

SC005204

Registered provider: Keys Childcare Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This service is maintained by a large private provider. The home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to six children who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Inspection dates: 7 to 8 June 2017

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	Good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 19 January 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: Improved effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection

None

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because:

- Children experience positive and trusting relationships with staff that enable them to develop confidence and benefit from the support provided.
- Children attend school regularly and are making progress from their starting points.
- Children take part in a wide range of social activities in the local community. This is increasing their feelings of self-worth.
- The views of children and young people are central to how the home operates and this increases their sense of belonging.
- The home is managed effectively with the needs of children being prioritised well. The management team and staff have a clear understanding of the progress that children are making.
- The management are ambitious for children and create a culture of high aspiration and positivity.

The children's home's areas for development:

- Partnership working supports children's emotional and psychological well-being. This could be further strengthened by providing staff with training in trauma and separation and loss.
- The home is well maintained; however, a child's bedroom window has no curtains.
- The use of sanctions is kept to a minimum; however, the records do not always reflect how some sanctions imposed are helpful.
- Records of key work sessions demonstrate that staff regularly engage in conversation with the children. However, the records do not always reflect that children are being supported to explore their feelings of anger and frustration in a sympathetic and nurturing way.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
19/01/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
10/05/2016	Full	Good
03/12/2015	Full	Requires improvement
29/09/2015	Full	Inadequate

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Recommendations

- For children's homes to be nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of their children, they will, in most cases, be homely, domestic environments. ('Guide to the children's home regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph, 3.9)
- Regulation 12(2) details sanctions that are prohibited in behaviour management. Any sanctions used to address poor behaviour should be restorative in nature, to help children recognise the impact of their behaviour on themselves, other children, the staff caring for them and the wider community. In some cases, it will be important for children to make reparation in some form to anyone hurt by their behaviour, and the staff in the home should be skilled to support the child to understand this and carry it out. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 48, paragraph 9.54)
- The registered person should support staff to be ambitious for every child in the home and gain skills and experience that enable them to actively support each child to achieve their potential. To ensure that staff understand and can meet each child's needs, in line with their responsibilities. ('Guide to the children's home regulations including the quality standards', page 52, paragraph 10.5)
- Staff should be familiar with the home's policies on record keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective, and clear recording. Staff should record information on individual children in a non-stigmatising way that distinguishes between fact, opinion and third-party information. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. ('Guide to the children's home regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Three children have moved into the home since the last inspection. They have settled well and are making good progress from their starting points. A placing social worker said, '[name] is mixing well with the other young people.' Staff provide children with a stable, warm and nurturing environment. The children receive one-to-one attention, which helps to increase their sense of safety and well-being. For example, key members of staff accompany their key child to weekly therapy sessions. A social worker commented, 'I have been very impressed with the home... the quality of their care is of an excellent standard... I am very happy with the progress my young man has made.'

Staff have high aspirations for all children. They challenge any barriers to learning and advocate on the children's behalf. Staff have made strong links with education providers

and the virtual head. This ensures a consistent approach to children's learning. All the children are in full-time education and have good attendance. Staff actively support the children's learning and development; for example, staff help with homework and encourage the children to read. This helps to increase the children's educational attainment.

Children are in good health and their health needs are well supported. Most children are receiving support from the child and adolescent mental health service (CAMHS) or the organisation's own clinical team. In addition, the staff have regular consultations with the clinical staff; this ensures that they are confident in responding to the children's presenting needs.

Staff ensure that children are given the opportunity to express their wishes and contribute to their future plans. Weekly house meetings enable the children to make choices about the menu, what activities they want to do, and new items for the home. Staff also use the house meetings to raise the children's awareness of bullying and e-safety. The children have access to an independent advocate, should the need arise, who visits the home every month.

Children participate in a range of social activities, such as going to a youth club, swimming lessons, cycling and Scouts. One young person recently took part in a junior triathlon event, which he won. During the summer holiday, the children plan to do a sponsored walk for charity. This helps to improve self-esteem and self-worth, as well as providing opportunity for positive engagement with the wider community.

Staff promote contact between children and their families by supervising contact and providing transport. This ensures that children spend time with their families in a safe and positive manner which helps promote their sense of identity.

