

1242216

Registered provider: Keys Childcare Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is operated by a large private provider, and is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to four young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The home accommodates a maximum of three young people.

Inspection dates: 11 to 12 December 2018

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

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 22 February 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
22/02/2018	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

31/07/2017	Full	Good
08/11/2016	Full	Requires improvement

What does the children's home 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, Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards'. The registered person(s) must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The registered person may only— employ an individual to work at the children's home; or if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home, if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). The requirements are that— full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32(1)(2)(a)(b)(3)(d))	31/12/2018

Recommendations

- When a child returns to the home after being missing from care or away from the home without permission, the responsible local authority must provide an opportunity for the child to have an independent return home interview. Homes should take account of information provided by such interviews when assessing risks and putting arrangements in place to protect each child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.30)
- Records of restraint must be kept and should enable the registered person and staff to review the use of control, discipline and restraint to identify effective practice and respond promptly where any issues or trends of concern emerge. The review should provide the opportunity for amending practice to ensure it meets the needs of each child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 49, paragraph 9.59)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Young people make significant progress in all areas of their lives. They are happy and have secure relationships with staff. Young people develop their confidence and self-esteem over time because of the strength of support and guidance they receive from staff.

Staff know the young people very well. Care planning is clear and informative. Staff spend time building nurturing and strong relationships with young people. Consequently, young people feel safe and secure.

Young people's views and wishes are important to staff. Young people are listened to and their views acted upon. They are involved in their care planning. They are asked for their views on activities, menus and decor. This helps young people to feel valued and respected.

Young people's health is good because they do not smoke, drink alcohol or misuse drugs. They have access to the company's therapy service. This helps to promote their emotional health. Staff consult with therapy staff to develop individually tailored therapeutic ways of working with young people.

Education is important to young people in this home. Their attendance is generally good. Young people who have not attended school for significant periods of time are now attending school. Young people are achieving in school and looking forward to starting college.

Young people are learning independence skills. They help with household chores, shopping and cooking. They also look after their pets, which gives them an additional sense of responsibility. These skills will help them successfully transition to adulthood.

Young people enjoy a range of community-based activities by joining clubs that offer pursuits such as gymnastics. One young person is hoping to join a drama club. They also go walking and cycling. Activities such as these help to develop their confidence and self-esteem, and are good for their physical and mental well-being.

Young people live in a homely and comfortable environment. They have single bedrooms that provide them with adequate privacy.

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

Staff have warm and supportive relationships with young people. This helps young people to feel safe and secure. These strong relationships also mean that high-risk behaviours, such as going missing from the home, are significantly reduced. Consequently, young people who are at high risk of sexual exploitation become safer.

Staff follow good procedures when young people go missing. Staff always welcome young people back into the home. However, local authorities do not always fulfil their statutory responsibility to conduct return home interviews with the young people. The registered manager challenges this on some occasions, but not all.

The behaviour of young people improves over time. Young people learn to manage their own behaviour because staff are good role models. Staff are patient and respond therapeutically to any challenges that young people present. They provide strong and consistent boundaries, but are fair and empathetic.

Staff are trained to carry out physical intervention. They use this as a last resort, employing de-escalation techniques successfully in most instances. However, on the rare occasions that physical intervention is used, records are not always clear about why it was required. This is not always identified when physical intervention records are reviewed by managers.

Recruitment and vetting procedures help to protect young people from unsuitable adults. However, there is no evidence that references have been verified. In addition, certificates for relevant qualifications have not been put on file for one member of staff. This is a breach of regulation, but there does not appear to be a direct impact on young people in this instance.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

An experienced, qualified and supportive registered manager leads, motivates and inspires her staff team. She has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the service. Plans are in place to address identified shortfalls.

The recommendation made at the previous inspection has been addressed. Case records are now accurate, up to date and complete.

The staff team is well established. Its members are supportive of each other and passionate about providing a good service for young people. Staff are caring, empathetic and positive about the young people in their care. The staff regularly reflect on their practice to ensure that they are sharing good practice. About half of the team members are qualified. Others are either completing a relevant qualification or are waiting to enrol. This means that young people are looked after by a skilled and knowledgeable staff team.

Staff communicate well with external professionals such as school staff and social workers. This helps to provide a consistent and holistic approach to the care of young people.

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 children's home 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 Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards'.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 1242216

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Keys Childcare Ltd

Registered provider address: c/o Pinsett Mason LLP, The Soloist Building, 1 Lanyon Place, Belfast, Northern Ireland BT1 3LP

Responsible individual: Patricia James

Registered manager: Holly Robertson

Inspector

Joanne Vyas: social care inspector

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