

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	10/09/2015
Unique reference number	SC026991
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Keys Childcare Ltd
Registered person address	Broadwood Education Services LTD, Keys Attachment Centre, Hurstwood Court, New Hall Hey Road, ROSSENDALE, Lancashire, BB4 6HR

Responsible individual	Julie Hamilton
Registered manager	Position vacant
Inspector	Denise Jolly

Inspection date	10/09/2015
Previous inspection judgement	Inadequate
Enforcement action since last inspection	One Compliance notice was issued. A full inspection was conducted on 10 September 2015; Ofsted found the registered provider had taken action to meet the regulatory shortfalls.
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Requires improvement
The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.	
how well children and young people are helped and protected	Requires improvement
the impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Inadequate

SC026991

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is requires improvement because:

- The manager in post during the last inspection has withdrawn their application to register with Ofsted. Although the organisation has begun to identify a replacement, there is no permanent manager appointed. This means there is inconsistent oversight of the home that limits its capacity to improve.
- The detailed development plan does not break down all actions to improve into specific, measureable steps. This means, for example, that the effectiveness of the programme for raising awareness about bullying has not been evaluated and some drift has occurred in its delivery.
- At the time of this inspection no new young people have moved into the home. This means the management and staff have been unable to robustly test the improvements that have been put into place.
- Managers are committed to driving forward improvements but recognise there is still much to be achieved, including improving the induction of staff and embedding staff's understanding of autism and learning disability to better support young people's needs.
- A consistent staff team has been appointed that is enthusiastic about supporting young people. A majority of staff are unqualified, and untrained in the specific approaches used by the home. This limits their capacity to deliver high quality care practice.

The children's home strengths

- Two placing authorities confirm the home is having a positive impact on the lives of young people.
- Managers have helped staff to reflect on their learning and practice and have supported a more open culture within the home.
- Relationships between staff and young people have improved through sharing activities that are tailored to individual tastes and preferences and recognise young people's unique needs.
- Young people engage in their education placements, supported by staff who recognise their efforts and achievements.

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

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 (England) Regulations 2015 and the *Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards*. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
14: The care planning standard. In order to meet the care planning standard the provider must ensure- (2)(a) that children are admitted to the home only if their needs are within the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home's statement of purpose.	30/10/2015
Ensure the provider appoints a person to manage the children's home if there is no registered manager in respect of the home; and they are not, or do not intend to be, in day-to-day charge of the home. (Regulation 27 (1)(a)(b)(iii))	30/10/2015
Ensure the provider employs individuals to work at the children's home who have the appropriate experience, qualifications and skills for their work. (Regulation 32 (3)(b))	30/10/2015

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the service should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- Ensure that any actions to address improvements in the delivery of care provided in the home are clearly set out, so as to measure their ongoing effectiveness and the timeframes by which they are expected to be achieved. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 65 paragraph 15.4)

Full report

Information about this children's home

The service is run and managed by an established private provider. The home is registered to provide care and support for up to four young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
15/07/2015	Full	Inadequate
04/03/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness
23/07/2014	Full	Adequate
31/01/2014	Interim	Satisfactory progress

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	requires improvement
Three young people have remained living in the home since the last inspection and all have made progress in their safety and emotional well-being. Staff have worked to address key issues for each young person that affected their stability and happiness. As a result, young people have enjoyed a summer holiday period that provided them with opportunities to have individual holidays with staff, try out new activities, and enjoy independent time away with an army cadet group. This has improved relationships, particularly with key workers. In turn, this has enabled staff to build increased levels of trust with young people. One young person said that he was now more settled in the home and was not in such a rush to leave. Another said that he really liked being in the home because staff did lots of things with him, and he saw his family. All young people have continued with their education placements following the summer break. For one, this has meant a change to a college course. Unfortunately, the course was closing, and he was concerned that he did not know what his next placement would be after the half-term break. Staff had begun to explore other options with him, and had spoken to the head of his last school, to seek support. During the inspection, staff also informed the Virtual Head of his predicament to ensure appropriate oversight and continuity of his education. Another young person's attendance at school had improved because of him being missing less often. Staff had also identified and persisted with strategies that addressed any school refusal on his part, and this improved his safety because he remained with staff when he was not at school. Young people are participating more often in one-to-one sessions with key workers and with other staff, and have engaged more productively with young people's meetings. The result has been individual improvements to each bedroom, identification of equipment and activities that interest them, and more participation in trips out with staff. As staffing has stabilised, the anxiety demonstrated by one young person through inappropriate levels of control over his environment has diminished. His sense of humour and some flexibility was beginning to emerge. This enabled him to improve his interaction in the home, negotiate his wishes and talk about his concerns more openly, so that he could get the help he needed. Young people are learning to think about the impact of their behaviour upon themselves and upon others. They are more receptive to the efforts of staff to help them to identify positive measures, such as going for a walk, or removing themselves from a room, if they are feeling stressed. While not always successful,	

there have been fewer occasions when their behaviour has deteriorated to being outside of staff management capability. This has resulted in a settled and more stable home environment.

Young people's individual needs are being identified and met more proactively. For example, staff recognised the importance of predictability and structure for a young person with autism. They created a timetable for him that sets out his activity, and the choices he can make for his free time after school. This has given him increased confidence to make independent choices, and he said, 'The staff are good, they are fun. I see my mum more now, and can even go home for a bit, that's because I'm better at being good.'

