

SC370910

Registered provider: Keys Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A private organisation runs this home. It provides care for up to three children who have experienced trauma that has left them vulnerable.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since April 2017.

Inspection dates: 21 to 22 January 2020

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 **requires improvement to be good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 19 June 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
19/06/2018	Full	Good
05/02/2018	Interim	Improved effectiveness
25/05/2017	Full	Good
21/12/2016	Interim	Declined in effectiveness

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 protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— 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. (Regulation 12(1)(2)(b))	28/02/2020
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— use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13(1)(a)(b)(2)(h))	28/02/2020
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The registered person may only— employ an individual to work at the children's home; or if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home, if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3).	28/02/2020

The requirements are that—

full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32(1)(2)(a)(b)(3)(d))

Recommendations

- 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. ('Guide to children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

In particular ensure that the bathroom and children's bedrooms are consistently decorated to a good standard.

- The registered person should only accept placements for children when they are satisfied that the home can respond effectively to the child's assessed needs as recorded in the child's relevant plans and when they have fully considered the impact that the placement will have on the existing group of children. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 56, paragraph 11.4)

In particular, consider the needs and vulnerabilities of each child when making impact risk assessments.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The overall experiences of children are positive, and they make good progress. The children receive individualised support that enhances their opportunities. Positive relationships are established with the staff, who are skilled and committed to enhancing the children's experiences and well-being.

The staff support the children to make progress in their education. The staff work closely with schools and implement individual incentives to encourage the children to improve their attainment and attendance. Since being at the home, one child has been able to return to school after a substantial gap in attendance. Another child is making progress with a home tutor. Well-planned support has reduced children's barriers to learning.

Children can share their thoughts, views and feelings through regular key-worker sessions, house meetings and daily consultations. Further to this, they are supported to attend their reviews and meetings. This inclusive approach means that the children are involved in the planning of their care and that their wishes are listened to.

The children enjoy a wide range of activities that meet their interests. These activities include trips to theme parks, skate parks and the cinema and going swimming. The children attend local clubs that relate to their hobbies. These opportunities help them to develop their friendships and provide them with meaningful experiences.

The children are supported to stay in touch with their families. The staff are effective in their communication with the children's families and planning visits and meetings. The staff support these visits and recognise the importance of these relationships. As a result, the children benefit from improved emotional well-being and sense of identity.

The children experience well-planned endings. One child was able to reunite with her family due to the significant progress that she had made with her independence skills at the home. One child moved to another home and was able to visit this before her placement. The staff received letters of gratitude from the children and keep in touch with them. The children are well supported as they move to the next steps in their lives.

The home is spacious and well resourced. The children benefit from personalised bedrooms in line with their preferences and interests. However, the bathroom area is worn and in need of redecoration. Paint on the walls of two children's bedrooms is flaking. These areas detract from what is otherwise a homely and welcoming environment.

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

Behaviour management plans are well detailed. There is an emphasis on proactive strategies and individual incentive programmes. The staff use sanctions proportionately. These approaches are effective in helping the children to change their behaviour over time.

There are clear missing-from-home protocols for each child, and staff are proactive in locating the children if they go missing. High levels of staff support and strong relationships have ensured that these incidents have reduced significantly.

Children regularly review their risk assessments with the staff during key-work sessions. The children understand why risks may change and what they need to do to manage or reduce these. This ensures that the children improve their reflection skills and become safer.

Impact assessments are undertaken when children transition to the home. Clear chronologies and risks are identified for individual children well. However, individual risks for children who are new to the home are not considered alongside the risks and vulnerabilities of the children who already live there. This reduces staff's ability to implement sufficient risk-reduction measures prior to a child arriving at the home.

The staff have good knowledge of safeguarding and whistle-blowing procedures. The manager investigates allegations and consults with the designated officer. Concerns are dealt with promptly. However, one internal investigation into a concern about staff's poor practice was not sufficiently objective. There was no feedback to the child on the outcome and a lack of robust action to follow up the concerns fully.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The manager is suitably experienced, skilled and qualified. She is well regarded by external professionals and the staff team.

The managerial monitoring is not good enough. A failure to ensure accurate oversight of health and safety checks has resulted in a deficient fire door not being identified in a timely way. This does not sufficiently reduce risks in a home in which there have been incidents of children smoking.

Physical interventions have been used and are proportionate. However, the monitoring of records has consistently been poor. Inaccuracies in information and lack of timeliness of debriefs and management reviews have significantly impaired the analysis and learning opportunities available to reduce the recurrence of further incidents. This was highlighted in external monitoring visits and, despite an action plan being created, shortfalls have continued. Failure by the manager to ensure that information is recorded and reviewed in a timely way potentially places children and staff at risk.

Safe recruitment processes are not consistently followed. Monitoring of agency recruitment checks is not undertaken. The systems fail to sufficiently reduce the potential for unsuitable people to work at the home.

The staff benefit from an inclusive training programme. They are skilled and equipped to meet the children's individual needs.

The staff value their child-focused and personal development discussions in supervision meetings and annual appraisals. The regular staff meetings ensure that effective communication and consistent support are embedded. The staff said that they feel well supported. This range of guidance provides the staff with direction and time to reflect on their practice.

The staff and management team have established positive relationships with parents and professionals, who provided good feedback about the effectiveness of communication and overall quality of care provided at the home.

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: SC370910

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Keys Care Limited

Registered provider address: c/o Pinsett Mason Llp, The Soloist Building, 1 Lanyon Place, Belfast, Northern Ireland BT1 3LP

Responsible individual: Patricia James

Registered manager: Saddia Shafiq

Inspectors

Mark Anderton, social care inspector

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