

SC026991

Registered provider: Keys Childcare Ltd

Interim inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is run and managed by an established private provider. It is registered to provide care and support for up to four young people who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Inspection date: 6 February 2018

Judgement at last inspection: Good

Date of last inspection: 20 April 2017

Enforcement action since last inspection:

None

This inspection

The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection

This home was judged good at the last full inspection.
At the interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has sustained effectiveness.

There have been no admissions or discharges since the last inspection. The same young people have remained living in the placement and are settled in their placements. This is a credit to the staff's perseverance and commitment to not giving up on young people who display challenging behaviour. Young people are making good progress in all aspects of their development due to the help and care they receive from the staff. One social worker commented, '[Name of young person] is making academic, social and emotional progress on an ongoing basis despite the significant hurdles and challenges he faces in relation to his mental health and background of trauma.' Young people like living in the home and are positive about how staff support them. One young person commented that the home has 'Fantastic staff. They keep me safe.'

Staff give education a high priority. All young people in the home attend school or a further educational provision. Staff support the young people's educational progress by using incentives and positive re-enforcement to encourage the young people to attend school. As a result, most young people in the home have good attendance. For some young people, staff support them during school time and also provide support to educational staff if challenging behaviour occurs during school time. This ensures that young people have the opportunity to meet their educational potential.

Staff know young people well. They spend time with young people getting to know each young person's unique interests. As a result, young people take part in a wide range of activities from undertaking a first aid course to attending Scouts. This gives young people the opportunity to develop new skills and increase their confidence and self-esteem.

Staff promote young people's health and well-being. They ensure that young people attend medical appointments and work effectively with other agencies such as the child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) to ensure that young people access support for their emotional well-being. Staff make referrals to external agencies such as the drug and alcohol services when necessary. They spend time with young people in key-worker sessions educating them on the dangers that are associated with smoking or misusing substances. Staff ensure that young people have a healthy diet and exercise. As a result, some young people have lost significant amounts of weight in a planned way, which will benefit their health and well-being.

Staff recognise young people's individual needs and ensure that young people receive care and support which promotes their identity and a positive self-view, for example by supporting a young person to attend a lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender group. This promotes young people's self-esteem and sense of personal identity. Young people live in a warm and homely environment, which is decorated in communal areas to a high standard. However, young people cause damage to their bedrooms by damaging the walls and furniture. This damage is not always repaired in a timely manner. This means that not all young people's bedrooms provide a warm and welcoming space for young people to spend time in. There are plans in place to address this but repairs are not always carried out in a timely way.

Staff are proactive at promoting young people's contact with families in line with young people's care plans. Staff transport young people to contact, sometimes at some distance, to ensure that young people spend time with family members. Staff remain in the vicinity during the contact if this is required. Staff also promote indirect contact when this is part of a young person's plan and keep detailed records of any contact that has taken place. This means that young people can maintain relationships with those who are important to them in a safe way.

Young people's views are central to the running of the home. Staff obtain young people's views through key-work sessions and young people's meetings. The manager has implemented a new young person's development plan, 'Operation Sparkle', that tracks how staff have acted on young people's requests in the home. This includes examples of

how staff have followed through a range of requests from obtaining a barbecue to the décor of the home. This ensures that young people feel listened to and are empowered to make decisions about their home and care.

There was an unsettled period in the home last year. Some young people were uncertain as to whether they would remain living at the home. This resulted in an increase in challenging behaviour and significant events. The manager has taken effective action following these incidents to reduce the risk of further occurrence and the home has been more settled over recent months.

Staff understand each young person's individual risks and vulnerabilities. Each young person has an individual risk assessment in place but there were some shortfalls identified in these during the inspection. For example, there are no written actions for staff to follow about how they should monitor and manage young people who return to the home under the influence of alcohol. Furthermore, there is no guidance for staff to follow to manage certain behaviours such as young people climbing on the roof of the home. This leaves staff unclear about how they should manage such situations, which can leave young people at risk of harm.

Staff take a robust approach to managing areas of risk such as self-harm. When this is identified as a risk, staff undertake room searches and increase levels of supervision including waking nights. They work effectively with other agencies such as CAMHS to ensure that young people receive the support they need. A social worker reported, '[Name of young person] has had a recent mental health crisis which has resulted in staff and the team around him feeling less confident about his ability to keep himself safe. However, staff have followed a clear risk management plan in conjunction with CAMHS and children's services. This ensures that young people are safe and that there is a reduction in self-harming behaviour. A family member commented, 'They put him on two to one staffing so he did not harm himself anymore. Over the last six-seven months, he is better than what he was. His self-harming has gone down.'

Staff are proactive when young people go missing. They follow and search for young people to ensure that they are located as quickly as possible and follow missing-from-home protocols by reporting young people to the police. Staff spend time with young people in key-work sessions to educate young people on how to keep themselves safe and the dangers of going missing. Consequently, there has been a reduction in episodes of young people going missing since the last inspection. The manager ensures that independent return home interviews take place but does not ensure that she takes into account information provided by such interviews when assessing risks and putting arrangements in place to protect each child.

Staff work effectively with professionals such as the police to ensure that young people are kept safe. One police officer commented, 'Staff work proactively and positively with professionals such as the police to ensure young people are kept safe and to secure good outcomes for young people. Professionals and family members are positive about how staff work with them to ensure that young people are kept safe.' One family member commented, 'Staff have been brilliant, they keep [name] safe. He was running

away quite a lot and they put everything in place to keep him safe.'

There is a low level of restraint used in the home, reflecting staff's skill at de-escalating situations of challenging behaviour. When restraint is carried out, it is as a last resort and in line with the legislative framework. Young people and staff are debriefed afterwards and the manager provides a clear evaluation of staff practice. This ensures that young people are kept safe from harm.

The manager is experienced and committed to the continuous improvement of the home. She makes good use of internal and external monitoring systems to monitor young people's progress and the care that staff provide. The manager has made good progress in ensuring that most of the requirements and recommendations from the last inspection are met. Shortfalls were identified during this inspection in ensuring that they challenge effectively when placing authorities do not provide pathway plans for young people and in recording. Some case records lack detail and are illegible. The manager accepted this and has plans in place to address this by ensuring that staff undertake training in recording

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
20/04/2017	Full	Good
09/11/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
18/05/2016	Full	Requires improvement
10/09/2015	Full	Requires improvement

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, the 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
If the registered person considers, or staff consider, a placing authority's performance or response to be inadequate in relation to their role, they must challenge the placing authority or the relevant person to ensure that the child's needs are met in accordance with the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 5(c)) This is with particular reference to challenging and escalating concerns where current relevant plans are not provided in a timely manner.	20/03/2018
In order to meet the quality and purpose of care standard, the registered provider must ensure that staff ensure the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 6(2)(c))	20/03/2018
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. (Regulation 12(1)(2)(a)(i))	20/03/2018

Recommendations

- Staff should be familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. Records should include sufficient detail to enable the reader to identify what staff do to monitor and support young people's well-being. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)
- When a child returns to the home after being missing from care or away from the home without permission, the responsible local authority must provide an opportunity for the child to have an independent return interview. Homes should take account of information provided by such interviews when assessing risks and putting arrangements in place to protect each child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.30)

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and 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 whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

This inspection focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

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: SC026991

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Keys Childcare Ltd

Registered provider address: Hurstwood Court, New Hall Hey Road, Rossendale BB4 6HR

Responsible individual: Sylvia Eboigbe

Registered manager: Wendy Birtwistle

Inspector(s)

Sarah Billett, social care inspector
Jo Hornby, social care inspector

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