

Time Out Fostering

Time Out Fostering Limited
15 South Street, Lancing, West Sussex BN15 8AE
Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this independent fostering agency

Time Out is a limited company with 30 fostering households caring for 23 children and four parents. The agency offers long and short-term fostering, specialises in the assessment of parents and children and supports unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.

Inspection dates: 26 February to 2 March 2018

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

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

The independent fostering agency provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the independent fostering agency contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people.

Date of last inspection: 4 November 2013

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Key findings from this inspection

This independent fostering agency is outstanding because:

- Permanence, children's rights and a sense of belonging are the core values of this organisation.
- The quality of care, personal relationships and the impact of the agency are palpable throughout. Children are clearly seen as individuals and all of the staff know them well, including their strengths, foibles and aspirations. The agency is

forward-thinking in planning for what challenges children may face next.

- Children make secure and meaningful relationships with adults and with each other. This results in exceptional levels of stability and low levels of disruption for the children, and helps them to achieve well educationally and to develop their emotional maturity.
- Everybody who works for Time Out knows all of the children. At all levels, the staff and carers are prepared to do whatever is required to help children have a life that is better than their previous experiences and that allows them to flourish.
- The agency cares well for children who have a wide range of complex needs and backgrounds, including unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and those who display sexually harmful behaviour. The agency sets itself, and achieves, high expectations that it will provide a high-quality service for these children.
- Children feel safe and experience a sense of belonging secure through nurturing, positive relationships with more than one key adult.
- Staff and carers go beyond what would normally be expected to keep children safe, escalating concerns rigorously and giving their time freely to protect not just the children in their care, but also other children in the community.
- Children receive purposeful and sensitive help that enables them to manage their own safety and develop networks of support beyond the agency.
- The agency has grown sustainably, with a focus on recruiting staff and carers who share the agency's core values.
- The senior leaders are highly visible and have a direct impact on the quality of care given to children.
- Professionals from other agencies see Time Out as 'invaluable'.

The independent fostering agency's areas for development:

- Recording is generally very good. However, there is room for improvement in ensuring that records are written in a way that will help children to understand their life in later years. In particular, details of where children have moved from and where they move on to are often missing.

What does the independent fostering agency 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, Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011 and the national minimum standards. The registered person(s) must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
<p>The fostering service provider must maintain and keep up to date the records specified in Schedule 2. (Regulation 22)</p> <p>In particular, the addresses for children before and after they live with Time Out carers must be recorded on the children's register.</p>	31/05/2018

Recommendations

- Information about the child is recorded clearly and in a way which will be helpful to the child when they access their files now or in the future. In particular, records should be organised in a way that makes it easy for children to understand the story of their time with Time Out carers. (Fostering Services: National Minimum Standards 26.6)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children make significant progress personally, educationally and emotionally. This is achieved through a whole-service approach to recruiting and supporting carers who share the core values of the agency. Children develop strong and meaningful relationships with adults who understand them. These positive relationships result in permanency, respect and dignity for the children who live with Time Out carers.

Children are involved in day-to-day decisions about their lives, and are integral to the development of the agency in a meaningful way. As a result of thorough and sensitive matching, children remain with their carers for significantly longer on average than in other agencies nationally. Children remain in contact with their carers and the staff far beyond the point when they move on.

Children are helped to understand their life stories. For example, a social worker tracked down people that one child had stayed with briefly over 10 years ago, to help him to understand why he could not remain with them. This included a visit to see these people, who were significant in the child's life.

School places are maintained and children take part in a wide range of activities that fit their interests and challenge them to try new things. Children are actively involved in high-quality arts and media projects that give them a sense of achievement and teach them how to work as a team.

Children are not restrained. Only one child has been reported missing over the last 12 months. Parents who have been assessed with their babies move on with a clear understanding of their strengths and the areas that they need to work on.

This is a forward-thinking organisation that uses research to help children to understand their lives, and to develop strategies for meeting upcoming challenges. In one case, a child who was scared of water was encouraged to get into the bath in a mermaid costume. Over time, the child was able to grow in confidence to the point where she is now able to swim in the local swimming pool. This was achieved 18 months prior to her school providing swimming lessons so that she was confident in the water and not at risk of being left out. Similar sensitive thinking and planning are evident for the vast majority of children.

