

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	05/12/2016
Unique reference number	SC009651
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Keys Childcare Ltd
Registered provider address	Keys Attachment Centre, Hurstwood Court, Rawtenstall, Rossendale, Lancashire BB4 6HR

Responsible individual	Julie Hamilton
Registered manager	Sarah Haworth
Inspector	Graham Robinson

Previous inspection date	16/02/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Improved effectiveness
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.	
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Outstanding

SC009651

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- The home provides young people who have experienced an unsettled lifestyle. Staff provide them with high levels of care and consistency in their lives, which in turn helps them to live a more age-appropriate and socially acceptable lifestyle.
- Staff create a warm, homely and nurturing environment in which young people feel safe and secure.
- Strong, trusting relationships between young people and staff enable high levels of communication and consultation.
- The clear boundaries and routines at the home, coupled with high levels of support from staff, help young people to make good progress in all areas of their lives.
- Young people re-engage well with their education. Consistent attendance on a full-time basis helps them to make good educational progress.
- Challenging behaviour is well managed. High levels of monitoring, reflection and evaluation of behaviour patterns ensure that coping strategies are reviewed and updated regularly.
- Each young person's specific needs are accurately reflected in plans, strategies and areas of risk, which are reviewed and updated regularly.
- Excellent working relationships with partner agencies allow for collective, multi-agency working, to address young people's needs and keep them safe.
- The home is well organised and managed. A number of new initiatives have been introduced that have improved the monitoring and working practices of the home.

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and operated by a private organisation. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to four children and young people. The children and young people may have emotional and behavioural difficulties, including attachment problems.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
16/02/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
30/03/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
11/12/2014	Full	Good
17/01/2014	Interim	Satisfactory progress

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
The home specialises in working with very young children. Attentive and caring staff create a warm, cosy and homely environment where high levels of care and nurture help young people to settle. Their complex needs and sometimes challenging behaviour are well managed in a non-punitive way. As a result, young people start to trust the adults looking after them and adapt their lifestyle to one that is more ordered and socially acceptable. Developing trust and building relationships are strengths of this home. Before admission to the home, many young people experienced chaotic lifestyles that put them in conflict with adults and often in situations of high risk. Building trust in adults, coupled with the strong relationships formed, gives young people respite from their previous lifestyle. Being cared for in an age-appropriate way allows them to revert and experience a lifestyle that is more reflective of their age. Clear boundaries and routines, support from staff and consistent care give young people a sense of security and a feeling of being safe. This is reflected in some of the comments that they made. For example, when asked about staff, one young person said, 'They stop anybody from hurting me and that's good.' Another young person was asked why they felt safe, and responded by saying, 'Because there's nobody to hurt me'. High-quality individualised planning documents and risk assessments clearly identify areas of need and the strategies in place to address those needs. They are reviewed and updated regularly to keep them current. Targeted key-work sessions allow young people to be involved in their care plans and ensure that they have a full understanding of their individual plans. The monthly reports sent to social workers, along with excellent written reports that are prepared before each review, capture the areas in which progress is being made and the areas still to be worked on. A psychologically informed pathway, which features an assessment and a system outcome measurement, has been recently introduced. Although it is not yet fully embedded into the working practices for each young person, this pathway adds to the evidence available. Feedback received from social workers and parents regarding the quality of care and the progress being achieved was positive. A parent reflecting on the progress that her child has made stated, 'I can take him out now in public. He will hold my hand now. He is much calmer and more controlled.' A social worker spoke about staff, saying, 'They think outside the box in an attempt to address complex, individual issues. Staff genuinely care about the children they look after.' This view was endorsed by another social worker who said, 'Senior staff understand the	

complexities this young person has and they will try various strategies to manage behaviours.'

All young people are in full-time education. They attend schools that are situated in the local community. Attendance levels are high, and this is reflected in the good educational progress being made by young people. Links with the schools are strong, and staff fulfil a parental role that is supportive to each young person. For example, staff attend parents' evenings. The early evening routine includes checking and supporting homework tasks and completing homework forms.

The everyday health needs of young people are fully met. They are all registered and receive the services of community-based facilities, such as general practitioners, dentists and opticians. Specialist services are accessed as required. For example, the home is working closely with a local nurse for those who have diabetes, who visits regularly.

Buying in the therapeutic interventions provided by the organisation that operates the home is an option for placing authorities. A variety of services provided by external staff are available. The combination of services available for young people ensures that their physical, emotional and mental health needs are being fully addressed.

Activities are pre-planned to make them purposeful, to develop social skills and to promote good health. Consultation with young people about their interests enables many activities to be individualised. For example, one young person plays regularly for a local football team, and another young person has enjoyed street dance and horse riding. Other activities that are community based include scouts, swimming lessons and trampoline clubs. The young people's involvement in activities helps to integrate them into the local community, where they can make new friends. This proves to be a significant boost to their self-confidence and helps to develop their social skills.

Young people take on given tasks, roles and responsibilities around the home that provide them with useful skills. This is designed to improve their independence and to give them a sense of responsibility. As they progress, they commence a formal programme to monitor and develop skills that will serve them well when they come to an age at which they will prepare for independence. They also take on more responsibility for managing themselves. For example, one young person has started to go to the shop on his own to buy everyday goods for the home. He is also allowed to play out with friends when and where appropriate. This is designed to improve self-esteem, as young people move towards living a more independent lifestyle.

