family members.

Staff recognise and promote the importance of education. They work closely with education staff in their efforts to overcome the young person's reluctance to consistently engage in school. For example, staff are always prepared to attend school when additional support is required and will provide direct support in class if necessary. The young person has expressed a view to wanting to move schools; this has been discussed and considered at the most recent review of her personal education plan. This is currently being explored, along with incentives to encourage good attendance that will improve the young person's prospects of finding an alternative placement.

The young person is encouraged and supported to maintain good physical and emotional health and well-being. Staff ensure that she is fully supported to attend routine appointments, such as going to the dentist or opticians. Staff enable her to attend weekly sessions with the organisation's therapist, who is influential in determining staff's approach to meeting the young person's emotional needs and responding to her behaviour. The therapist said, 'It is a tight core team of staff who have got the measure of (name). Although her risks and behaviours have never been high, I have seen a reduction in these since moving into this solo home.' The therapist went on to say, '(Name) has a desperate need to belong and has found this in this home and with this staff team. (Name) recognises it as a safe place.'

Staff are aware of the benefits that young people gain from engaging in positive recreational activities. They make every effort to source activities and clubs based on the young person's individual hobbies and interests. This has included horse-riding, swimming and a recent holiday in the Lake District, which went extremely well. Staff recognise the need to provide opportunities that encourage the young person to socialise with other young people. However, the young person shows a high dependency on staff, which is inhibiting her becoming more independent. Staff understand this and are working hard to develop the young person's confidence and provide opportunities for her to spend time away from them, while ensuring that her vulnerability is managed well. For example, staff have recently started to introduce unsupervised independence

time, which the young person has used to go to the shops. Through developing the young person's self-confidence, it is hoped that this can be built on and include opportunities for her to make friends outside of the organisation. A social worker said, 'They focus on now, but have long-term plans in mind.'

The young person benefits from living in a pleasant home that is appropriate to her particular needs. Staff have worked hard to make it feel homely and encourage the young person to see it as her home by adding her own personal touches. This has been a challenge for staff, whose persistence is beginning to pay off. For example, the young person has recently helped a member of staff paint her bedroom wall in a brightly coloured mosaic design. This is recognised as a significant achievement and is indicative of how increasingly settled the young person is feeling.

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

The young person benefits from being cared for by staff who have a good understanding of how to keep her safe. They provide the young person with one-to-one support, which means that staff are consistently available to provide her with individual support on a daily basis. Staff are able to recognise and respond to changing moods and patterns of behaviour and take pre-emptive action to avoid an escalation in negative and risk-taking behaviour. As a result, risk-taking behaviour such as self-harming is extremely rare. When it has occurred, it has been sensitively managed in the best interest of the young person's welfare.

The young person confirms that she feels safe. She is supported well to explore and understand her own behaviour, risks and vulnerabilities, as well as the risks faced by young people generally. For example, during the inspection the young person spoke about child sexual exploitation, using the backdrop of a recent TV programme she had watched and discussed with staff. Also, she has undertaken an online training course in e-safety and demonstrates an age-appropriate understanding of the risks associated with the use of social media. The manager is currently in the process of acquiring an internet-enabled computer in recognition of the need to allow the young person to take age-appropriate risks similar to peers her age.

There have been eight reported incidents of missing since the last inspection. Records confirm that staff have made every effort to locate the young person and followed her individual protocol for informing the police and other agencies. However, there is no formal agreement in place to ensure that the placing authority discharges its statutory duty to provide the young person with an opportunity to have an independent return home interview. On all occasions, the young person has been spoken to by the manager, staff or managers from one of the organisation's other homes. These discussions have enabled the manager to understand the reasons why the young person has been running away and make changes that appear, currently, to have stopped this behaviour.

There have been no allegations or child protection referrals since the last inspection. Should there be any concerns, the manager knows who to contact within the local authority and fully understands the organisation's and local authority's procedures. She maintains good links with agencies involved in the care of the young person and ensures that any emerging concerns are managed well. For example, when a safeguarding

incident occurred in school, the manager maintained contact with the headteacher to ensure that the young person could be provided with the support she needed.

The young person is settled and incidents of seriously challenging behaviour are non-existent. Staff are trained in the use of physical restraint, but this has not been necessary while the young person has lived at this home. Staff support the young person to understand the expectations of her behaviour in the home and in the community and are attuned to the factors that create unsettlement for her. Relationships are a major key in helping staff to help the young person self-regulate her behaviour. Imposed consequences are rarely used, with staff preferring to encourage the young person to reflect and learn.

