

# Time To Listen

Time To Listen Community Interest Company

Marvell House Children's Centre, Cranbourne Street, Hull HU3 1PP

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this adoption support agency

This agency first registered in January 2018 when, as an existing therapeutic service, it began to provide support and therapy to people affected by adoption. It now provides adoption support in the form of therapy, counselling and life-story work for adopted children, young people and adults and their adoptive families. At the time of the inspection, the agency's team had 17 counsellors. In the last 12 months, the agency has supported 39 adopted children and 44 adopters.

The manager is in the process of registering with Ofsted.

### Inspection dates: 23 to 25 May 2023

<b>Overall experience and progress of service users,</b> taking into account	<b>good</b>
--	-------------

How well children, young people and adults are helped and protected	good
---	------

The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
---	------

The adoption support agency provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

**Date of last inspection:** 7 February 2019

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## **Inspection judgement**

### **Overall experiences and progress of service users: good**

The agency provides high-quality packages of individual support for children, families and adult service users. Overall, the support the agency provides has had positive outcomes for adopters and children. The therapists understand how much early trauma can disturb and disrupt children's social and emotional development. Many of the families who are referred to the agency are at crisis point. In many cases, the support provided to families helps to make significant improvements in family relationships. This support has reduced the likelihood of a family breakdown in a number of cases.

The agency succeeds in building confidence and positive relationships with families. The therapeutic support available to adopters, children and families covers a range of approaches. Staff are responsive and accessible and families are helped by the timeliness of the individualised support packages. Parents said overall their experience of the work carried out with them and their families was positive. Words such as 'compassionate', 'a lifesaver' and 'amazing' were used to describe the staff who provide this support.

The agency's response to the COVID-19 pandemic has been good. Robust risk assessments were quickly put in place with regular updates provided to families and staff. Planned therapeutic sessions continued, albeit virtually, during lockdown. While this approach did not suit all families, the agency resumed face-to-face sessions as soon as it could.

The agency works well with schools to promote their understanding of attachment issues affecting adopted children. Agency staff advocate on behalf of children to ensure that children get the support they need to support their learning. This enhances outcomes for children in education as they benefit from improved support to access all aspects of school life.

### **How well children, young people and adults are helped and protected: good**

The well-being and safety of children and adopters are paramount. Everyone across the agency has a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities, through the regular review and implementation of policies and procedures. Safeguarding policies are comprehensive and offer guidance to staff about how to keep service users safe and well supported. The agency has good links with the local safeguarding agencies. The agency also holds contact details for adopters' local authorities so that safeguarding referrals or requests for advice can be made quickly and easily. In addition, the agency has sourced support from an independent safeguarding consultant to help them maintain robust safeguarding systems. This work is still in the early stages and not yet fully embedded.

All agency therapists have a good understanding of childhood trauma. They support parents to develop a clear understanding about how their adopted child's early life experiences can affect their emotional well-being and behaviour. Parents are prepared and supported to develop their parenting skills so that they can manage children's behaviours more effectively. This helps to minimise risks to children.

New staff members recruited and appointed by the agency since the last inspection have undergone thorough recruitment and checking procedures. This helps to ensure the suitability of the people employed by the agency to work with children and vulnerable adults.

The premises where therapy sessions take place are of a high quality and well resourced. Effective maintenance and safety systems ensure that a safe and nurturing environment is provided. Parents and children feel welcomed and say that they enjoy coming to the agency.

Therapists carry out risk assessments as part of the initial arrangements for any work with a child. However, not every child with high-risk behaviours has a written risk assessment that considers the risks and mitigation to minimise any possible harm to everyone at the agency. This shortfall does not ensure that children, families and staff are safeguarded effectively.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good**

Since the last inspection, the leadership and management of the agency have changed. This was a well-planned transition. The new manager and responsible individual are ambitious, dedicated and child centred in their approach. They provide a nurturing, welcoming and effective service. Leaders and managers know their strengths and aim to build on these. They know most of the areas for development and have plans in place to address these. The new management team has commissioned an independent business consultant to help to develop the service further.

Staff feel supported in their work by the leadership team. Staff commented that leaders and managers are approachable and accessible and their views are listened to and valued. All therapists receive regular line-management supervision and clinical supervision. This ensures that staff have consistent opportunities to review and reflect on their practice. Staff attend team meetings and professional development sessions that enable them to build on their expertise and safeguarding practice. This helps staff to continue to develop the skills and knowledge needed to carry out their roles effectively.

The agency's records of the work it carries out are well maintained. They are clear, comprehensive and reflect the work that is done. They are kept up to date and subject to regular monitoring and audit to ensure their quality.

The manager and staff have developed good working relationships with commissioners and referring social workers. They can challenge practice effectively while maintaining constructive working relationships with referring authorities. This ensures that children receive the required support to achieve better outcomes.

The agency's statement of purpose outlines the agency's objectives clearly. However, it currently contains out-of-date information. The statement of purpose has not been reviewed annually as it should be. Similarly, the children's guide is not accessible to children of varying abilities. This limits which children can view the information in an understandable format.

# What does the adoption support agency need to do to improve?

## Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered persons must take to meet the Care Standards Act 2000, the Adoption Support Agencies (England) and Adoption Agencies (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2005 and the national minimum standards. The registered persons must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
<p>The registered person shall—</p> <p>keep under review and, where appropriate, revise the statement of purpose and children’s guide;</p> <p>notify the registration authority of any such revision within 28 days of making the revision.</p> <p>(Regulation 6 (a)(b))</p>	4 August 2023

## Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that children’s safety and welfare are promoted. Specifically, ensure that all children’s risks are supported by a written risk assessment. (‘Adoption: national minimum standards’, page 18, paragraph 4.1)

## Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children, young people and adults, using the social care common inspection framework.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the adoption support agency, how it meets the core functions as set out in legislation, and to consider how well it complies with the Adoption Support Agencies (England) and Adoption Agencies (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2005 and the national minimum standards.

## **Adoption support agency details**

**Unique reference number:** 1250134

**Registered provider:** Time To Listen Community Interest Company

**Registered provider address:** Marvell House Children's Centre, Cranbourne Street,  
Hull HU3 1PP

**Responsible individual:** Post vacant

**Registered manager:** Post vacant

**Telephone number:** 07810 503830

**Email address:** [info@timetolisten.co.uk](mailto:info@timetolisten.co.uk)

## **Inspector**

Evelyn Chafota, Social Care Inspector

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](mailto: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 [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence](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](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

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](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2023