Young people live in a house that is indistinguishable from others around it and provides a warm, cosy, homely and child-friendly environment. There is space for young people to play, or be on their own if they wish. Single-occupancy bedrooms are personalised to suit individuals' tastes and needs. The overall state of repair and the quality of decor, furnishings, fixtures and equipment are good.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
Young people live in an environment where they feel safe and are kept safe. For example, contracts to maintain and service emergency equipment and other vital resources are in place. Risk assessments linked to safety inside and outside the home are revised and updated annually. A revision of the fire risk assessment and regular drills to practise evacuation of the home take place regularly. Overall, the safety of young people and staff is being promoted positively. A well-trained staff team understands its roles and responsibilities in keeping young people safe. The home has developed collaborative working partnerships and practice with external agencies, which help to keep young people safe and provide them with greater protection. A comment received from a social worker supported this view: 'Of all the residential homes I work with, this one is by far the best.' Staff work alongside young people, which reduces the opportunities for bullying to occur. Bullying is not an area of concern for any of the young people living in the home. Clear boundaries, coupled with consistent routines, give them a feeling of security with which they are comfortable. Overall, behaviour is well managed. Young people can be unpredictable, volatile and challenging. Although the number of incidents requiring physical intervention have been relatively high since the last inspection, the reasons for this are known and explainable. Incidents are monitored effectively and de-brief sessions take place. This provides opportunities to review strategies and practice with an overall aim to reduce the number of incidents taking place. Incidents of young people going missing from this home are extremely rare, and there have been no such occurrences since the previous inspection. Suitable risk assessments are in place, and staff are fully aware of and briefed on the procedures to follow should a child go missing. This takes account of local protocols for missing children. Although the main body of staff has remained intact, some movement of staff has had a minor impact on the home. However, this has been well managed with new staff fitting in well and being fully accepted by the young people. Recruitment practice and clearance procedures are thorough and meet with regulatory requirements and current guidance. Longer-serving staff are being rechecked regularly, which is deemed to be good practice. This ensures that young people are	

only being looked after by staff who have been suitably cleared and recruited.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Outstanding
A dedicated, experienced, qualified manager has high aspirations for the young people and the staff. She has created and introduced into the home a number of new initiatives that are designed to develop working practice further and to improve outcomes for young people. For example, she has created a new format for the home's workforce plan, which complements the written development plan. This detailed and comprehensive piece of work has been shared with similar homes in the group. The quality of this work and the generosity shown in sharing it with others is commendable. Other new initiatives that have recently been introduced include a system to record and monitor staff training. This is a newly devised document that gives staff who are involved in supervising other staff a revised format with which to work. This improves the standard of recording as well as the consistency and quality of staff supervision. Both documents have been embedded fully into working practice. The documents have also contributed to the improvements that have been noted regarding the internal monitoring of the home. Another development that has had a significant impact is the creation of a new brochure, 'A guide to Cherry House'. It provides quick, easy-to-read and condensed information about the home, its working practices and the needs of young people. It is instantly available to any staff who are covering a shift. This and the other new initiatives have had a significant impact on the working practices of the home, benefiting staff and young people. Despite some changes to the staff team since the previous inspection, the team remains experienced, well trained, highly motivated and child centred. Morale is high, and this has a positive effect on young people, who live in a happy, cohesive establishment full of good humour and appropriate laughter. Staff are supportive of the manager and buy into the culture, ethos and working practices developed in the home over the years. Staff confirm that they feel well supported. Both staff supervision and appraisal programmes are taking place with consistency. Staff benefit from participating in an active core staff training programme, which includes regular refresher training in areas such as safeguarding, physical intervention and first aid. This helps to	

ensure that skills remain current, in order to meet the needs of young people. Most staff are professionally qualified, and the few who are not have all embarked on appropriate professional training.

The internal monitoring of the home has improved since the previous inspection, as the profile and influence of the manager has grown. External monitoring takes place consistently, with detailed reports produced following each monthly visit. The reports are used by the manager as one of the tools with which to identify issues that translate into the home's written development plan. This practice contributes to the view that the manager and senior staff have a clear understanding of the home's strengths and are able to identify and act on areas that require development.

The home has a good record of compliance. Following the previous inspection, a requirement was made to make some structural improvements to the home. Those improvements have been completed and have been complemented by a comprehensive programme of refurbishment, which has significantly improved the decor, fixtures and furnishings in the home.

As in any home where there are young people who have deep-rooted behavioural issues, there have been some challenging times and events. These have been well managed, and the home has remained stable at all times. The progress made by each young person reflects the positive influence that the home is having on them.

Staff have high aspirations for each child as the child successfully re-engages with society and their education. Strong relationships with partner agencies provide young people with extra levels of support as they benefit from a multi-agency approach. Strengths and weaknesses are recognised and addressed. An influential manager has clear plans in place to improve the home further.

What the inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against 'Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection'.

An **outstanding** children's home provides highly effective services that contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help and protection and care. Their progress exceeds expectations and is sustained over time.

A **good** children's home provides effective services that help, protect and care for children and young people and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

In a children's home that **requires improvement**, there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. The welfare of children looked after is safeguarded and promoted. Minimum requirements are in place. However, the children's home is not yet delivering good protection, help and care for children and young people.

A children's home that is **inadequate** is providing services where there are widespread or serious failures that create or leave children and young people being harmed or at risk of harm or that result in children looked after not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people living in the children's home. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference that adults make to the lives of children and young people. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with children, young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care given to children and young people. Wherever possible, they talked to children, 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.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service 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'.

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