

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	20/01/2016
Unique reference number	SC064500
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	Oliver Birtwistle
Inspector	Ceri Evans

Inspection date	20/01/2016
Previous inspection judgement	improved effectiveness
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.	
how well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
the impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good

SC064500

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- This is a relaxed and happy home where young people are settled and making good progress. The care is provided by an experienced and well supported staff group who demonstrate a commitment to meeting the needs of young people.
- Staff provide clear and consistent boundaries. Over time, young people develop a sense of stability which enables them to make good progress across all aspects of their lives.
- All young people are in school and their attendance is very good. They are all invested in their education and are progressing well.
- Staff encourage and support young people to have age appropriate experiences. They benefit immensely from participating in a range of activities which promote their interests and social development.
- Young people are safe and their welfare is protected. This is because staff practice is underpinned by good safeguarding procedures and young people's safety and protection is given optimum priority.
- Staff are led by an enthusiastic, knowledgeable and motivated manager. He is very child focused and has high aspirations for young people. Staff confirm they feel valued and share the manager's vision to improve the life experiences of young people.
- There are a few areas of practice that require improvement. This includes; ensuring that risk assessments are reviewed and updated on a regular basis; incident reports are recorded in a timely manner, and the views of young people, professionals and relatives are collated and evaluated for staff appraisals. To date these shortfalls have not impacted negatively on the well-being and welfare of young people.

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
12: The protection of children standard In order to meet the protection of children standard the registered person must ensure - (2)(b) 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. This specifically relates to ensuring that risk assessments are reviewed and updated as necessary.	04/03/2016

Recommendations

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

- All staff must have their performance and fitness to carry out their role formally appraised at least once annually. This appraisal should take into account, where reasonable and practical, the views of other professionals who have worked with the staff member over the year and children in the home's care. (The Guide, page 61, 13.5)
- The home's record of an incident or event must include a description of the action taken and the outcome of any resulting investigation. With specific reference to ensuring that incident forms are completed in a timely manner and are clear in relation to the action taken. (The Guide to the quality standards, page 63, paragraph 14.14)

Full report

Information about this children's home

This is a privately run children's home that provides care and accommodation for up to three young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
27/01/2015	CH - Interim	improved effectiveness
29/07/2014	CH - Full	Adequate
12/02/2014	CH - Interim	Good Progress
17/09/2013	CH - Full	Good

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	good
The underpinning ethos of this home is one of nurture, care, laughter and respect. There is a genuine commitment by staff to help young people enjoy their childhood and achieve in all aspects of their lives. Every effort is made to ensure the environment mirrors that of a positive family life. For example, eating an evening meal together and discussing how their day has been. This has proved effective in helping young people settle, develop relationships and feel a sense of security. The support young people receive is individually tailored to meet their specific and complex needs. Staff demonstrate great respect and empathy for young people who have experienced trauma, and take into account the underlying reasons for behaviour and respond effectively. This ensures that young people feel accepted even when they are experiencing heightened levels of anxiety or distress. Staff are experienced and not overwhelmed by challenging and complex behaviour. They are clearly child centred and are very skilful at engaging young people. One professional stated: 'staff genuinely appear to enjoy caring for children and have good knowledge of their needs. The home has a nurturing ethos and staff are committed to their roles. The children seem happy.' Staff are passionate about supporting young people in their education. They have	

encouraged them every step of the way and celebrate their achievements no matter how big or small. Staff work closely with education providers to ensure young people progress. An example of this includes when a young person made sufficient progress in a specialist provision and expressed that she wanted to move on to a local mainstream school. This was carefully considered and a positive transition was made. This young person is now flourishing in her education and has clear aspirations for the future.

Young people's general health and well-being has improved. The manager and staff are proactive at building and sustaining relationships with a range of healthcare professionals. Young people are provided with good information and advice about a range of important health matters such as sexual health, smoking and the consequences of substance misuse. Young people's emotional health needs are also identified and met by qualified and experienced professionals. This means their holistic health needs are routinely met and they are supported to make informed decisions which promote good physical and emotional wellbeing.

There is extensive evidence to demonstrate that the young people's wishes and feelings are central to how the home is run. Their views are constantly sought in house meetings, one to one key work sessions and regular consultation with the manager. Young people are also fully involved in their own care planning. They have a strong say over how they would like to be cared for and what they hope to achieve. Consequently, they feel valued and motivated to work towards the goals they have set for themselves.

