

SC067561

Registered provider: Keys Education Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is run by a large national provider of childcare and education services. It is registered to provide care for three children or young people who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Inspection dates: 24 to 25 May 2017

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account

requires improvement to be good

How well children and young people are helped and protected

requires improvement to be good

The effectiveness of leaders and managers

good

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.

Date of last inspection: 20 February 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: Sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection:

None

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home requires improvement to be good because:

- Actions taken by the manager to help staff to deal more effectively with young people's challenging behaviour need to embed and develop further.
- The home has experienced a challenging period and the actions of one young person have negatively affected the experiences of others.
- Staff's approach to managing young people's behaviour needs improving. Physical intervention has been used to remove young people from the office when it was not evident that their behaviour was a serious risk, and the kitchen/dining room and lounge door are locked at bedtime.
- Care planning documents and risk assessments are not up to date with all of the information about the young people's current needs.
- Leaders and managers have not escalated their concerns when young people have not always received an independent return to home interview within 72 hours following an event of them going missing.
- Safeguarding records do not include comprehensive information to demonstrate the reporting and outcome of allegations that are referred to the designated officer.

The children's home's strengths:

- Young people make good progress in some areas of their lives.
- Young people have good relationships with some staff.
- Staff are supported and morale is good.
- The manager works well with outside agencies.
- The manager is aware of the difficulties at the home and is taking action to address them.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
20/02/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
20/09/2016	Full	Good
29/02/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
15/12/2015	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
6: The quality and purpose of care standard The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children, and use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure that staff provide personalised care that meets each child's needs, as recorded in the child's relevant plans, taking account of the child's background. (Regulation 6 (2) (b) (iv))	30/06/2017
11: The positive relationships standard The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on mutual respect and trust, an understanding about acceptable behaviour and positive responses to other children and adults. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure that staff—help each child to develop socially aware behaviour; encourage each child to take responsibility for the child's behaviour, in accordance with the child's age and understanding; help each child to develop and practise skills to resolve conflicts positively and without harm to anyone; and communicate to each child expectations about the child's behaviour and ensure that the child understands those expectations in accordance with the child's age and understanding. (Regulation 11 (2) (a) (ii) (iii) (iv) (v))	31/08/2017
20: Restraint and deprivation of liberty Restraint in relation to a child is only permitted for the purpose of preventing injury to any person (including the child) or	30/06/2017

serious damage to the property of any person (including the child). (Regulation 20 (1) (a) (b))	
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Recommendations

- When a child is found, they must be offered an independent return interview. Independent return interviews provide an opportunity to uncover information that can help protect children from the risk of going missing again, from risks they may have been exposed to while missing or from risk factors in their home. The interview should be carried out within 72 hours of the child returning to their home or care setting. This should be an in-depth interview and is normally best carried out by an independent person (i.e., someone not involved in caring for the child) who is trained to carry out these interviews and is able to follow-up any actions that emerge. Children sometimes need to build up trust with a person before they will discuss in depth the reasons why they ran away. ('Statutory guidance on children who run away or go missing from home or care', page 14, paragraphs 31 and 32)
- For children's homes to be nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of their children, they will, in most cases, be homely, domestic environments. Children's homes must comply with relevant health and safety legislations (alarms, food hygiene etc.); however in doing so, homes should seek as far as possible to maintain a domestic rather than 'institutional' impression. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- Any allegation against people who work with children should be reported immediately to a senior manager within the organisation. The designated officer, or team of officers, should also be informed within one working day of all allegations that come to an employer's attention or that are made directly to the police. In particular, complete referral forms to the local authority designated officer at the time of referral and on conclusion of an internal investigation. ('Working together to safeguard children', page 54, paragraph 7)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

The overall experience and progress of young people requires improvement to be good because of their involvement in serious incidents that have occurred since the last inspection. One young person's behaviour has a negative impact on the others. Incidents include young people and staff being physically attacked, young people going missing from the home together, young people having their sleeping patterns disturbed and damage being caused to the home. As a result of the physical attacks, staff have called

the police three times in the last month and a young person is being charged with assault. This is a poor outcome for one young person and a traumatic experience for the others.

The manager has taken action to address these challenges currently faced at the home. She communicates regularly with the placing authorities and arranged a placement planning meeting specifically to discuss the suitability of one young person's placement. Staffing levels have been increased, some young people have been taken away for weekend breaks and therapeutic and medical services have been sought to support young people's emotional needs. These measures have helped to reduce the negative impact of one young person's actions on the others, and it is positive that his emotional needs have started to be addressed.

Further work is required by staff to communicate their expectations about behaviour and to help all young people to develop socially acceptable behaviour.

Staff lock the kitchen/dining room and lounge doors when young people go to bed. This practice is not in keeping with providing a homely, domestic environment.

The maintenance of young people's records needs improving. Documents are not always up to date with new, relevant information. One young person's health plan, behaviour management plan and risk assessment do not provide staff with the correct information. This is especially important at a critical time for the young person and his changing circumstances.

Young people are doing very well at school. Two young people attend mainstream school and another young person is attending a specialist provision. All three young people have improved their attendance and attainment since being in this home. One young person was provided with extra lessons to catch up with the education that they had previously missed and is now currently taking GCSE exams. She has aspirations for the future and plans to go to college. All young people's social workers recognise the educational progress that they are each making and that this is a significant achievement for them.