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement
Since the last inspection, staff have reviewed young people's risk assessments, and have identified strategies with young people that have improved their safety and welfare. One staff member said, 'we discuss the needs of young people more, and challenge each other to provide consistent messages that help young people to be safer.' Staff have a clearer understanding of young people's needs, and are being more persistent and creative in finding ways to help them to engage in the support available to them. They are working with schools, with missing from care professionals, with social workers, therapists and with the police, to help them to stay safe. Risk management plans are updated to include immediate changes in approach, such as progress being achieved with one young person's road crossing skills following an incident when he demonstrated poor roadside safety. The member of staff said, 'I worry less about whose job it is, to update risk assessments. Now, if I have completed a piece of work with a young person, I write up the changes to his care plan. That way we can be consistent when we manage risk.' There has been a reduction in episodes of being missing for one young person. Managers have evaluated information about these episodes, and have consulted with him, to find ways to help him to recognise the risks of unsuitable friendships. He has forged new friendships, and staff have encouraged this by organising and supporting age appropriate activities, such as skateboarding and sleep-overs. He has a reward scheme that motivates him to return to the home on time, and his key worker is clear about the importance of reviewing success or difficulty with him to ensure the programme remains relevant to his needs and wishes. His social worker praised the home for promoting such positive change, and improving his	

safety.

There are improved relationships in the home. Young people have more structure to their free time, participating in activities that interest them and improve their well-being, such as running off energy in the park after a day in school. There are still tensions within the home due to conflicting needs of young people. Staff have begun to work with young people, arising from recent training opportunities some staff have attended, about how to identify positive and unhealthy relationships, the impact of young people's emotional histories, and the nature of bullying. However, this is in very early stages.

To ensure young people remain safe, staff adopt a proactive approach to spending time with them, and diverting inappropriate remarks and modelling positive interaction. On the occasions this is not successful, young people sit with staff when they are calm to think about how they could manage such situations in the future. This has led to increased insight on their part, and an occasional willingness, to accept some responsibility for making amends.

Staff have worked with young people to improve the environment in the home. This has resulted in a cleaner, better-organised and safer physical environment for all. Damage is repaired quickly and this ensures all young people can feel relaxed in the home.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	inadequate
There has been no registered manager in post since January 2015. The manager in post during the last inspection has withdrawn their application to register with Ofsted. Although the organisation has begun recruitment processes, there is no permanent manager appointed. This means there is inconsistent oversight of the home and limits its capacity to improve. Through the efforts of the senior management team, a comprehensive action plan has been implemented to address shortfalls found at the last inspection. In general recording in the home is much improved, providing a clearer and more up-to-date picture of young people's lives. This is particularly evident in records of one-to-one sessions between staff and young people, and detailed records of young people's meetings. However, it is early days, and time is needed to embed the positive changes being made. Furthermore, managers recognise they have not consistently monitored all actions for effectiveness, particularly when actions are delegated to residential staff. For example, some elements of the anti-bullying strategy had not	

included an assessment of the level of understanding of a young person with autism, and this limited the impact of the work that was being undertaken with him.

Managers have reviewed the statement of purpose, and have begun to match the workforce development plan against the revised ethos of staff working with the organisation's therapeutic and psychology professionals to provide effective care to young people whose needs are assessed as compatible to the home. Managers have also revised pre-admission procedures to ensure all risk assessments are completed prior to young people being offered places. As no young people have been admitted to the home, it is not possible to judge the effectiveness of these improvements.

Staff said that they are improving their knowledge and understanding of the needs of young people by attending training in a variety of subjects such as autism, learning disability, positive behaviour support, and the impact of young people's past experiences on their well-being. Staff use staff meetings and supervision as an opportunity to share their learning, reflect on their practice, and challenge others to improve the consistency of their approach. Managers respond to the views of staff, and amend training opportunities to enhance their skills and child-care practice. In general, staff say the home has improved because staff work together more cohesively to address the needs of young people, and because they have been included in the development of the home.

A significant proportion of the team is new, relatively inexperienced and unqualified. There is increased stability in the rota and this has been mirrored in increasingly stabilised relationships between staff and young people. Managers have identified that improvement is required within staff induction processes, and are using the skills of some staff to devise a buddy system to enable new staff to measure their progress and reflect on their development needs. This scheme has yet to be implemented formally, although new staff were complimentary about their introduction to the home and young people. Ensuring staff acquire a suitable qualification remains as a priority, and there are renewed efforts to help staff who are already pursuing their qualification to make better progress.

What the inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

An **outstanding** children's home provides highly effective services that contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help and protection and care. Their progress exceeds expectations and is sustained over time.

A **good** children's home provides effective services that help, protect and care for children and young people and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

In a children's home that **requires improvement**, there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. The welfare of looked after children is safeguarded and promoted. Minimum requirements are in place, however, the children's home is not yet delivering good protection, help and care for children and young people.

A children's home that is **inadequate** is providing services where there are widespread or serious failures that create or leave children and young people being harmed or at risk of harm or result in children looked after not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people living in the children's home. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference adults make to the lives of children and young people. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with children, young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care given to children and young people. Wherever possible, they talked to children, 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 who it is trying to help, protect and look after.

This 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 Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the *Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards*.

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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