

Children's homes – Interim inspection

Inspection date	20/03/2017
Unique reference number	SC064500
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Keys Childcare Ltd
Registered provider address	Hurstwood Court, New Hall Hey Road, Rossendale, BB4 6HR

Responsible individual	Julie Hamilton
Registered manager	Oliver Birtwistle
Inspector	Graham Robinson

Inspection date	13/12/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Good
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 full inspection. At this interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has sustained effectiveness. Since the previous inspection, the home has faced some difficult challenges which it has generally coped with well. For example, staff are currently working with the repetitive, challenging and, at times, highly aggressive behaviour being displayed by a young person. The disruption caused has had a knock-on effect on other young people living in the home, generating a number of complaints about their peer to different people and agencies. All have been addressed. The staff have successfully worked together in a coordinated way to ensure that all young people have remained safe at all times. However, this has been at some cost to themselves. Despite this, staff have shown determination and resilience in seeking solutions and strategies aimed at settling the young person concerned. Staffing levels have been increased, which has meant that any disruption is being dealt with effectively and safely, without impacting on the plans the other young people may have. This practice has proved to be successful. Appropriate plans, strategies and assessments of risk for all young people are in place. They are revised regularly to keep them current and up to date. Regular meetings with representatives from placing authorities keep young people fully involved with the whole planning process. Suitable plans for the short, medium and long term are in place for each young person. It is expected that the levels of disruption will decrease as plans proceed. Despite the challenges currently being faced, overall the home remains stable. An experienced manager, well supported by a staff team that has experienced little change since the previous inspection, provides all young people with a high level of consistent care. As a result, all young people have made some progress in the short time since the previous inspection took place. For example, all young people are in full-time education and attendance levels are high. Each one has interests and makes use of a variety of community facilities, such as playing football, swimming and being members of local youth clubs and a scout group. One young person was observed talking to staff about joining a group where he could sing.	

The home was calm when the inspection took place. Young people were fully engaged as they returned from school or college. All had specific plans for what they intended to do that evening, with the high staffing levels allowing for individual needs and interests to be followed.

The structure, boundaries and routine of the home remain intact despite the challenges posed at times. Communication levels are high and are helped by the good relationships that exist between staff and young people. Young people were observed making choices and expressing opinions to staff who they were obviously comfortable with. Interaction between staff and young people was observed as being warm and caring throughout the visit.

Serious behaviour management issues affecting young people are rare. Staff have the skills, knowledge, confidence and ability to manage behaviour through their relationships with young people and their understanding of young people's needs. Staff are well supported by the help and advice they receive from a visiting behavioural specialist and therapists, which adds to their knowledge and understanding of each young person.

Young people benefit from having a stable, trained and relatively experienced staff team looking after them. Although severely tested at times, the team centred approach adopted by the team remains, and has contributed to the resilience shown by the staff group recently.

A tour of the home revealed areas that had been repainted, with new flooring in one young person's bedroom and new fire doors, fitted with automatic release locks, on the ground floor. The bathroom used by young people on the lower level looks tired and dated and is in need of refurbishment. Repairs are quickly implemented should any damage to the fabric of the building occur.

Good homes negotiate difficult times and address any challenges that present themselves. This remains a good home. The commitment and professionalism of staff to work through difficulties in a positive and supportive way, when they at times have faced risks, is commendable. Agreements and plans are in place which should allow the home to meet its target of addressing the needs of all young people in its care.

The report contains no requirements. There is one recommendation, which is designed to improve the overall environment for young people.

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 who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
13/12/2016	Full	Good
15/03/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
20/01/2016	Full	Good
27/01/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness

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

Recommendations

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

- The bathroom on the ground floor used by young people is tired and in need of refurbishment. Once completed, this should enhance the welcoming environment provided for young people. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', section 3.7, page 15)

What the inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspection we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the 'Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection'.

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

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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