

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC378407
Inspector	Angela Whiteley
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	Karen Houghton
Date of last inspection	27/02/2014

Inspection date	11/09/2014
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Previous inspection	not judged
Enforcement action since last inspection	A notice was issued on 25 March 2014 to impose a condition on registration for this children's home. The notice was complied with.

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

Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	good
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Significant change has taken place since the last inspection when this home had no children or young people in placement and there was no Registered Manager or staff team.

A new Registered Manager is in post. She demonstrates effective leadership and management skills and is committed to ensuring she secures further improvement by promptly addressing any areas of weakness. A carefully selected staff team provide well-planned care to meet the complex needs of the children and young people in placement.

Children and young people enjoy good quality care in this home and say they feel safe. They have only recently been admitted and require high levels of support and supervision. They come to the home having experienced multiple placement breakdowns. Staff use specific therapeutic models of care to support children and young people to form positive attachments and lessen the disturbing and challenging behaviours that children and young people can exhibit. This helps children and young people to settle quickly into a caring and structured

environment. Their relatives confirm this and provide positive feedback about the staff and the home.

Children and young people benefit from personalised care packages, which take account of their complex needs. This enables them to achieve improved outcomes across most aspects of their welfare and development from their starting point.

Strong partnership working particularly with therapeutic crisis intervention accredited trainers enables staff to understand behaviours and provide intensive support to children and young people. Staff develop strong partnerships with other professionals who have an interest in promoting positive outcomes for children and young people. For example, support from the transport police and specialist missing from home police officers. This support has been instrumental in helping the safe return of children and young people who have been reported as missing from the home.

Some areas for improvement are identified at this inspection. Firstly, in respect of the homes' Statement of Purpose and fire risk assessment and secondly, staff recruitment procedures and supervision records. Therefore, two requirements and two recommendations are made to help the home improve practice in these areas, which has not impacted negatively on the outcomes for children and young people.

Full report

Information about this children's home

This is a privately run children's home. The home provides care and accommodation for one young person with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
27/02/2014	Interim	not judged
02/05/2013	Full	adequate
31/01/2013	Interim	satisfactory progress
05/10/2012	Full	good

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

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 Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Reg.	Requirement	Due date
5 (2001)	ensure Ofsted are notified of any revision to the Statement of Purpose within 28 days (Regulation 5 (a)(b))	23/10/2014
32 (2001)	ensure after consultation with the fire and rescue service that adequate precautions are taken against the risk of fire, including the provision of suitable fire equipment. Provide an escape plan that considers the use of window restrictors and ensure persons working at the home and children accommodated there are aware of the procedure and have practiced it. (Regulation 32 (1)(a) (b) (e))	23/10/2014

Recommendations

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

- ensure that written or electronic records detail the time, date and length of each supervision held for each member of staff and that records are signed by the member of staff and the supervisor, including the registered person (NMS 19.5).
- ensure all personnel responsible for recruitment and selection of staff consistently follow good recruitment practice. In particular, ensure thorough checking and recording of the reasons for gaps in employment history (NMS 16.2)

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for children and young people **adequate**

Children and young people are safe at the home and confirm they like it. Children and young people have been at the home only a short while and require more time to settle and show sustained improvements in all aspects of their welfare and development. They continue to display some of the same behaviours they were presenting prior to their admission, for example, they leave the home without permission. Staff take action in response to any incidents and are committed to helping children and young people achieve stability and permanence and keep them safe. The homes records confirm these incidents are beginning to reduce.

Children and young people are encouraged to take responsibility for their behaviour but not all provide their fullest cooperation. Despite this, the service is responding to individual challenging needs using a therapeutic model of care. They have had some success with some of the strategies and techniques adopted to manage children and young people's challenging behaviour and support positive change. However, some children and young people need more time to learn how to resolve conflict positively. Staff occasionally need police support to ensure children and young people are kept safe. The home consistently follows individual behaviour management plans. The homes records show incidents requiring the use of restraint are reducing as children and young people settle into the placement.

