

Time Out Fostering

Time Out Fostering Limited

Unit 17, Oaklands Business Park, 64-68 Elm Grove, Worthing BN11 5LH

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this independent fostering agency

Time Out Fostering is a limited company with 41 fostering households caring for 39 children. The agency offers a range of services for children between the ages of 0 and 18. This includes short- and long-term, emergency, bridging, siblings' assessment, asylum-seeker and respite placements. Alongside this, the agency has developed a specialism in working with parent and child placements.

Inspection dates: 1 to 5 November 2021

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 **outstanding**

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: 26 February 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

The staff and foster carers are passionate about the children in their care. Everyone works closely together to ensure that the support children receive reflects the therapeutic model of care described in the statement of purpose. This commitment starts before children move in. Using a whole-team approach, the agency staff carefully match foster carers' personalities, skills and experience to children's needs. As a result, children benefit from living in stable, safe and secure homes.

During the COVID-19 restrictions, the agency used innovative ways to keep everyone together. Virtual online quizzes, organised by the managers, were used effectively to check in with families while having fun. Some children took turns hosting the quiz, making sure it was accessible to all. The lockdown period was also used as an opportunity to get in-depth feedback from children, including the impact it had on them.

The staff and foster carers have high aspirations for the children. Together they continually look for ways to ensure that children have access to a wide range of experiences and opportunities. This includes both in and outside of school. Foster carers are very good at encouraging children to follow their dreams. The agency continually goes over and above what is expected of them to support this. Because of this, children are making significant progress.

Children feel part of the fostering family. However, they are fully supported to keep in touch with the key people in their lives. A member of staff trained in life-story work has done some amazing work with children. This has helped them come to terms with their past, make sense of their circumstances and rebuild family relationships.

Parent and child placements are promoted. The agency staff provide excellent support to foster carers who support parent and child placements. This includes ensuring that they have access to all the necessary information. Foster carers are trained, skilled and experienced in this area. Because of this, parents and children receive personalised care and support.

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

Leaders and managers have created a safeguarding culture where children's safety comes first. The managers use a range of systems to monitor the quality of care children experience. This includes keeping track of any incidents or concerns to ensure that the correct processes are followed. Where managers feel that partner agencies are not fulfilling their role and/or responsibilities, they actively challenge this to ensure that all necessary actions are taken to keep children safe.

The progress of children is exceptional, including examples of when children are placed in an emergency. The staff are very skilled at identifying risks early on and ensuring that action is taken to reduce them. Experienced foster carers confidently lead on strategies to provide safe care. Their therapeutic approach to parenting enables children to develop trusting relationships with adults where they can talk openly. As a result, the original risks are eradicated.

Children very rarely go missing. However, on the rare occasion that they do, there are detailed plans in place for foster carers to follow. Because all the staff know the children and foster carers extremely well, the advice and support they give at these times, including out of hours, is well received. Children are also helped and supported to manage risk in a safe way. As a result, incidents of children going missing are significantly reduced.

Allegations against foster carers are taken seriously. The agency works closely with the designated officer and children's social workers to agree what action needs to be taken. When concerns are investigated internally, the approach is thorough. While this is being carried out, children and foster carers are supported appropriately. In situations where the standard of care has fallen below what is expected, the agency does not hesitate to deregister foster carers. They also reflect carefully on what went wrong and put measures in place to prevent it happening again.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

Since the last inspection, the management arrangements have been strengthened. The long-standing and well-established registered manager and responsible individual have appointed to two new roles that focus on the quality of professional practice and the ongoing development of the agency. This, along with their strong commitment to continued improvement, has meant that the agency has gone from strength to strength.

Over the past year, the agency has faced some challenges, including some staff leaving to pursue new opportunities, as well as an office move. The staff team has also had to adapt to new ways of working because of COVID-19. Naturally, this has had an impact on children and their foster carers, for example, changes in workers and how support is provided. However, the management team has worked extremely hard to minimise the impact of this through the recruitment of new experienced staff and using innovative ways to introduce them, such as through podcasts.

Foster carers describe the support they receive as exceptional. Those spoken to during the inspection repeatedly credited the stability, security and long-term arrangements for their children to the care and support they receive. This includes access to support out of hours, time and space to reflect on how they feel, support to undertake further training and recognising and rewarding this through allowances.

Leaders and managers work hard to attract foster carers looking to join the agency and retain those already working for them. The process for recruiting them is thorough from start to finish. The content of the agency's website is well thought

out, assessments are thorough, recommendations and decisions are strong. Because of this, foster carers know what is expected from them and how they will be supported to provide children with stable, loving homes. This includes when foster carers transfer from another agency.

The fostering panel and process is continually evolving. Recent developments include a quality assurance check mid-way through assessments. This helps the panel to run more efficiently because issues and/or questions are identified and resolved early. Also, the panel is led by an experienced chairperson who, along with panel members, carefully scrutinises the assessment, training and ongoing review of foster carers. This, combined with the overall approach of the agency, keeps children at the centre of decisions.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people 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: Unit 17, Oaklands Business Park, 64-68 Elm Grove, Worthing BN11 5LH

Responsible individual: Jeremy Cross

Registered manager: Alison Young

Telephone number: 01903 259900

Email address: office@timeoutfostering.co.uk

Inspectors

Amanda Harvey, Social Care Inspector
Suzy Lemmy, Social Care Inspector
Kelly Marchmont, 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.

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, 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://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
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2021