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

The home is run by an experienced and suitably qualified manager who has been registered with Ofsted since May 2007. She is also registered for another home within the organisation, and splits her management time between the two. The manager is child focused and demonstrates a strong commitment to ensuring that the young person's needs and best interests are at the heart of care practice. She knows the young person very well and plays a key role in coordinating her care, including close liaison with agencies and professionals. The therapist said, 'I work closely with the manager. She has an in-depth understanding of the young person's complex emotional needs and always keeps me informed of any concerns or changes in behaviour.'

Only one of the four requirements from the previous inspection has been suitably addressed by the manager. Individual risk assessments have been updated and now accurately reflect the young person's known and emerging risks.

Some progress has been made in acquiring statutory documentation, including an up-to-date copy of the local authority placement plan and a copy of the care order. The manager has yet to acquire the young person's statutory health plan, although there is evidence that she has requested this on a number of occasions. However, the manager has not presented any challenge of the agency's failure to provide this document, despite indicating to Ofsted that she would do this using the organisation's escalation policy.

The arrangements for managing medication still require improvement. Staff are not always recording when medication is not given and unused non-prescribed medication is not being disposed of in a timely manner, issues that the manager's auditing has failed to pick up.

A review of the safe area risk assessment was completed in May 2017. The manager confirms that this task was delegated to one of her seniors to complete. However, during the inspection the manager was unable to provide evidence that consultation with partner agencies had been undertaken, in order to assess the specific risks in the local area.

A review of the statement of purpose was completed in July 2017. This is an organisationally generic document that requires the manager to amend certain details to reflect the individual characteristics of the home. The most recent document received by

Ofsted did not include the details of the experience and qualifications of all staff and cited the name of another home in place of this one. The manager has failed to recognise this shortfall and inaccuracy, although they took steps to make the necessary changes during the inspection.

The progress the young person makes is kept under regular review by the manager and staff. They are able to recognise when the young person is not progressing as hoped and are adaptive in their approach when this is the case. The manager is not as diligent when it comes to monitoring other aspects of activity in the home, evidenced by the failure to address the requirements from the previous inspection and to ensure that delegated tasks are completed.

There is a sufficient number of experienced staff available to provide consistently good levels of individual support for this young person. The manager recognises the need to ensure that staff do not become too isolated when working on their own. The manager is currently looking at ways of using staff from her other home to provide support and opportunities to share good practice. For example, she has changed the format of the next staff meeting, which will be a combination of staff from both her homes rather than just those identified to care for this young person.

Staff are generally positive about the support that they receive from the manager. They confirm that the manager spends time in the home, a fact also confirmed by the young person herself. Formal supervision takes place in accordance with the organisation's policy timeframes of 10 supervisions per year. These are undertaken by the manager or delegated to one of the seniors. Although records confirm that the expectation of 10 supervisions per year are completed, one staff member is close to missing this target, having missed supervision for two months in a row. The manager was unaware of this fact, another example of poor monitoring in relation to delegated tasks.

A good range of training is available for staff. Opportunities to complete and refresh mandatory training are frequently available. A small minority of staff need to refresh some aspects of training including safeguarding, first aid essentials and restraint. In most cases, there are legitimate reasons for these being out of date. Mandatory training is supplemented by a range of needs-led training that is beneficial to staff in the care and support of this young person. For example, the organisation's therapist has delivered training in understanding self-harming behaviour, which has helped staff to provide the right support when presented with this behaviour.

All records are now stored electronically. A real advantage of this system is that allocated social workers can remotely access the records relating to their respective young person. The social worker was complementary of this fact, stating that it further improved what is already good communication with the home. However, not all staff are completely familiar with this system. For example, during the inspection one member of the team was unable to locate key documents, including care plans and risk assessments. This said, they did demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the young person's individual needs, behaviours, risks and vulnerability.

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: SC357468

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Timeout Children's Homes Limited

Registered provider address: Timeout Children's Homes Ltd, Unit 2, Mill Fold, Ripponden, Sowerby Bridge, West Yorkshire HX6 4DH

Responsible individual: Janet Lumb

Registered manager: Jennifer Williams

Inspector

Paul Scott, social care inspector

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