Despite their short time in placement, some children and young people have made some progress in some aspects of their lives. They enjoy relatively good health and begin to understand the importance of a healthy lifestyle. They have access to a range of specialist health professionals such as psychologists and therapists and primary health care providers. This enables individual health needs to be assessed and met. Children and young people develop personal care skills with the support of staff.

Children and young people are provided with a variety of well-balanced healthy, nutritious meals, which they help to choose and help to prepare. This enhances their health and physical well-being. They receive good support and advice about the risks of smoking and alcohol use.

Children and young people enjoy participating in a broad range of social and sporting activities, such as football, fishing, swimming, scouts and youth club. This develops their self-esteem and confidence and provides them with opportunities to have positive engagement within the wider community.

Staff promote and support children and young people with their education. However, some children and young people struggle to fully engage with the learning programmes provided. They require intensive support to enable them to achieve their

educational potential. This is mainly due to their previous placement history, lack of stability and historical poor attendance. Individual learning programmes support children and young people to re-integrate into a school environment.

Where, appropriate children and young people benefit from contact with family and friends. Staff support and facilitate contact, which helps children and young people maintain positive relationships with those that are important to them.

Quality of care

good

Children and young people receive good quality care from a committed, experienced and motivated staff team. They get along well with staff and begin to develop positive relationships. Children and young people confirm they can approach staff if they have any worries or concerns and know how to complain if they are unhappy with any aspects of their care. No complaints have been received. A grandparent describes the home and staff as, 'brilliant.'

Staff have a broad range of experiences and knowledge and are able to demonstrate a good understanding of children and young people's complex needs. They benefit from the providers commitment to staff training in therapeutic crisis intervention. They have a genuine interest and desire to understand children and young people's behaviours and make a positive difference. There is good communication between children and young people, staff and professionals. Staff work hard to help children and young people develop their potential and are persistent when faced with setbacks or failures. They continue to support and guide children and young people to help them make positive choices in their lives. As a result, children and young people receive high quality care in a nurturing environment.

Staff promote and support children and young people's education. They provide intensive support in the classroom environment when required and help with homework. They are imaginative in creating additional opportunities for children and young people to learn and develop skills. For example, visits to museums and special events assists young peoples' understanding of historical events. As a result, children and young people learn about the diverse society they live in.

There is good access to health support services and staff support children and young people to attend their health appointments. Children and young people participate in a broad range of sporting and social activities and are encouraged to join different groups, which are sustainable in the long-term, for example, scouts and youth clubs. This helps to promote their health and development and involves them in their community.

Children and young people have well written individualised care plans, which clearly identify their needs. Plans are reviewed regularly, which helps to provide stability and permanence. Children and young people are encouraged to participate in all aspects

of care planning, which means they know what progress they are making. They are encouraged to voice their views and wishes to have a significant influence on the running of the home.

Children and young people confirm they enjoy living in the home, which is in a good location. They benefit from living in a comfortable and homely environment, which promotes their welfare and safety.

Keeping children and young people safe good

Children and young people feel safe, secure and well cared for in the home and know how to complain if they are unhappy. There are no issues of bullying, in part because children and young people receive high levels of supervision.

Staff are trained in all aspects of safeguarding children, they are alert to children's vulnerabilities and risks of harm, and are knowledgeable and confident about how to implement safeguarding children policies and procedures. Staff practice helps safeguard children and young people and ensures appropriate services are in place to support them.

There are good links with the police missing person's coordinator, transport police and community officers. When children and young people leave the home without permission staff follow the agreed missing from care protocol and act in accordance with the placing authority care plan. Staff know the local area and community and go looking for children and young people to encourage their early and safe return. Staff are proactive in communicating with placing authorities and other professionals. They highlight safeguarding issues and contribute well to strategies that help to achieve positive outcomes for children and young people. As children and young people settle into their placement, records show a reduction in them going missing from the home. All such episodes are monitored, fully considered and reviewed by the Registered Manager to promote children and young people's safety and welfare.

