

SC067561

Registered provider: Keys Education Ltd

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a private company. The statement of purpose states that the home can provide care for up to two children. At the time of this inspection, two children were living in the home.

The manager registered with Ofsted in November 2020.

Inspection date: 19 January 2023

Date of last inspection: 8 September 2022

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Information about this inspection

At this inspection, the inspector evaluated:

- the care of children
- the safety of children
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers.

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children, using the social care common inspection framework. This assurance 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'.

Findings from the inspection

We did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance inspection.

The care of children

Since the last inspection, the same two children have lived at this home. In recent months, outcomes for the children have been mixed. One child is thriving. She has made significant progress in her health, well-being and education. Another child has recently celebrated his 18 birthday and has been spending extended periods of time away from the home, often staying with family and friends. Positively, the young person maintains daily contact with the adults in the home who he has long-standing and trusted relationships with. These adults visit the young person regularly to check on his health and well-being.

At the last inspection, inspectors found that the home environment was not adequate for children to live in. Since then, the extensive refurbishment programme has been completed and the home is now safe, well-resourced and welcoming. Both children have been actively involved in the selection of soft furnishings and their bedrooms have been redecorated in colours of their choice.

In recent months, the children have had improved continuity of care. Since the last inspection, the manager has been successful in recruiting and retaining a full staff team. Staff on duty confirmed morale has improved and the team is working well together.

The manager has reviewed the children's care and support plans. However, these documents remain extensive, making it hard to find important information easily. The registered manager agreed these documents require streamlining to ensure pertinent information is not duplicated.

The safety of children

All staff have completed safeguarding training and regularly attend refresher courses. Despite this, not all staff apply their learning from training in practice. The registered manager has taken robust and decisive action when staff have failed to follow missing-from-home protocols, including making sure welfare checks are completed within the required timescales.

Since the last inspection, the manager has reviewed the home's safer recruitment practices. The changes made include evaluating a candidate's suitability to ensure they have the skills and experience required to care for the children they will be looking after. Since the last inspection, no staff have left the home. This means opportunities to learn from exit interviews have not been tested for effectiveness.

The quality of most written risk assessments requires improvement. These documents are extensive and do not provide staff with the clear and concise information that they need to safeguard children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers

Since the last inspection, improvements have been made to the management oversight of the operation of this home. Despite this, weaknesses remain in the consistent quality of some records. In addition, the registered manager has not always reported significant incidents to Ofsted within the required timescales. To date, these deficiencies have not had a direct impact on the children but have the potential to do so if not rectified.

The registered manager and team receive regular formal supervision and team meetings are well attended. Records of these meetings have improved; they reflect the discussions held and the agreed actions. More consideration is needed regarding opportunities for staff to develop professionally by learning about internal and external monitoring findings and considering patterns and trends of behaviour..

The registered manager has reviewed the home's development plan. However, this plan focuses on regulatory requirements. The registered manager has not yet considered more aspirational developments to enhance children's opportunities and experiences.

A social worker and independent reviewing officer commented positively about the registered manager and the care team. They confirmed that the local authority care plans are met, communication is good, and they are pleased with the progress the children are making. A social worker acknowledged that since turning 18 one child does not want to be looked after. The same social worker described the relationship the child has with the registered manager as steadfast. He said the registered manager has been the only professional who has been consistent in his life, and she has been an exceptionally strong advocate for him.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
08/09/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
08/02/2022	Full	Good
14/01/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
05/06/2018	Full	Good

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, 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
The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that arrangements are in place to— ensure the effective induction of each child into the home; and manage and review the placement of each child in the home. (Regulation 14 (1)(a) (2)(b)(i)(ii)) This particularly refers to simplifying internal care plans and risk assessments to make them easier to read and ensuring they are written in a way that will be helpful to the child. This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	3 March 2023

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that best use of information from independent and internal monitoring is made, to ensure continuous improvement and to develop staff. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24)
- The registered person should ensure that notifications of safeguarding concerns are consistently reported in accordance with regulation 40. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 63, paragraph 14.10)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC067561

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Keys Education Ltd

Registered provider address: Maybrook House, Second Floor, Queensway,
Halesowen, Worcestershire B63 4AH

Responsible individual: Gemma Moore

Registered manager: Beverley Page

Inspector

Sharron Escott, Social Care Inspector

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