

SC024808

Registered provider: Keys Education Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a private company. It is registered for up to four children aged seven to 18 years who have experienced adverse childhood experiences that have led to associated trauma and presenting complex behaviours.

The registered manager was registered with Ofsted in February 2021. He is appropriately experienced and 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: 15 to 16 September 2021

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 29 October 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
29/10/2019	Full	Good
27/02/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
22/05/2018	Full	Good
15/03/2018	Interim	Improved effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children receive child-focused care from staff who have built trusting relationships with them. Staff are positive about the children and provide a caring and nurturing environment in which children thrive.

Staff have developed individualised plans for children. These plans provide good detail as to how staff care for children in a consistent manner. As a result, one child is more confident, better able to manage her emotions and can now talk to staff about how she feels. She has also developed friendships outside of the home, engaged in out-of-school activities and transitioned well from primary to secondary school. Another child, who previously went missing, has not gone missing from the home for many weeks, has engaged well with staff and started a new school.

The inspector observed positive interactions between staff and children; for example, it was one child's first day at a new school and the child was very anxious. Staff listened to the child, empathised and used a nurturing approach. This approach was successful and the child went to school, spending a few hours there getting to know everyone.

A strength of this home is how staff use key-work sessions with children. The records of these sessions clearly show how staff are working with children on important issues and gain their views and thoughts about things that are important to them.

Staff help and encourage children to keep in touch with their families and friends where appropriate, using technology, welcoming visits to the home and taking children to visit their families and friends. Consequently, children's relationships with people who are important to them are maintained.

Children moving to the home say that they have been welcomed by everyone and had all the information they needed before moving in. Children also said that staff encourage them to personalise their rooms and to take part in activities in the home and the wider community.

Staff have kept children busy, even during the COVID-19 pandemic, when restrictions meant that children could not do their usual activities. They went out on walks, visiting places of interest and as restrictions have lifted children participated in a local 5k charity run in aid of cancer research. They have also begun to look at social opportunities away from the home. Consequently, children feel part of the community in which they live.

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

Staff are helping children understand and manage risks through in-depth key-work sessions. For one child, this has meant that she was able to openly talk to staff when she was worried about things which may put her at risk.

Staff rarely need to use physical intervention with children to manage behaviours. Positive relationships and behaviour management plans mean that staff provide consistent approaches in de-escalation. On the rare occasions that physical intervention has been used, incidents are recorded appropriately. However, the manager did not use his professional curiosity when reviewing one intervention to explore whether it was appropriate on that occasion. This is a missed opportunity to develop staff's practice.

Children rarely go missing and when they do, staff take appropriate action to try and locate them. When there have been concerns arising from the episodes of going missing, managers have taken prompt action in discussing with the placing authority how they could better manage the risks.

Concerns raised by children are promptly reported and investigated. However, managers could ask more direct questions as part of their investigation and record in greater detail conversations held with staff and children. This would help other professionals to satisfy themselves that the action taken was appropriate.

Staff have developed risk assessments and behaviour plans for children. However, for one child, some risk assessments had not been updated and there were repeated references to the same risk in the child's risk assessment plan, which could cause confusion. For one child, not all staff had signed the child's risk assessment to show that they had read and understood it. This could result in staff not following the latest guidance on managing risks to that child.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is managed by an experienced, child-focused practitioner. He is knowledgeable about the children in his care and has brought stability and continuity to the home. Staff told the inspector that they like working at the home and feel supported. Staff who have worked at the home for several years said that they have seen a real difference in the support they receive and the care provided to children.

Staff appreciate the support they get from managers. Staff receive regular supervision and annual appraisals. The manager has been creative in helping staff understand their responsibility in regard to professional boundaries by using workbooks and questions to test their knowledge and understanding. This support means that staff can reflect regularly on their practice.

Managers have provided a comprehensive induction for new staff and ongoing training and development for all staff. However, staff have not received training in

attachment theory and trauma in children. Consequently, staff do not have all the skills they need to care for the children.

A complaint raised by a neighbour after they were disturbed by late night noise from the children was appropriately managed. Children were helped to reflect on their actions, they wrote a letter and took some flowers to the neighbour as an apology.

Managers have completed robust impact risk assessments prior to children moving into the home. These assessments are comprehensive and are based on the information received by the manager. This ensures that only children whose needs the staff can meet come to live in the home. The manager has reflected following a placement breakdown to improve these processes to ensure that future placements are appropriate.

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; and understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(v)) In particular, that risk assessments are updated, that repeated references are not made to the same risk in the child's risk assessment plan and staff sign to show that they have read and understood the risk assessments.	29 October 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. 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)) In particular, that staff receive training in attachment theory and trauma.	29 October 2021

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that when records of restraint are reviewed, the registered manager responds promptly where any issues or trends of concern emerge. The review should provide the opportunity for amending practice to ensure that it meets the needs of each child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 49, paragraph 9.59)
- The registered person should ensure that when there is an allegation, the home's record of the event must include a description of the action taken and the outcome of any resulting investigation. In particular, all discussions should be fully recorded, and the investigator should ask direct questions. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 63, paragraph 14.14)

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: SC024808

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Keys Education Ltd

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

Responsible individual: Dale Berry

Registered manager: Ronan Franklin

Inspector

Debbie Bond, Social Care Inspector

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