Children live in a comfortable family home that is decorated and furnished to a good standard. They are able to choose the colour schemes and decor of their bedrooms. This helps to develop the children's sense of belonging. Despite damage to the home being repaired with little or no delay, attention is required to one of the bedrooms that has no curtains because the curtain pole has been pulled down.

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

The children receive a high level of staff support that ensures their overall welfare and safety. Staff receive training in safeguarding, which ensures that they have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in protecting vulnerable children. The home has effective links with safeguarding agencies and there is good communication about safeguarding concerns, such as allegations against staff.

Comprehensive risk assessments and behaviour management plans provide the staff with clear guidance for managing individual behaviours. There is a strong emphasis on promoting positive behaviour with the use of rewards and praise. Clear and consistent boundaries help children to cope well with their loss of control. Staff are skilled in guiding and using re-direction when children's feelings of anger and frustration escalate. When a child's behaviour becomes a risk to themselves or others, then staff use physical intervention. The records show that the numbers of these interventions are relatively

high for some children compared to others. Every incident is reviewed by the manager in order to identify any triggers for behaviour and ensures safe practice by staff.

The use of sanctions is kept to a minimum. However, the records do not always reflect how some sanctions imposed are helpful. For example, on one occasion staff imposed a sanction that required a child to spend 'positive' time with an adult away from the other children. Incidents of bullying are managed well and staff are proactive in raising children's awareness through the weekly house meetings.

There have been several complaints since the last inspection. The records show that the children's complaints are treated seriously and responded to clearly. There have been no incidents of children going missing from the home.

Staff understand the risks that the internet can pose for children, including sexual exploitation. Staff took appropriate action when they had concerns about a child. Work has been done with the children in order to support them in learning how to keep themselves safe, with good effect.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is managed by a suitably qualified and experienced manager, who has been registered with Ofsted since January 2017. She is supported by two competent assistant managers. The management are ambitious for children and young people and create a culture of high aspiration and positivity. This is having a significant impact in improving the lives of the children they care for.

The home is appropriately staffed and resourced to meet the needs of the children. Most staff have a minimum of a level 3 qualification, while others are in the process of achieving these. Staff's practice is underpinned by an ongoing training programme that provides them with the skills and knowledge to effectively meet the needs of the children. However, this could be further strengthened by providing staff with training in trauma and separation and loss. This will enhance their knowledge and understanding when supporting children with these emotional complexities.

Regular team meetings and supervision sessions ensure that the staff are well supported in their role and good practice is able to thrive. A member of staff confirmed that the management team is 'approachable'. The registered manager is well supported by a senior manager. She commented, '[name] has been fantastic support for me... I have learnt a lot from her... she is very thorough.'

The manager and staff have established effective working relationships with key professionals to ensure the best all-round support for children. The children recently visited the local fire station, which they enjoyed immensely. Following the visit, the fire officers have contacted the manager to discuss starting up a mentoring programme for the children. This will provide them with positive role models and enhance the children's life chances.

There has been one complaint from a neighbour since the last inspection due to staff parking their cars outside the neighbour's house. This was dealt with in a timely manner.

The manager has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the home,

and areas for improvement are clearly identified in the development plan. Quality assurance monitoring takes place regularly, with the management seeking to understand triggers in behaviour, and identify patterns and trends. This helps to improve the experiences and outcomes for the children. An independent person also undertakes comprehensive monthly monitoring visits to further drive up improvements.

Information contained in the children's records and internal placement plans is, in the main, legible and accurate. However, the records of key work sessions do not always reflect that children are being supported to explore their feelings of anger and frustration in a sympathetic and nurturing way following a physical intervention. For example, the response often recorded in the key work books is, 'Spoke to [name] about the PI and they understood the reasons for this, no marks and doesn't want to make a complaint.' This lack of information hinders the staff in reflecting on incidents with young people and in learning what intervention works best with individuals.

No requirements or recommendations were made at the last inspection.

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 difference 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 who 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: SC005204

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Keys Childcare Ltd

Registered provider address: Hurstwood Court, New Hall Hey Road, Rossendale BB4 6HR

Responsible individual: Julie Hamilton

Registered manager: Kimberley Feeley

Inspector

Michelle Bacon, social care regulatory inspector

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