

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC020594
Inspector	Jo Stephenson
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Keys Education Limited
Registered person address	Hurstwood Court, Laganwood House New Hall Hey Road ROSSENDALE Lancashire BB4 6HR
Responsible individual	Marc Murphy
Registered manager	Tanya Marie Chamberlain
Date of last inspection	24/10/2013

Inspection date	13/05/2014
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Previous inspection	satisfactory progress
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

This inspection	
Overall effectiveness	inadequate
Outcomes for children and young people	inadequate
Quality of care	inadequate
Keeping children and young people safe	inadequate
Leadership and management	inadequate

Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	inadequate
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The home provides specialist services for young people experiencing periods of severe crisis in their lives. Nevertheless, personalised care for young people is compromised because managers and staff do not work in effective partnership with placing authorities. For example, not all young people have statutory documentation in place. As a result, not all young people benefit from comprehensive care planning that reflects their individual needs or risk taking behaviours. Subsequently, the service does not make proper provision for the care and support of young people. This means that the welfare and safety of young people is not continually promoted. Staff consult with young people regarding the general quality of care provided by the service. Young people participate in regular young people's meetings and say that they feel safe in the home. However, young people's views on any sanctions they receive are not consistently captured in records in place for this purpose. This is detrimental to the care, safety and welfare of young people because their thoughts and feelings are not evaluated or acted upon. As a result, young people are not intrinsic to the development of good practice in the home.

The Registered Manager has established a broad range of internal monitoring systems to review and assess the quality of care in the home. Nonetheless, staff do not consistently apply these systems. For example, the home's admissions and discharges record does not include all necessary information. This shortfall means that the Registered Manager is unable to evaluate the composition of young people

accessing this service. This is potentially detrimental to the development of the service. However, this failure does not have a negative impact on the young people currently in placement.

Medication stocktaking systems in place to ensure the accurate audit of all medications held in the home are ineffectual. These systems do not clearly record if medication has been removed when young people are away from the home on activities. As a result, medication records do not reflect the amount of medication stored in the home. This places young people at risk of harm because should they receive too little or too much medication, these errors will not be immediately identified. This significantly compromises the safety and well-being of young people. Fire safety records in the home are not maintained to an appropriate standard. Checks to confirm that emergency lighting is fully operational, in the event of a fire, are not consistently completed. This shortfall places young people at risk of serious harm. This is because in the event of a fire, young people may not be able to safely evacuate the premises.

Since the last inspection, improvements have been made to files for permanent staff employed in the home. The Registered Manager ensures that all necessary information is retained on file. This means that the suitability of permanent staff to work with young people can be confirmed. Nevertheless, agency staff used in the home are not sufficiently verified as suitable, in accordance with the regulations. For example, the employment history of agency staff is not checked and any gaps in employment cannot be ascertained. As a result, the Registered Manager is unable to fully establish the suitability of these staff. This seriously compromises the safety of young people as they may potentially work with persons who wish to cause them harm.

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home provides care and accommodation for up to 10 young people with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The home undertakes assessments, for up to three months, of young people in crisis. The home is managed and operated by a private provider.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
24/10/2013	Interim	satisfactory progress
13/06/2013	Full	good
15/02/2013	Interim	satisfactory progress
10/09/2012	Interim	satisfactory progress

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

Statutory Requirements

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person/s meets the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Reg.	Requirement	Due date
11 (2001)	ensure that the children's home is conducted so as to promote and make proper provision for the safeguarding and welfare of children accommodated there; and make proper provisions for the care, education, supervision, support and, where appropriate, treatment, of the children accommodated there (Regulation 11(1)(a)(b))	04/07/2014
17B (2001)	ensure that within 24 hours of the use of any measure of control, restraint or discipline in a children's home, a written record is made in a volume kept for the purpose of which shall include	04/07/2014

	all information required by the regulations (Regulation 17B(3)(a-i))	
21 (2001)	shall make suitable arrangements for the recording, handling, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of any medicines received into the children's home (Regulation 21(1))	04/07/2014
26 (2001)	shall not employ a person to work at the children's home unless that person is fit to work at a children's home; a person is not fit to work at a children's home unless full and satisfactory information is available in relation to him in respect of each of the matters specified in Schedule 2 (Regulation 26(3)(d))	04/07/2014
28 (2001)	maintain in respect of each child who is accommodated in a children's home a record in permanent form which includes the information, documentation and records specified in Schedule 3 relating to that child (Regulation 28(1)(a))	04/07/2014
29 (2001)	maintain in the children's home the records specified in Schedule 4 and ensure that they are kept up to date (Regulation 29(1))	04/07/2014
32 (2001)	where the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 applies to the children's home the registered person must ensure that the requirements of that Order and any regulations made under it, except for article 23 (duties of employees) are complied with in respect of the home. (Regulation 32(1A)(b))	04/07/2014

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for children and young people inadequate

Young people say that they enjoy living in the home. One young person said, 'I've done really well. This place has made a difference; it has been good.' Young people participate in regular one-to-one sessions with staff. They are confident in discussing their backgrounds, past experience's and future plans. Young people are supported to reflect on their behaviour. They are encouraged to recognise the potentially negative impact some of their actions have on their development. Their individual achievements are continually celebrated. As a result, young people develop an improved sense of self-confidence and the emotional resilience necessary to move forward with their lives.