Staff promote the health needs of young people effectively. A young person is helped to manage his own diabetes and is now taking greater responsibility for monitoring his health.

Staff respond safely to self-harming behaviours and young people's personal care needs. They provide medical attention and have, on occasions, deployed a waking member of staff at night to monitor young people's well-being. Young people report that a 'coping box' they put together with the manager has helped them to decrease their self-harming behaviour.

Staff help young people to make appropriate friendships with other young people away from the home. This is something that young people have previously struggled with. Young people now meet with their friends after school to attend youth clubs and an

archery club. Staff also engage young people in activities and visits that they enjoy. A young person has recently been on a short break to Wales and another young person enjoys go-karting.

Staff help young people to learn independence skills and to look after themselves. Young people are encouraged to cook and enjoy helping staff at the home's garden allotment. Some young people have also improved their personal hygiene skills since being at the home. They are now taking greater care of their appearance, dressing well and keeping clean.

Staff provide good support to young people in relation to their family. Young people are helped to understand about their personal histories and staff have directly supported young people on holidays with their family. A social worker reports that, '(name) has holidays just like they would with their family.'

All young people's social workers contributed to this inspection. Despite the current difficult dynamics, they are all pleased with the overall progress that their young people are making. They are kept informed of events at the home. A social worker comments that she is 'hugely impressed with the commitment of the staff' and another social worker states that 'staff have done some fantastic work with (name)'.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

Staff's approach to managing some challenging situations needs further development. On three occasions since the last inspection, staff have physically intervened to guide young people out of the home's office. It was not evident that young people were presenting a serious risk of harm to themselves, others or to the property. This approach is to enforce compliance and is not in line with the regulations.

Young people are not always provided with an independent return to home interview in line with the statutory guidance. The manager has not challenged the placing authorities for failing to provide the interviews as required. Since the previous inspection, there have been six recorded events of a young person going missing. Only two of these have been followed up appropriately with a conversation with a representative from their local authority within 72 hours of them returning. This was a recommendation made at the previous inspection and the manager has not taken sufficient action to resolve the situation. As such, important information about the reasons young people go missing and where they are is not being gathered and shared in a timely manner.

The manager has responded appropriately to allegations made by young people. Concerns have been reported to the designated officer and the placing authority social worker as required and young people have been provided with opportunities to share their views. Safeguarding records can be improved. Currently, a detailed chronology of the actions taken to conclude an internal investigation and evidence of a written referral to the designated officer are not consistently maintained.

The manager has effectively managed safeguarding concerns involving young people who are at risk of sexual exploitation. Staff act quickly when concerns are identified and share information appropriately with the police and placing authority. Action is taken to reduce risks and to undertake direct work with the young person about personal safety.

Despite the current difficulties, young people state that they feel safe living at the home.

There have been no new staff recruited since the last full inspection so records for employees of the company were not checked at this inspection. The vetting details for staff employed by an agency were scrutinised and found to be of a good standard. A young person commented that the same individuals are used regularly, and they get on well with them.

The necessary physical, environmental and safety checks of the premises are conducted at appropriate timescales. Staff ensure that medication is stored appropriately and securely.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Despite this being a challenging time for the home, the team remains supportive of each other and staff morale is excellent. Staff retention is good and the use of staff employed from an external agency has been minimal. These staff have been used to provide extra support in response to the challenges presented by the current group of young people.

Staff report that they are well led and feel fully supported by the senior leadership team. They receive frequent supervision and guidance in their role. Staff undertake specialised training, for example, supporting young people with diabetes, behaviour management training and advice from the company's therapist.

The manager works effectively with local authorities and outside agencies that support young people. Social workers and health professionals report that communication with them is good. Social workers receive copies of all incident reports, weekly reports and outcomes of investigations. As a result, they are well informed about the experiences of the young person who they are responsible for. The manager ensures that notifications are made to Ofsted as required, along with regular updates to existing significant events.

Monitoring of the home takes place at the required intervals. An independent person visits monthly and the manager submits a quarterly review of the quality of care to Ofsted. Young people and stakeholders are consulted as part of these processes.

The manager can demonstrate the progress that young people make living at the home. In particular, the number of restraints that one young person is involved in has significantly reduced since he moved in three years ago. The manager has a good relationship with young people, she is approachable, makes time for them and listens to them. Young people respond well to this approach.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since January 2017. She has the

necessary skills and experience to fulfil the role, and is working towards the required qualification. One staff member who has been employed by the company for over two years has not gained the necessary level 3 qualification in residential childcare. There are mitigating circumstances for this weakness and the member of staff is receiving the necessary support to complete the qualification.

The statement of purpose is up to date and accurately describes the function of the home. The manager is aware of the home's weaknesses and is taking action to address them. The manager wants to provide permanency for young people, but also recognises when young people's needs may be better met by an alternative provision.

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: SC067561

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Keys Education Limited

Registered provider address: Hurstwood Court, Laganwood House, New Hall Hey Road, Rossendale, Lancashire BB4 6HR

Responsible individual: Janet Porter

Registered manager: Shellina Brown

Inspector(s)

Guy Mammatt: social care inspector

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