Children and young people are safeguarded by strong recruitment procedures, which ensure only those suitable to work with vulnerable children and young people are employed at the home. Despite this, the Registered Manager recognises improvements can be made to strengthen the process. Some applicant's employment history dates are not sufficiently detailed, which potentially may place children and young people at risk of harm. The Registered Manager is keen to address this with changes to the application form that requests precise dates of employment and to provide clear records of any gaps in employment history at the interview. This has no negative impact on the outcomes for children and young people. There are also suitable systems in place to ensure that visitors to the home are appropriately vetted and supervised to protect children and young people.

The home implements a range of generally good safety measures that ensures

children and young people live in a safe and secure environment. However, a fire service visit has not been carried out for some time, particularly in respect of the use of window restrictors and fitting of fire doors, which may compromise children and young people's safety and welfare. Also, the fire evacuation plan does not identify alternative actions and exits should an emergency occur in different areas of the home.

The consistent, individualised approach to risk management and behaviour management ensures children and young people learn appropriate boundaries. Staff are trained in the appropriate use of physical restraint. However, they prefer to use therapeutic crisis intervention techniques, such as, de-escalation, humour and distraction strategies, which are more effective in diffusing children and young people's behaviour. Written records are well maintained and show incidents of physical intervention are beginning to reduce as placements settle. The use of sanctions is minimal. When children and young people are restrained, the Registered Manager oversees the written records and speaks to children and young people about their experiences. This informs improvements in behaviour management for children and young people and supports staff development. Agreed individual incentives and rewards are used to good effective to help children and young people develop socially acceptable behaviours.

Leadership and management

good

The home benefits from having an effective Registered Manager who leads by example. She is highly motivated, experienced and suitably qualified. She has been in post since February 2014 and has recently completed a relevant leadership and management qualification. She manages another small home within the same company, which is in close proximity, but has no young people in placement at this time. The Registered Manager is supported by a motivated and competent senior care worker and an experienced staff team. They demonstrate a strong commitment to helping children and young people achieve their potential. A staff member commented positively on how well the team work together and the availability of the Registered Manager.

The home is sufficiently resourced. The staffing ratio meets the aims and objectives of the Statement of Purpose and is reviewed regularly to ensure the changing needs of children and young people in placement are safely met. Despite this, the provider is not consistently sending the reviewed document to Ofsted.

Children and young people live in a spacious family home, which is clean, tidy and well-furnished and maintained to a high standard.

Staff confirm they are well supported by their colleagues and management through annual appraisals, regular supervision, and training and team meetings. This ensures they have regular opportunities to develop and reflect on their practice. Despite this,

some records of supervision do not contain all the required information, particularly for the Registered Manager.

Children and young people benefit from the providers commitment to high quality staff training. In particular, the introduction of specialist modular therapeutic training, which is delivered to all staff by, accredited trainers. This underpins staff knowledge of therapeutic techniques and models of care and helps them to understand and support children and young people to achieve positive outcomes.

Children and young people's records are well structured, stored securely and recording is of a good standard. They have regular opportunity to access their care file to receive an accurate description of the time they have spent at the home. In addition, significant events are notified to all relevant agencies in a timely manner, which ensures prompt action is taken to protect children and young people. The Registered Manager and staff team work effectively with parents, relatives and other agencies, which provides a consistent approach to children and young people's care and develops strong partnership working.

Effective monitoring and quality assurance systems are in place, which provide good oversight of the quality of care in the home. The Registered Manager understands the strengths and weaknesses in the home and has a comprehensive development plan in place, which tackles the improvement agenda and assists with forward planning. There are no outstanding requirements or recommendations from the previous inspection.

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.