

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	25/08/2015
Unique reference number	SC009651
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Keys Childcare Ltd
Registered person address	Broadwood Education Services LTD, Keys Attachment Centre, Hurstwood Court, New Hall Hey Road, ROSSENDALE, Lancashire, BB4 6HR

Responsible individual	Mrs Julie Hamilton
Registered manager	Ms Sarah Haworth
Inspector	Mr Robinson

Previous inspection date	30/03/2015
Previous inspection judgement	Sustained 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	Good

SC009651

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

Leadership and Management

An experienced, qualified manager is well supported by an experienced staff team, with the majority having worked together in this home for a number of years. This gives the home stability and the young people consistency of care.

Management and care staff work with a team centred approach and all buy into the ethos, culture and working practices they have developed in the home over the years.

Effective monitoring of the home along with the ability and willingness to review and adapt working practices ensures the ever changing needs of young people are met.

Good working relationships with partner agencies promotes collaborative working which helps to ensure young people receive a strong, focussed multi-agency response to meet their specific needs.

Keeping young people safe

The home works particularly well and has developed expertise in working with young people of primary school age. Many have histories of unsafe behaviour, due to deprivation and lack of care. This behaviour reduces significantly as they journey through the home, with young and vulnerable children being kept safe.

Behaviour management is well handled in a caring, nurturing and non-punitive environment that gives young people security and the ability to manage their emotions and feelings better as they settle and progress.

Young people make it clear they feel safe living in the home and they feel safe with the adults who look after them.

Experiences and progress of young people

Young people quickly move from an unhappy, chaotic and unsettled lifestyle into a more ordered and satisfying one. This allows them to experience and appreciate the benefits that are gained through education and improved socialisation.

Young people build strong and trusting relationships with adults who care for them and act as good role models. The home advocates strongly on young people's behalf to ensure they benefit in the same way as other children of similar ages.

Young people make good progress socially, emotionally and educationally, although education could feature more prominently within Placement Plans.

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

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the service should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- Ensure that within young people's placement plans, education is given greater prominence alongside the other 'relevant plans' that feature. (Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations including the quality standards page 26 paragraph 5.1)

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
30/03/2015	Interim	sustained effectiveness
11/12/2014	Full	Good
17/01/2014	Interim	Satisfactory Progress
16/04/2013	Full	Good

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	good
The home has over the years worked with the lower age range of young people coming into the care system. A stable staff team that in the main, have worked together for a number of years, have developed specific skills and created an ethos, culture and working practices that meets the needs of primary school age children. Many young people arrive at the home having experienced a lifestyle of chaos, deprivation and for some, neglect. One social worker went as far as describing a young person as being; 'Almost feral on admission.' The home has an excellent record of settling young people and provides them with a standard of care that is consistently good. The detached house blends well with the other houses that surround it and is warm and welcoming. Bedrooms are quickly personalised to the suite the choice and interest of the occupant. There is space indoors and out that allows for play, with enough room for young people to find their own space when required. The décor, fixtures, equipment and furnishings reflect the age range and is maintained to a good standard. Young people say they like the home and observations show they are relaxed and at ease within their environment. Staff are skilled at settling young people and developing relationships with them. The general care young people receive is good, which is reflected in the individualised plans in place that identify need alongside the strategies in place to meet those needs. This quickly builds trust. One young person summed this up by saying; 'Staff look after me and I like them a lot.' Aspirations are high and the home has a good record of advocating strongly on behalf of young people and re-introducing them back into education. For example, strong representation has been made to the placing authority of a young person recently placed with a view to arranging a local school placement in time for the new term. The other young people all have full time placements and attend various community based schools. Records show attendance is high and they are all making good educational progress, based on their starting points. The home has well established links with community based services that provide for day to day health needs. Staff have the knowledge and the professional links to bring in more specialised services where necessary. For example, in dealing with	

asthma and diabetes. Staff training to increase knowledge and skills is implemented accordingly. Diet and exercise are accounted for within daily routines. This results in young people experiencing significant improvements to their overall health and lifestyle, with all their health needs being well met.

There is a good balance between group activities such as going to the park, or going out for picnics to individual activities that allow young people to gain new experiences and develop new interests. For example, one young person spoke about the enjoyment gained when at the local riding stables; another has joined local football and basketball teams. All the young people spoke about the recent holiday in Wales, which they all thoroughly enjoyed.

