

1242216

Assurance visit

Information about this children's home

A large private provider operates this home. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to four young people who have emotional, behavioural and social difficulties. The manager was registered by Ofsted in September 2016 and is qualified for the role.

Visit dates: 8 to 9 October 2020

Previous inspection date: 19 February 2020

Previous inspection judgement: Requires improvement to be good

Information about this visit

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), Ofsted suspended all routine inspections in March 2020. As part of a phased return to routine inspection, we are undertaking assurance visits to children's social care services that are inspected under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF).

At these visits, inspectors evaluate the extent to which:

- children are well cared for
- children are safe
- leaders and managers are exercising strong leadership.

This visit was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000, following the published guidance for assurance visits.

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills is leading Ofsted's work into how England's social care system has delivered child-centred practice and care within the context of the restrictions placed on society during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Findings from the visit

We did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance visit.

The care of children

Young people enjoy good, trusting relationships with the adults who care for them. Once the COVID-19 restrictions eased, a new young person was admitted to the home. This transition was well managed and the group of young people quickly developed positive relationships with each other. One young person has also successfully moved on from the home, having made significant progress.

Young people are making good progress from their starting points and say that they are happy living at the home. More than one young person described it as 'like a family'. Young people are engaged in college placements and are making progress with the support of staff. Young people are aspirational and all have plans for what they want to do in the future.

Staff helped young people to stay in contact with those people who are important to them during the lockdown period. They gave clear guidance about social distancing and ensured that young people understood how to keep themselves safe. Staff transported young people where necessary to help minimise the risks they faced when going back out into the community following lockdown.

The house is spacious, homely and exceptionally well maintained. Young people's bedrooms are personalised to a high standard and reflect their individuality. There are lots of pictures in the communal living areas of the young people enjoying activities and days out. Staff encourage young people to take pride in their home. This helps young people to develop a sense of being cared for and of belonging.

Staff are working collaboratively with specialist services to enhance their understanding of young people's behaviours and to offer direct support to the young people. The positive attachments the young people have with the staff team enables them to engage with services and develop their self-esteem and confidence.

The safety of children

Risk assessments and care plans are detailed and up to date. They give clear guidance to staff about how to care for young people and how to help them minimize the risks they face. The records of assessments and plans are reviewed monthly and at the point of any incident or changes in behaviour. They include suggestions and comments from young people. This helps young people to develop a sense of ownership of their emotional well-being and understand how staff will support them.

There have been no significant incidents during the COVID-19 period, including no physical interventions. The positive relationships that staff develop with young people help them to de-escalate and manage situations. This helps young people develop a mature approach to dealing with their difficulties and anxieties and helps them to learn how to manage these in future.

There are some missing-from-home episodes recorded during the COVID-19 period, but all relate to a young person who no longer lives at the home.

Leaders and managers

The manager is an inspirational leader who models positive relationships with young people. She is aspirational for them and advocates strongly on their behalf. A social worker commented, 'The manager, in particular, has advocated strongly for [Name] and he very much appreciates that. He sees this as his home and feels supported by the staff.'

Staff receive regular supervision, including reflecting on situations that occur to help them develop. Training is regular, up to date and mainly face to face, with a few exceptions due to the COVID-19 restrictions. Where this has happened, the manager has ensured that online alternatives are in place.

The requirements and recommendations made at the last inspection are met.

No requirements or recommendations are made following this visit.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 1242216

Registered provider: Keys Care Ltd

Registered provider address: C/o Pinsent Masons Llp, The Soloist Building, 1 Lanyon Place, Belfast, Northern Ireland BT1 3LP

Responsible individual: David Carser

Registered manager: Holly Robertson

Inspector

Susan Atkinson-Millmoor, Regulatory Inspection Manager

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