

SC020594

Registered provider: Keys Education Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is a privately owned children's home that is registered to provide care for up to eight children. It offers a 12-week programme to children who are in crisis. The programme includes children engaging in activities, staying in temporary accommodation and camping. Ofsted does not inspect all of the accommodation used. However, the company is required to carry out its own risk assessments for each accommodation.

The manager registered with Ofsted in December 2021, is suitably experienced, and holds a level 5 qualification in leadership and management.

Inspection dates: 29 and 30 August 2023

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

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **requires improvement to be good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 27 September 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
27/09/2022	Full	Good
28/03/2022	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
18/08/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good
10/03/2020	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

During this inspection, five children were living at the home. Children do not stay at the main house for all of their stay. Children stay in a variety of holiday lets and other accommodation with staff so that they can participate in a wide variety of activities. All of the accommodation is assessed for suitability by the manager.

Staff are nurturing and children say that they enjoy living in the home and feel safe. Staff build trusting and respectful relationships with children. These positive relationships mean that many children make progress and talk fondly about their time at the home. Some children stay in touch with the home after they have left, wanting to share their news and achievements.

Most of the children living in the home have been out of formal education for some time. While living in the home, children learn new skills in a way that is suited to their abilities. Some children receive one-to-one tuition, while other children complete bespoke accredited qualifications, which cover a range of topics. The manager is reviewing children's educational outcomes and exploring barriers to learning so that children are helped to understand the importance of education.

Staff are passionate about seeing children have fun and make positive memories. Children enjoy a range of adrenaline-boosting activities, such as coasteering, climbing and paddleboarding. In addition, staff take children to the cinema and shopping, and encourage children to cook with staff and develop their independence skills.

Staff support children to spend time with their families and friends. This is planned in a way that considers the risks associated with those visits, and the child's and families' views. As a result, children maintain those relationships that are important to them.

When children move in to the home, the manager assesses children's risks and how these can be reduced. However, it is not always clear if the manager considers the children's known likes and cultural preferences. In addition, the manager has failed to ensure that she has all the required information about children prior to them moving in to the home. As placements are time-limited, this is a missed opportunity to fully develop a targeted programme from day one.

The manager has recently implemented a process to review children's time spent at the home. This has allowed the manager to reflect on children's outcomes and consider the impact that the care has had on the children's future. The manager hopes that these reviews will generate learning outcomes for staff which will result in many more success stories for children.

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

Children's risk assessments have improved since the previous inspection. Their written plans are informative and give staff an outline of each child's presenting needs and how risks and behaviours should be managed. When appropriate, the manager discusses the risk assessments with children so that they can understand how staff will respond to certain behaviours.

There have been times when staff have used physical interventions. Following these interventions, appropriate professionals are informed, and children and staff are provided with the opportunity to reflect. The managers use these discussions when reviewing the use of the measure to determine its effectiveness.

On occasions, children go missing from the home or when they are visiting their families. Staff are proactive in reporting them as missing, searching for them, and working in partnership with other agencies, such as the police, to try to locate them. During a recent incident of a child going missing, staff travelled to the known areas that the child visits daily and continued searching for them. The police were complimentary about the staff's commitment and efforts to try to find the child.

Despite staff having positive relationships with children, they do not consistently have conversations with children that explore known and emerging concerns. For example, when a child is subject to bail conditions, there is no evidence in place to suggest that staff have explored the child's feelings about this. In addition, when children are known to use e-cigarettes, it is not always clear what work staff have completed to help children to reduce their use of these. This is a missed opportunity to ensure that children learn strategies to keep themselves safe and to reiterate important messages to help children to understand risk and how to reduce it.

Managers are proactive in responding to concerns raised by children or others about staff behaviour or practice. Incidents are reported and investigated appropriately. Managers have taken action to address poor practice, including the dismissal of staff where needed.

Children's health needs are met. Children are registered at local services and supported to attend routine medical appointments. When there have been medication errors, the manager has been swift in identifying these concerns and the learning outcomes for staff to prevent reoccurrence.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The registered manager is motivated, passionate, and knows the children well. She has acknowledged the weaknesses found during the inspection and feels that the home is on a journey of improvement.

The staff group are consistent and stable. Staff say that they feel supported by the manager and that she is approachable.

Since the previous inspection, staff have received further training. This includes mandatory training and training that is specific to children's presenting needs. To complement the training, the manager liaises with a therapist to gain further advice in understanding children's behaviours and how best to respond.

The manager has not ensured that all staff working in the home have been provided with practice-related supervision. For example, the manager has not ensured that agency staff have received one-to-one sessions, despite working with the children on a regular basis. This is a missed opportunity for those staff to reflect on their practice.

The manager has not ensured that staff have access to a suitable workforce development plan. There is no clear plan about the staff structure, supervision arrangements, and timescales for staff inductions. As a result, expectations for staff are not clear.

The manager does not have effective monitoring systems in place. For example, the manager has failed to ensure that regular checks are completed on the accommodation used by children and staff. On one occasion, a child raised a concern about the heating and hot water not working. Checks may have identified this sooner. In addition, the manager has not made sure that there are regular unannounced visits to all accommodations. This omission means that the quality of accommodation and care given by staff may fall below expected standards.

The manager has not ensured that children's case files contain up-to-date and accurate information. In some cases, there is evidence of the manager requesting this information. However, the information is still not available. As a result, staff do not always have the information that they need to coordinate care. This requirement was raised at the last inspection and is repeated.

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to meet the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards'. The registered person(s) must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff— help each child to understand and manage the impact of any experience of abuse or neglect; help each child to develop resilience and skills that prepare the child to return home, to live in a new placement or to live independently as an adult. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(v)(vi)) This specifically relates to staff having conversations with children to explore and learn from past experiences, risks taken when missing from the home, children's feelings about their care, bail conditions, and other restrictions placed on them by the court.	12 October 2023
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—	12 October 2023

ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child; understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home. The registered person should also use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a) (2)(d)(f)(h)) This specifically relates to the registered manager ensuring that monitoring systems are effective in identifying and responding to shortfalls, assessing and reviewing the suitability of accommodation where children stay, and monitoring the care that they receive.	
The registered person must ensure that all employees— receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(b)) This specifically relates to the registered manager ensuring that all staff working in the home receive practice-related supervision.	12 October 2023
The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which— include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child; and are kept up to date. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b)) This specifically relates to the registered manager ensuring that children's case files hold an up-to-date education, health and care plan. This requirement was raised at the last inspection and is restated.	12 October 2023

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the workforce plan includes information about staff training, timescales for induction and detail of how poor performance is managed or improved. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.8)
- The registered person should ensure that there are procedures in place for welcoming and introducing each child to the home, and that they are sensitive to the needs of the child at the time of arrival. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards' page 57, paragraph 11.7)

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people, 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: SC020594

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Keys Education Ltd

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

Responsible individual: Agata Dokszeicz

Registered manager: Samantha Orr

Inspectors

Debbie Bond, Social Care Inspector
Sophie Hills, Social Care Inspector

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