

SC009651

Registered provider: Keys Child Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is one of a number owned and managed by a private organisation. The home specialises in caring for children with attachment difficulties who may have experienced multiple placement breakdowns. Children are of primary school age on admission. The home is registered to care for four children.

The manager was registered with Ofsted in March 2009. However, she is currently undertaking other duties in the organisation and in the process of resigning her registration. The former deputy manager has recently been appointed as manager. He was in charge of the home at the time of the inspection. He is in the process of registering with Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 10 to 11 December 2019

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

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **outstanding**

The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: 28 January 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
28/01/2019	Full	Outstanding
08/08/2017	Full	Outstanding
29/03/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
05/12/2016	Full	Good

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

Recommendations

- Ensure that staff continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)
Specifically, ensure that risk assessments contain sufficient detail about incidents of self-injurious behaviour for staff to be able to put these into context.
- Ensure that all staff consistently follow the home's policies and procedures for the benefit of the children in the home's care. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 54, paragraph 10.20)
Specifically, ensure that medicines are stored as procedures dictate, at all times.
- Ensure that the registered manager, who is responsible for good employment practice, ensures that recruitment practice minimises any potential risks to children. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1)
Specifically, ensure that further exploration is undertaken when referees do not confirm dates of employment.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children living in this home benefit from receiving consistent care, from a largely stable and experienced staff team. There have been minimal staff changes since the last inspection, with new staff quickly learning the routines and style of parenting expected in the home.

Staff provide a supportive and nurturing environment, where children feel safe. Children can develop trusting relationships with staff, without the fear that they may be leaving soon. One child has lived in the home for over five years. A number of the staff team members have been here throughout this time, seeing him grow and develop over the years. They share many happy memories. This helps children feel that they belong here.

All four children have lived in the home for over a year. They get on well together, for the majority of the time. They are learning to accept each other's differences and they enjoy spending time together.

Children benefit from routine and structure. Staff use consistent therapeutic terminology, and children know what is expected of them. Children benefit from bedtime routines that include some individual time with staff and a bedtime story. This predictable care helps children feel safe and helps them settle.

Children make excellent progress in all areas of their development. All children have 100% school attendance, which is praiseworthy. While some children attend the organisation's school, others attend schools in the community. One child has been supported to return to mainstream school, due to the progress made. Staff support children to complete their homework when they return from school. They are also in regular communication with schools about children's progress. This helps children achieve their potential.

The organisation's therapist meets with children regularly and offers advice and guidance to staff too. This ensures that staff are tackling any presenting difficulties in the most appropriate way. This therapeutic approach helps children form an understanding about their past experiences and helps to strengthen their emotional resilience.

Children receive encouragement and support to engage in a range of activities in the community. They currently enjoy swimming, horse-riding, street dance and scouts. This helps build children's confidence and self-esteem. It also allows them the opportunity to form friendships outside of the home. Children invite their friends to their birthday parties, as would any other child of their age.

Similarly, children enjoy caravan holidays in the summer. In addition, one young person recently had a special trip to the studio tour of his favourite fictional character. Such experiences help to broaden children's horizons and spark further interest. Staff are mindful to take photographs and keep mementos of these trips, which they save for the child for the future. All children have memory boxes and staff have produced beautiful memory albums with photographs and text about these special moments shared together. This is significant as some children have lived here for many years and without this, these memories may be lost.

Children move into and out of the home in a planned manner. Staff have produced a short video clip about the home. This helps children feel familiar with the home before they visit. Similarly, children leave the home in a planned way, usually moving to a foster family, when the time is right for the child and after a carefully planned period of introductions. This optimises their chances of success.

Staff advocate well for children. Their decision making is based on what is best for the child. One social worker commented about the ethos of the home, saying, 'It's all about the child.' Staff will go the extra mile, to make sure that children living here have the best experiences.

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

Children are well settled in this home and trust the staff who care for them. They feel safe and secure here. They live in a warm, friendly and supportive environment. They see the manager daily and know that they can talk freely to him about any worries that they have.

Good placement matching ensures that children's needs are compatible with those already living in the home. The rules and boundaries in the home are clear and kept to consistently by staff. Children learn about acceptable behaviour in the home and in the community. One child recently used the home telephone to make a hoax call to the emergency services. Subsequently, staff have completed work about the implications of such a call and the child has shown genuine remorse. The local police have also made a visit to the home to reinforce this message and to give the children the opportunity to ask them any questions. The children engaged well with the police officer and one child is now interested in joining the police cadets when he is older.

Risk assessments demonstrate that staff assess a range of risks associated with each child's behaviour. Strategies are agreed to manage these risks safely. These documents contain details of recent behaviours and are subject to regular review. However, in doing so some of the pertinent detail is lost, potentially resulting in staff being less vigilant than they need to be.

High levels of staff supervision ensure children's safety. Staff are close by when they need to be. Children can take age-appropriate risks when staff are confident that they can manage these. Staff engage children in discussions about some of the risks that they may face when out in the local community, such as bullying and being wary of strangers. This ensures that children are alert to these issues if they present themselves in the future.

Staff manage one child's complex medical needs well. He is also learning to take responsibility for this himself. However, on one occasion the medication had been moved prematurely from the medical cabinet, resulting in a medication error by another staff member. Staff took the appropriate action, seeking medical advice, and there was no harm to the child. The medication procedures have now been amended, as learning has been taken from this incident. Additional checks are now undertaken by staff before administering medication and increased signage has been introduced.

Staff recruitment is mainly sound, with the organisation's human resources department taking the lead on this. However, further investigations have not always been completed when there has been a discrepancy between the dates that an individual states they have been employed, and the dates confirmed by referees. Such scrutiny is required to ensure the integrity of those in employment.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The registered manager is in the process of resigning her registration. However, the new manager is already in post, as he was the former deputy manager in the home. He is appropriately qualified and experienced. There has been minimal disruption, as he is well known and respected by the children and staff. He is passionate about improving outcomes for children.

The manager has an inclusive management style. He encourages others to voice their ideas and suggestions. This includes children living in the home. Staff work hard to find

the solution to any problem. Individual staff take the lead on various jobs and responsibilities, which ensures that things get done. This inclusive approach makes this a positive environment in which to live and work.

New staff receive a comprehensive induction process. This ensures that they receive the support they need and that managers are assured of their competence to do the job. Staff receive regular supportive supervision and an annual performance appraisal. Training and development are also prioritised, with the majority of staff having a level 3 qualification. This commitment to staff development helps to motivate staff, who in turn demonstrate a commitment to working in the home. The consistency of the staff team reflects this.

Management oversight is strong. The internal and external monitoring of the home is used to drive forward improvements. The new manager has already drafted a new development plan, ensuring that targets are set for the year ahead. This is subject to regular review, helping to avoid drift. One new target has been to promote recycling. Staff have completed work with the children, who have embraced this project. They are now recycling whatever they can and are busy making eco-bricks. The children are learning about the environment and feel that they are making a difference.

Staff and managers are highly thought of by other professionals. Feedback about the home is extremely positive. One social worker commented, 'This is one of the best residential units that I visit. I am always kept up to date; communication is excellent.'

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: SC009651

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Keys Child Care Limited

Registered provider address: Maybrook House, Queensway, Halesowen,
Worcestershire B63 4AH

Responsible individual: Sylvia Eboigbe

Registered manager: Sarah Haworth

Inspector

Mandy Williams, social care inspector

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