Young people participate in a detailed programme of practical activities and personal challenges as part of their education and continued learning. These encourage young people to learn new skills and develop alternative means of managing their frustrations. However, young people do not receive integrated care and support to meet their individual needs. This is because statutory care plans and placement plans are not in place for all young people. As a result, internal risk assessments and support plans do not give an accurate reflection of the needs of young people. Subsequently, positive outcomes for young people are significantly compromised because not all of their risk taking behaviours are sufficiently addressed. Therefore the welfare and safety of young people is not promoted. This is because proper provision is not made for their care and support.

Participation in education is embedded in the ethos of the home. In relation to their starting point, young people make progress in this area of their development. Young people enjoy a combination of classroom learning and practical activities designed to assess and evaluate their future learning needs. Nevertheless, young people's case files do not include all necessary educational information, such as personal education plans. This means that their previous achievements and known learning needs are not incorporated into their current education plans. Because of this shortfall, young people's positive outcomes in education are lessened and they are unable to achieve their full potential.

Young people are supported to attend their primary health care appointments. In addition, they access additional specialist mental health services, when required. This ensures that young people's emotional well-being is supported. However, there are contradictions between statutory plans and internal plans, regarding the identified health needs of some young people. This is because case files for young people do not include up-to-date health information. This means that young people may not be provided with the care and support they require to address all their health needs. As a result, the welfare and safety of young people is not promoted.

Regular contact, when appropriate, between young people and their families is continually encouraged. Young people receive practical and emotional support to maintain and further develop these relationships. For example, young people regularly visit their families and are encouraged to have phone contact. As a result,

young people are not isolated from their families.

Quality of care

inadequate

Young people have generally positive relationships with staff and each other. One young person said, 'the staff are ok, some are better than others and some are easier to talk to.' Young people follow a three stage programme during their placement in the home. Programmes are devised to challenge and address the negative and risk-taking behaviour that young people display, and assess their future placement needs. Staff formally evaluate the progress young people make at regular intervals during the programme. Young people participate in one-to-one sessions and are encouraged to reflect on the skills they have learnt and their personal achievements. Feedback from young people on their development is incorporated into internal placement plans. As a result, young people are involved in decisions about their care. This supports the progress young people make.

Staff ensure that internal placement plans are in place for young people. When staff are able to access all information pertaining to young people's needs, these plans are robust and effective in supporting their development. However, there are significant shortfalls in the statutory documentation available in young people's case files. For example, only three young people have up-to-date statutory placement plans in place that detail their individual needs and risks. The safety of young people is seriously compromised because staff are not fully aware of the risks young people present or their specific vulnerabilities. Young people with a history of sexual exploitation are not provided with the support that they need. This is because staff do not work in effective partnership with placing authorities. They do not ensure that information held on young people is up-to-date, accurate or complete. Although managers have taken some step to address this shortfall, actions to date have been insufficient. As a result, the safety and welfare of young people is not promoted because staff do not provide appropriate support for young people.

Staff do not effectively liaise with placing authorities to ensure that necessary statutory placement meetings take place within acceptable time scales. Young people who have been at the home for a number of weeks, have yet to have a post-placement meeting. This means that staff are unable to substantiate the risks that young people may present or confirm the aims and objectives of the placement. This is detrimental to young people's development, safety and well-being. One young person said, 'I don't really know what's going on, I've been dumped here. I just want to go home'.

The routine of the home is founded on a programme of practical and physical activities that are incorporated into education programmes. Young people are able to learn new skills and benefit from new experiences. This means that young people develop a confidence in their skills and this has a positive impact on their self-esteem. In addition, continual physical activity supports young people to maintain a

healthy life-style. Nevertheless, all of the individual health needs of young people are not sufficiently addressed. This is because staff do not ensure that they have accurate statutory documentation pertaining to young people. This means that young people are not provided with the care or support they need to promote their health, welfare or well-being.

The home is located in a very rural community. Staff support young people to access local villages and towns and make use of the facilities these locations offer, such as leisure and shopping centres. As a result, young people are not isolated from the community. The layout and facilities of the home are conducive with the purpose, aims and objectives of the service. Young people are encouraged to personalise their bedrooms and the communal areas of the home. This gives young people a sense of belonging. One young person said, 'my room feels like it's mine, even though I won't be here long.'

Keeping children and young people safe inadequate

Young people say that they feel safe in the home. There have been no incidents of bullying in the home although staff are alert to the signs of bullying and intimidation. Bullying is regularly discussed with young people and this means they are able to understand the impact bullying has on others. Staff receive regular training in safeguarding. Safeguarding policies in the home demonstrate clear reporting procedures. This means that allegations concerning suspicions of harm are effectively managed.

