

SC366002

Registered provider: Alliance Care & Education Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home provides care and accommodation for up to four children and young people. There is a registered school on the site.

The registered manager has been registered since June 2016.

Inspection dates: 14 to 15 June 2018

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: 7 February 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
07/02/2018	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
22/06/2017	Full	Good
28/02/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
30/11/2016	Full	Requires improvement

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 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; 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 the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b)(2)(c)(i))	31/08/2018
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children to aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) and (2)(c)) In particular, ensure that staff receive good-quality training programmes tailored to the personal needs of children, including training on disorganised attachment and trauma, emotional development, life-story work and the ways of working with children with attachment difficulties. Also, the registered person should ensure that staff have regular opportunities to reflect on	31/07/2018

training and how they are using it to improve the quality of care and support that they provide.	
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home; and use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b)(2)(f)(h)) In particular, the registered person must make sure that the independent person's monitoring provides in-depth scrutiny and detailed evaluation of the quality of care and childcare practice, the experiences of children living at the home and the impact that this is having on outcomes and improvements for the children. Also, the registered person must make sure that children are consulted regularly on their views about the home's care and that these views are recorded in the monitoring reports, in order to understand their experiences and to inform and support the continued improvement in the quality of care provided.	31/07/2018

Recommendation

- Ensure that records of direct work with children are detailed, analytical and reflective, and that they represent a significant contribution to understanding children's needs, experiences and outcomes. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.5)
In particular, ensure that each record shows clearly the outcome that the direct work is trying to achieve. In addition, the records should show how the work carried out by staff fits in with the child's plan, how it takes account of the child's views, wishes and feelings and how the work is evaluated for its effectiveness, including what needs to happen next to support the child.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Young people live in a stable, friendly and supportive home. The manager and the staff make sure that young people receive a good standard of personalised care. Based on their starting points, young people are making pleasing progress across all of their developmental needs. Their outcomes improve, often despite the complexity of their needs and the challenges that they face.

Young people have positive and trusting relationships with the staff that have endured over time. Staff show young people that they care about what happens in their lives and that they want to help them. Staff listen to young people's views and respond to them appropriately. They are strong advocates for young people being involved in the decisions that affect their lives, including seeing their family, finding out about their past and planning for the future.

Staff make sure that young people can maintain positive relationships with the important people in their lives. The staff enable young people to see their families and friends safely, in line with the agreed plan.

Staff actively support young people to take part in education and training. They encourage young people to see the benefits of learning. Staff understand young people's learning needs and know how well they are doing at school and college. When young people are struggling, the staff work well with teachers, the virtual school and social workers to get young people the support that they need to gain qualifications and to succeed.

Young people have lots of opportunities to broaden their experiences. They build their confidence by taking part in activities and developing their skills and talents in art and music. A young person's artwork was recently on show at a local art exhibition.

Young people's health and emotional well-being continue to improve. Staff help young people to understand the importance of a healthy diet, good personal and dental care and of being physically fit. Staff monitor closely young people's emotional health and make sure that young people get the support that they may need from counselling services.

The manager uses detailed assessments to make good decisions about young people coming to live at the home. He makes sure that staff can respond effectively to the young person's needs and considers carefully the compatibility of the young people living in the home.

Staff help young people to learn the practical skills and to build the emotional resilience that they need to prepare for adult life. Staff have a clear understanding of each young person's needs and the support that they will require in the future. The staff work hard to support young people's employment and training aspirations by helping them to find

the right place to live and through encouraging young people to make the best use of the support that is available before they move.

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

Young people live in a safe home. Clear safeguarding arrangements help young people to feel safe and protect them from harm. Staff listen to young people's worries and always make sure that their complaints are dealt with thoroughly. Staff have a good understanding of young people's needs and any current concerns about their welfare.

Staff use up-to-date and individualised risk assessments and plans that help them to support young people's safety. The staff are able to identify signs that young people may be at risk, including from exploitation, crime, self-harm, using cannabis, going missing and social media. Staff take appropriate action when they have concerns about young people's safety.

The manager's and staff's effective working relationships and good communication with social workers, the police, the designated officer, drugs and alcohol workers and the youth offending service help them to understand and manage risks to young people.

Staff help young people to recognise risks and to understand how to protect themselves and other young people. They encourage and support young people to work with the youth offending service and to complete drugs and substance programmes. Staff balance carefully the need to protect young people while allowing them to take managed risks as part of their development towards becoming more independent. Young people have responded positively to being given more responsibility for themselves in the community.

Staff provide young people with safe and reliable relationships that help them to have a sense of belonging. Staff know the young people really well and can quickly see when they are having a difficult time.

Staff work positively with young people to find the best possible ways to help them. Staff work hard to find out and understand the reasons why young people are upset. They work well with young people to sort out what is wrong. A young person said, 'Staff sit down and talk and talk with me and we find a solution.'

Young people are increasingly able to manage their emotions and moderate their behaviour. They are less likely to self-harm, be withdrawn and be aggressive or to break things when they are upset. Staff are supporting each young person to find ways that help them to cope when they are angry, frustrated or sad, such as drawing, listening to music, going for a walk or talking to a member of staff or a counsellor.

However, staff would benefit from training opportunities to develop their knowledge in emotional and psychological development and the ways of working with young people with disorganised attachment and who have experienced trauma and abuse. Staff should develop expertise in life-story work to help young people to make sense of their

experiences and history, such as understanding the reasons why they do not live with their families.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The recent change in the ownership of the home has been managed well. Young people's daily lives and the standard of support that they receive have not been disrupted. The manager provides clear and effective leadership. He leads a stable and caring staff team whose members are ambitious for young people to be safe and to have every possible opportunity to meet their full potential.

The manager and staff actively take part in the wider support system to make sure that each young person's needs are met. In particular, the manager has worked hard to improve significantly the working relationship with the police.

The manager communicates clearly to make sure that everyone involved has an up-to-date picture of young people's lives. He uses internal planning meetings to understand each young person's progress and the effectiveness of their plan. He raises concerns about young people's progress and plans assertively with social workers and they work together to find a solution.

The staffing arrangements make sure that there are always enough experienced and qualified staff available to meet the young people's needs. Staff work together cohesively. They plan well the day-to-day care of young people to provide them with the best possible support. The manager offers each member of staff good support, guidance and encouragement through regular practice-related supervision and team meetings.

However, the manager and staff would benefit from opportunities to reflect on their learning from their practice, research and training. In particular, to consider how they can use their learning to improve the quality of young people's care and support.

The independent monitoring of the home is not providing the level of scrutiny necessary to evaluate and improve the quality of care and childcare practice and the experiences of young people living there. It does not show the impact that the standard of care is having on young people's lives. Also, young people are not regularly consulted by the independent person about their experiences and the quality of support that they receive.

Records of direct work with young people do not always provide enough detail and analysis to contribute to understanding a young person's life. The records do not clearly show what is going well, what staff and the young person are worried about, the young person's views and understanding of the issues and what needs to happen next to help the young person.

Young people are currently living in a house that is not decorated and furnished to a good standard. Work is needed to make it a more comfortable, bright and pleasant place to live and work.

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: SC366002

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Keys Group Limited

Registered provider address: Maybrook House, 2nd Floor, Queensway, Halesowen, Worcestershire B63 4AH

Responsible individual: Andrew Taylor

Registered manager: Robert Allen

Inspector

Nick Veysey: social care inspector

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