Young people benefit from living in an inclusive and non-judgemental environment, where personal achievements are celebrated. Individual planning documents along with reports prepared monthly for social workers, constantly look at and review issues linked to a young person's identity. This helps young people from different backgrounds and cultures to live together cohesively as well as widening their perspective and increasing their tolerance of others.

Each young person's individual needs are well documented in a range of planning documents and assessments of risk. Strategies to meet those needs are clear. Plans, strategies and risks are reviewed and updated regularly which keeps them current. All areas affecting the child are covered although education could be given greater prominence within the presentation of a young person's placement plan.

The strong relationships between staff and young people contribute to the high consultation levels taking place. Young people confirm they make choices and are asked to contribute to daily life in the home. For example, making choices around food, activities and how they want their bedroom to look. This gives them some responsibility and a sense of belonging, as well as confirming to them that their views and opinions are important and will be taken seriously.

Contact arrangements can be complex due to safety issues. However staff in partnership with social workers, work flexibly to ensure young people maintain appropriate contact with those important to them. Distance is not viewed as a barrier.

Young people thrive and enjoy living in a caring and nurturing environment. One young person described it as; 'It's a bit like living in a big family. I like it and I am lucky to be here.' The progress experienced by young people is recognised by others. For example a social worker says; 'He has come on incredibly well. He is learning to socialise and is taking on social norms. He is now able to make and sustain relationships with other people.'

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
The home retains good working and professional relationships with partner agencies, including those charged with keeping young people safe. Although there have been no safeguarding issues or incidents of young people going missing since the previous inspection, good relationships allow for a multi-disciplinary approach in dealing with any potential incidents. This approach enhances young people's safety. Behaviour management generally is well handled. Tantrums, upsets, disruptive and sometimes dangerous behaviour is managed sensitively, with responses linked to individual plans and assessments of risk. All behaviour management incidents, including physical intervention are reviewed and monitored, with records being kept up to date. Strategies are reviewed regularly. As relationships bond and young people settle and begin to trust adults, the number of incidents and their severity decrease. All young people are able to say they feel safe living in the home. For example one summed up the feeling of others by saying; 'I do feel safe living here.' Because they feel safe and at ease in their environment young people become more trusting of adults. They begin to experience a lifestyle that for others of a similar age is normal. Bullying was not a concern to them, although they confirm staff speak about bullying regularly and do not tolerate it. Boundaries and routines are in place and are recognised by young people as being there to help keep them safe. They understand them and are comfortable and reassured by them. For example, one young person questioned the inspector on arrival, keen to know just exactly how long they would be in the home. Once informed, the young person relaxed and contributed positively to the inspection process. Little change has occurred with the staff team since the previous inspection. Young people are provided with a high consistency of care from a well-established and experienced staff team. Recruitment and clearance procedures comply with regulation and current guidance. Longer serving staff are re-checked every three years, which ensures young people are only looked after by staff who have been suitably recruited and cleared.	

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
The manager, who is qualified, has been in post since May 2009. A high proportion of the staff team have worked alongside her since then. Collectively they have invested in creating the ethos, culture and working practices that have evolved over the years. This has created a team-centred approach that gives the home its stability and provides young people with a high quality consistency of care. Staff confirm they feel well supported by their senior colleagues with a programme of formal supervision and appraisal taking place consistently. Training opportunities are good with all staff up to date with the core staff training programme. All but the newest staff member, who is in their probationary period, are suitably qualified or currently undertaking relevant training. Gaps in training are quickly addressed. For example, earlier in the year all staff received training in managing diabetes to meet the changing needs of one young person. This response enables staff to learn new skills, refresh existing ones so that the ever changing needs of young people in their care remain fully addressed. The manager understands the strengths of the home and recognises areas for development. This is reflected in the recently revised and updated development plan. The manager recently introduced a number of new developments and initiatives such as introducing a scrapbook for each young person and improving the overall recording of their achievements and activities. A formal programme to develop the independence and skills of young people not yet ready for leaving care has also just been completed. The new developments and introduction of new initiatives, is a reflection of the homes desire to improve practice and ultimately the lives and experiences of young people. They do need time to become embedded into working practices before any formal evaluation of their effectiveness can be made. Regular, consistent monitoring of the home both externally and internally is good. The manager responds positively to points picked up through external monitoring. Her own internal monitoring is evaluative and thorough. The reports from both formats are reaching Ofsted in a timely manner and it is clear they are used positively when written development plans for the home are revised and updated. No requirements or recommendations were made following the previous inspection. Ofsted have not received any complaints about the home, or raised any issues of concern based on the information received about the home.	

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 looked after children 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 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 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 who 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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