Children benefit from social workers and senior managers challenging delays in services and potential breaches of human rights effectively. This includes championing the right to family life on behalf of care leavers who are starting families of their own.

Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children are supported well to integrate themselves into supportive local networks. When placing authorities have not made acceptable arrangements for young people who are approaching adulthood, social workers and

carers find alternative solutions.

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

Children are kept safe because adults know them well and understand the risks that they may face. Everyone in the organisation works together to offer a supportive and cohesive approach to the safeguarding of children. Carers and staff know that behaviour is a form of communication and they respond to children's needs with care and insight.

On the very rare occasions that carers fail to keep to the standards that are expected, there are quick and thorough responses from senior leaders and the rest of the agency. One referral has been made to the designated officer for safeguarding in the local authority since the last inspection; this resulted in the resignation of a carer. A recent concern about the safety of children while they were on holiday with a carer generated a comprehensive response, including the independent scrutiny of the foster panel.

If new risks present themselves while the children are with Time Out carers, these risks are addressed through targeted supervision that is delivered by social workers. When risks are considered to be too high, or children are going to be moved on to more independent circumstances, the agency actively finds solutions that are in the best interests of the children.

Children develop supportive networks in the community that they can call on both now and in the future. This is particularly evident with children who are seeking asylum and who are at risk of feeling isolated.

Children rarely go missing. When they do, the agency employs a policy of a personalised response that appropriately avoids police intervention unless this is required.

Carers receive training that helps them to understand trauma, attachment, internet safety, exploitation and the needs of very young babies. Children themselves have asked for and have received group sessions on the impact of domestic violence. This helps children to be safe and encourages them to have healthy family relationships in the future.

Staff and carers give their time freely to protect not just the children in their care, but also other children in the community. During the inspection, a family resource worker sought out a child who had refused to visit his identified carers. While the child was technically not in Time Out's care, the worker ensured that he was safe and had a way to get to school the next day. Similarly, the safety of children in the community is central to staff, who have advocated for a support package for a young man who displays sexually harmful behaviour.

The recruitment of carers, panel members and staff is appropriate and thorough.

Arts-based activities often result in videos and photographs that are used on social media and the agency's website. This is done with care and with relevant permissions, so that the children can be proud of their achievements and also be protected from those that may wish them harm.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

This agency has high ambitions for children, and these ambitions are realised. This extends throughout the whole organisation. All of the staff, including the directors, know all of the children well.

Carers are appreciative of the level of support that they receive in and outside of normal office hours. The response that they receive is informed by a collective understanding of the issues that are current for the children. This response is informed further through regular casework discussion and group supervision that considers each child in detail.

The staff and the carers receive regular, meaningful supervision that includes challenge and reflection.

Professionals value the service that this agency provides. A local commissioner described the service as 'invaluable'. Other agencies consistently speak highly of the level of communication and challenge that they get from the agency on behalf of children.

This is an outward-looking, learning organisation. The senior leaders introduce the theory and research that best fit the needs of the children. For example, elements of social pedagogy, Signs of Safety and attachment styles are used to put together strategies that suit each child.

The agency has maintained sustainable growth that has not compromised its core values. Recently appointed social workers have been immersed in a culture of research-informed practice, and are a product of a 'grow your own' approach.

The agency's website and social media presence have grown since the last inspection. They make the agency accessible, with children's involvement in the design clearly evident.

The senior leaders have a clear grasp of strengths and areas for development. This is evidenced by the active involvement of the directors in quality assurance and in the recruitment process.

The agency utilises the individual skills and experience of each of its team members. This includes the expertise of the panel members in equality and diversity issues.

There is one requirement and one recommendation following this inspection. On both counts they are made to ensure that the records kept are clear and tell the child's story. An up-to-date record of where children have moved from and where

they move on to is an essential part of a child's record. These details are missing for some children. Similarly, the sequence of events following significant incidents is on record, but the agency should organise the information more clearly.

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 independent fostering agency 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 Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011 and the national minimum standards.

Independent fostering agency details

Unique reference number: SC064113

Registered provider: Time Out Fostering Limited

Registered provider address: 15 South Street, Lancing, West Sussex BN15 8AE

Responsible individual: Jeremy Cross

Registered manager: Alison Young

Telephone number: 01273 467 530

Email address: office@timeoutfostering.co.uk

Inspector

Steve Lowe: HMI



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 children looked after, 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://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted>.

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 2018