Evidence gathered at this inspection highlights that young people enjoy participating in their individual interests, they have fun and make friends. This has undoubtedly helped them to develop better social skills and confidence and has given them the opportunity to try new things. An Independent Reviewing Officer stated: 'the home has developed good links within the community and promotes the young person's participation in activities. For example, helping out at a local stables, attending local youth clubs and a Cadet group. The home try to balance the wishes of the young person with risk assessments and this can obviously be difficult at times but I believe they do this in the young person's interests.'

The environment is spacious, well-furnished and maintained. Young people are encouraged and supported to personalise their bedrooms with photographs, posters and personal belongings. At times there are tensions and arguments between young people living in the home. That said, staff respond quickly and mediate. This helps resolve matters quickly and prevents further escalation.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
The home makes good provision for safeguarding young people's welfare. Staff are confident in all areas of child protection and have the necessary knowledge and skills to keep young people safe. Staff have established effective and well-embedded working relationships with local safeguarding agencies. Placing social workers and a range of other external professionals confirm this. They compliment the manager and staff on their pro-active approach to managing and reducing risk. One social worker stated: 'I have nothing but praise for this home. X (name) has grown emotionally and is progressing well. I have great faith in the team's ability to keep X safe and they have a balanced approach to risk management. Staff are supportive and understanding of his needs and are committed to helping him in all aspects of his life.' Risk assessments are individualised and reflect the diverse needs and personalities of each of the young people. They provide a good overview of identified behaviours, triggers, warning signs and control measures. However, these documents are not regularly reviewed and updated. To date, this has not impacted negatively on young people. That said, this is not good practice and has the potential to undermine agreed risk management strategies. Staff demonstrate a careful child-centred approach to positive behaviour management. Their conflict management is effective because of consistent implementation of boundaries so that young people know where they stand and what is expected of them. Staff focus on positives and incentive plans; sanctions are not the preferred method of managing behaviour. The use of restorative techniques also helps young people confront their unacceptable behaviour, take responsibility and reflect on how they can handle future situations more constructively. In the main incident records are clear, concise and offer a good overview of the action taken. However, at least one incident was not thoroughly recorded with little evidence of the action taken by staff. This is something the manager has fully acknowledged and has taken necessary steps to ensure records are consistently completed in line with policies and procedures. The home's records confirm that the frequency of young people going absent without permission from the home has significantly reduced with only two reported incidents since June 2014. This further demonstrates that young people are settled and happy in the home. There have been instances where staff have used physical intervention. These have been used appropriately to safeguard the young person. All are well recorded	

and analysed by the manager. Good management monitoring helps to ensure that practice remains effective.

The recruitment of staff is sufficiently robust. The manager follows agreed procedures to ensure the thorough scrutiny of applicants prior to their employment in the home. This prevents unsuitable people from being able to work with young people. There are good systems in place for responding to allegations and any suspicions of harm. Staff fully understand their safeguarding responsibilities and good quality training enables them to respond effectively to child protection concerns.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
The manager is suitably qualified and experienced; providing the home with visible leadership which promotes good quality of care and positive experiences for young people. He maintains a thorough oversight of care practices and has an excellent understanding of the individual needs of the young people accommodated in the home. Professionals speak highly of the manager and feel that his competence is a key strength of the home. Comments include: 'I have been impressed with the unit, particularly the manager Oliver' and: 'the staff and the manager very responsive and have the children in the forefront of their consideration.' The manager ensures that the staffing levels are sufficient and adapts the rota in order to meet the individual needs of the young people. There is a good mix of experience and skill on the team and communication between colleagues is very good. Staff are able to share their views through a variety of means, such as informal discussions and daily handovers. Regular team meetings also provide a purposeful opportunity to reflect on practice issues which enables the team to improve the delivery of care. Staff are well trained and they continue to receive refresher training in key areas such as safeguarding, first aid and restraint. The team also undertake more specialised training for specific issues relating to the young people in their care. For example, training on attachment, trauma, therapeutic intervention and child development. This means that the team are well equipped to meet the individual	

needs of the young people living in the home.

All staff receive regular supervision which is focused on professional development and the progress young people make. Staff confirm that supervision helps to develop their knowledge, skill and practice. The manager routinely monitors the competency and conduct of staff and appraisals are undertaken annually. The manager does have a system to seek the views of young people, professionals and relatives. However, this information is not fully evaluated nor fully considered as part of the appraisal. This is a missed opportunity to undertake a more holistic review of professional practice and would aid the manager in identifying development needs within the team.

Quality assurance monitoring, both internally and externally, is effective in identifying strengths as well as minor shortfalls. The manager takes immediate action to address actions. He has a clear understanding of the home's strengths and can easily evidence the impact the service is having on the lives of young people. The requirement from the last inspection has been acted upon. This clearly demonstrates that the manager learns from inspection and takes immediate action to rectify shortfalls.

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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