

SC063997

Registered provider: Keys Care Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to three children who have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. It is one of several registered children's homes operated by a large private provider. The manager of the home is suitably qualified and was registered in January 2019.

This is the first full inspection of the home since it re-opened, having been mothballed between September 2017 and October 2018.

Inspection dates: 12 to 13 June 2019

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 **good**

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

Date of last inspection: 6 June 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
06/06/2017	Full	Requires improvement to be good
23/03/2017	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
29/06/2016	Full	Good
18/02/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness

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

Recommendations

- Children should be in full-time education whilst they are of compulsory school age, unless their personal education plan contained within the care plan or other relevant plan states otherwise. The home must aim to support full-time attendance at school unless the child's relevant plan indicates this is not in their best interests. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 28, paragraph 5.14)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Staff create a warm and comfortable home environment that children can enjoy and be proud of. Staff give children a sense of belonging by ensuring that photos of their families, friends and those close to them are displayed. Children decorate their rooms and choose their soft furnishings. The manager and staff recently re-decorated the home throughout and have plans for further improvements, including a new kitchen.

Staff complete sensitive and thoughtful individual work with children. This helps children to express their feelings, talk about the things that matters most to them and form strong bonds with staff.

The manager and staff fully consider and meet the health needs of children. Children are registered with local primary health services and they receive the support and help they need to remain healthy. Children enjoy healthy and balanced diets. Some children have used drugs and tobacco. The manager made referrals to specialist agencies to secure the help and support these children need to reduce or stop this harmful behaviour.

Children know how to complain if they are unhappy with any aspect of their care. They have trusted adults to turn to if they have any worries. The children's guide, provided to children when they move into the home, is of a good quality. It ensures that children know how to access support and that they understand their rights and entitlements.

The manager and staff understand the importance of a good education but have faced challenges in securing school placements for some children. The manager has worked hard to overcome these challenges, advocating robustly for children when faced with resistance from schools.

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

Staff have responded appropriately to a range of challenging and potentially harmful behaviours displayed by children. When children have gone missing, used illicit substances or caused damage to the home, staff have always followed the correct procedures and adhered to risk management plans. For example, when children have gone missing staff have searched for them, informed the relevant authorities and encouraged children to come home. Staff have demonstrated resilience when faced with aggression and tried to understand the underlying cause for such challenging behaviour. The manager and staff review all incidents and try to learn lessons to prevent re-occurrence.

The manager and staff support children to use the internet safely. They set clear boundaries by agreeing a 'social media contract' with each child. The manager and staff carefully monitor children when they are online. This proactive approach helps children to stay safe while enjoying the benefits of the internet and social media.

Staff have received training in safeguarding. Their safe care practice is overseen by the manager, who evaluates all incidents carefully. This ensures that staff understand what actions they should take if they have any concerns for the welfare of children. Staff fully understand and implement all safeguarding procedures.

Children are further safeguarded because:

- the recruitment of new staff is carried out in accordance with safer recruitment procedures
- senior managers in the organisation provide oversight and support, with a strong focus on safeguarding children
- the manager has developed strong links with local partner agencies, particularly the police. This means that responses to incidents are prompt and effective.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager's approach is thoughtful and engaging. This is appreciated by the staff who all value the support he gives them. Staff benefit from regular professional supervision that focuses on their relationships with children and safeguarding. The manager places an emphasis on staff development. A good-quality skills and training audit recently identified additional training and development opportunities for staff that have enhanced their skills and knowledge.

The manager is very organised. Since the home re-opened, he has implemented several effective systems to support the staff team and monitor the progress of children. He completes monthly audits. These audits are complemented by additional monitoring carried out by an independent visitor. Robust quality assurance processes have enabled the manager to quickly improve the home and have supported the development of an ambitious development plan.

At the last full inspection, several regulatory requirements and recommendations were made. The manager has addressed these fully. The staff team has become settled and stable. Although this is a relatively new team, many staff members have a great deal of previous experience in residential care.

Two complaints have been received since the home re-opened. These have been from neighbours. The manager responded quickly to resolve these matters because he values relationships with those living in the local community.

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.

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: SC063997

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Keys Care Ltd

Registered provider address: c/o Pinsent Masons, 1 Lanyon Place, Belfast, Northern Ireland BT1 3LP

Responsible individual: David Carser

Registered manager: Joseph Monaghan

Inspector

Phillip Morris, social care inspector

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