

SC020608

Registered provider: Keys Nhcc Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is privately owned. The home provides care for up to three children with emotional behavioural difficulties (social and emotional difficulties).

The registered manager is experienced and appropriately qualified.

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

Inspection dates: 21 to 22 April 2021

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

How well children and young people are helped and protected **requires improvement to be good**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

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

Date of last inspection: 8 October 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: not applicable

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
08/10/2019	Full	Good
12/11/2018	Full	Good
22/02/2018	Interim	Improved effectiveness
14/08/2017	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

One child currently lives in the home. They have lived there for almost five years. The child says that they like living in the home and describe it as being 'peaceful'.

The child has positive relationships with staff. They can identify staff they feel able to talk to and confide in. Staff promote the child's interests by arranging activities to do together. For example, the child enjoys cooking so staff arrange 'come dine with me' events. As a result, the child feels wanted and a sense of belonging, while also developing their independence skills.

Staff help the child to develop self-awareness and positive emotional well-being. They help them to understand and manage their feelings safely. Consequently, incidents of aggressive behaviour in the home have reduced, and the child no longer engages in criminal activity. Moreover, they can recognise and identify the progress they are making. The child commented, 'I don't get as angry anymore... If I lived anywhere else, I would still be in trouble with the police.'

Staff use a variety of ways to gather children's wishes and feelings, for example by encouraging them to contribute to their placement plans. These documents begin with an overview of the child and their progress. Staff record this in the child's own words, which brings alive their experience. This means that plans illustrate the voice of the child well and their views are valued and respected.

Managers escalate concerns about children's mental health to the appropriate professionals. They advocate on behalf of children to ensure that they receive specialist intervention. As a result, children receive the help and support they need when experiencing crisis.

Since the last inspection, the appearance of the home has improved. However, the environment could be more homely in respect of soft furnishings.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

Staff do not encourage the child to maintain a routine. Neither do they implement consistent boundaries. The child often plays on their games console late at night and sleeps during the day. As a result, their attendance at college is poor. This has led to a delay in them being able to complete their course and gain a qualification. This could limit their choice when aspiring to achieve their future goals.

The child enjoys spending a lot of time in their bedroom. However, staff do not always check what they are doing. The inspector found wires trailing across the bedroom floor. There was also a strong odour and stains on the carpet. Staff took action during the inspection to rectify these issues.

Managers and staff do not ensure that the child is safe when they are using the internet. There are no measures in place to monitor the child's online use. Staff complete online safety work through discussion, which is not effective. They have not put in place appropriate strategies to keep the child safe. As a result, the child has been a victim and perpetrator of online exploitation.

Staff provide the child with appropriate targets to encourage them to develop their independence skills. However, when they meet their targets, staff reward them by giving them money to buy games to play online. As a result, they are not provided with positive reinforcement that keeps them safe. This further increases the risk of online exploitation.

Risk assessments in general are thorough. They identify risk and the strategies for staff to use to keep children safe. However, the strategies are not effective in respect of safeguarding children online.

When children go missing from the home, staff follow a clear protocol. They follow children and persuade them to return home. If they lose sight of them, they continue to look for them by searching areas where they think they may go. When children return home, staff welcome them back. This good practice promotes children's safety. However, during one incident, there was a delay in staff notifying a child's parents.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is very experienced. The staff team is stable, and the provider does not use agency staff. This helps to maintain a consistent level of care for the child. As a result, they feel cared for and understood.

The registered manager has good oversight of the day-to-day interaction between staff and the child. This includes oversight of incidents that occur in the home. As such, debriefs are undertaken with children and staff as soon as possible. This helps children feel listened to and provides them with reassurance. It also enables staff to reflect on their practice at the earliest opportunity.

The manager liaises with a variety of external professionals. Professionals say that communication with the manager is excellent. They also say that the staff team shows commitment to preparing the child for independent living.

Managers and staff embed the home's therapeutic model throughout their practice. It is a useful tool, which staff use to identify triggers and behaviours of concern. Case records reflect the child's needs. The manager has regular meetings with the in-house therapist to review the child's progress. However, the therapist has been unable to visit the child in the home due to the restrictions of COVID-19. Plans are now in place for these consultations to take place in the home.

The registered manager has good monitoring systems in place. They undertake regular supervision with staff, during which there is opportunity for learning and

reflection. This includes exploring the emotional impact on staff of any incidents that occur in the home. Staff say that they enjoy working in the home and feel well supported.

The home's statement of purpose outlines an ethos and approach. However, this is not always in line with the needs of the children who live in the home. For example, one child had autism spectrum disorder and displayed sexualised behaviour. Their needs were not within the provider's remit, and staff did not have the training, skills or experience to understand this child's needs. As a result, staff were unable to respond appropriately to the child's behaviours.

Managers respond to external complaints seriously. They ensure that their investigations are thorough. They also communicate any learning and reflection for practice with the staff team.

Requirements made at the last inspection in October 2019 were found to be met.

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 protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child; help each child to understand how to keep safe; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(b)) This specifically relates to the monitoring and supervision of children when accessing the internet, and to improving the quality of work undertaken with children when teaching them to be safe online.	2 June 2021
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; and promotes their welfare.	2 June 2021

In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)) This specifically relates to staff receiving training pertinent to the needs of the children they care for.	
The registered person must compile in relation to the children's home a statement ("the statement of purpose") which covers the matters listed in Schedule 1. The registered person must— keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it. Subject to paragraph (6), the registered person must ensure that the home is at all times conducted in a manner which is consistent with its statement of purpose. (Regulation 16 (1) (3)(a) (5)) This specifically relates to the provider reviewing the home's statement of purpose to ensure that it outlines accurately the needs of children the home is set up and equipped to care for, and the support systems in place to meet the needs of children who live in the home.	2 June 2021

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that improvements are made to provide children with a more homely environment. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

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: SC020608

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Keys Nhcc Ltd

Registered provider address: 2nd Floor, Maybrook House, Queensway,
Halesowen, Worcestershire B63 4AH

Responsible individual: Christine Bird

Registered manager: Karla Dovey

Inspector

Sarah Berry, Social Care Inspector

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