However, there are a number of regulatory shortfalls that mean that young people are at risk of harm. For example, agency staff used by the home are not sufficiently vetted to confirm their suitability. The Registered Manager does not verify or question the appropriateness of references provided for agency staff. In addition, full employment histories for agency staff are not viewed or assessed. This means that any gaps in the employment history of agency staff are not established or discussed. Furthermore, employee references for agency staff are not sought from the most recent employer. Subsequently, the Registered Manager is unable to determine if agency staff used by the home are of suitable fitness and integrity to safeguard young people. As a result, young people may potentially have contact with persons who wish to cause them harm. This risk is increased because young people regularly work in isolation with staff, when away from the home.

There has been an increase in missing from home episodes since the last inspection. Protocols are in place with local police that detail actions to be taken by staff and the police in these circumstances. Staff complete one-to-one sessions with young people to identify potential triggers to these events. Nevertheless, staff do not ensure that up-to-date statutory placement plans are in place that includes all risk taking behaviours of young people. For example, for some young people, referral documents state that they are at risk of significant harm should they be missing from the home. These risks include gang affiliation and sexual exploitation. Staff are unaware if these risks are historical or current because statutory plans retained in case files are out of date. Managers and staff have not appropriately challenged the

placing authorities regarding this shortfall. As a result, these risks are not accounted for in missing from home action plans. This means that young people are at risk of serious harm and that their welfare and safety is not promoted.

Records relating to the use of restraint in the home are detailed and include the views and comments of young people. Physical restraint is only used as a last resort and when young people pose an immediate risk of harm to themselves or others. However, when sanctions are imposed on young people because of unacceptable behaviours, their views and comments are not consistently sought. This is detrimental to the safety and welfare of young people because the appropriateness of sanctions cannot be assessed.

Medication audit records in the home are ineffectual. They fail to accurately account for prescription medications removed from the home when young people are away from the home on activities. This means that any medication errors will not be immediately noted or actioned and this places young people at risk of harm.

Staff ensure that regular environmental health and safety checks are completed in the home. Young people participate in fire drills to ensure they are aware of how to evacuate the home in these circumstances. However, there has been one occasion when the emergency lighting has not been checked. This potentially places young people at risk of harm because defective emergency lighting may hinder their safe evacuation from the home. Ofsted have informed the fire and rescue service of this concern.

Leadership and management

inadequate

The home is run by an experienced and qualified manager who is registered with Ofsted. Since the last inspection, the requirements previously made have been adequately addressed. This demonstrates the home's commitment to improving positive outcomes for young people and providing personalised care. However, this principle is significantly compromised. The Registered Manager does not ensure that up-to-date statutory documentation is in place for all young people. This means that young people's needs are not fully assessed or met. The Registered Manager has taken some action to improve partnership working between the home and the placing authorities. However, to date, this has been ineffectual in addressing this shortfall. As a result, young people are unable to achieve their full potential because they do not receive appropriate care and support to meet all their needs.

Staff benefit from receiving regular formal supervision that considers their developmental and training needs. Trainings programme are tailored to support the aims and objectives the home and reflect the needs of young people. As a result, staff are equipped with the diverse skills, such as outdoor activity qualifications, they require to support young people. Young people, their families and placing authorities confirm they understand the aims and objectives of the home. The Statement of Purpose is regularly reviewed and supported by a young person's guide to the home. Staff provide placing authorities with weekly reports detailing the progress young people are making. These reports are shared with young people during one-to-one sessions. This means that young people are able to reflect on the progress that they

make. This has a positive impact on their self-esteem and self-confidence. Complaints recorded since the last inspection have been effectively address and resolved. Robust protocols are in place to ensure that all complaints are recorded in detail, referred to the appropriate authorities and fully investigated. Young people receive both written and verbal feedback. They confirm that they are confident that any issue they raise will be resolved by the Registered Manager. One young person said, 'we can talk to the manager if we have any complaints, they get sorted out.' As a result, the views, feelings and opinions of young people are taken serious and acted upon. This has a positive impact on young people's well-being. The Registered Manager has a varied range of systems in place to monitor the quality of care provided for young people. However, these measures have failed to sufficiently identify the practice shortfalls in the home. For example, the admissions and discharges record has not been maintained in line with regulations. Although this has no demonstrable impact on young people currently in placement, a requirement has been made to address this shortfall. In addition, monitoring systems do not validate the suitability of agency staff to work in isolation with young people. This places young people at significant risk of harm. Furthermore, the Registered Manager has not adequately challenged placing authorities regarding shortfalls in statutory documentation. This failure means that young people do not receive the care and support that they require to address all of their needs. This significantly hinders the progress young people make and is detrimental to their safety and welfare.

What inspection judgements mean

Judgement	Description
Outstanding	A service of exceptional quality that significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Good	A service of high quality that exceeds minimum requirements.
Adequate	A service that only meets minimum requirements.
Inadequate	A service that does not meet minimum requirements.

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The 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 relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the framework of inspection for children's homes.