

SC370949

Registered provider: Keys Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is owned by a private organisation. The home provides long-term placements for up to three children who present with behavioural challenges and are emotionally vulnerable. The home has a registered manager who has been in post for six years.

Inspection dates: 10 to 11 September 2019

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: 31 May 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
31/05/2018	Full	Good
03/08/2017	Full	Good
06/03/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
29/09/2016	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 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— understand and apply the home's statement of purpose; and 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(1)(a)(b)(2)(a)(b)(i)(iv))	31/10/2019
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 staff— take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare. (Regulation 12(1)(2)(a)(vi))	31/10/2019
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—	15/11/2019

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))	
The registered person must ensure that all employees— receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33(4)(b)) In particular, provide all staff with regular supervision and address practice-related issues effectively in supervision.	31/10/2019

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 the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The home should consider whether and how it can support the children to access a computer and the internet safely. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 29, paragraph 5.19)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children have stable and secure placements at this home. This stability gives them a sense of permanence. One child has just moved on after over five years at the home. Her move was well planned and managed. The registered manager visits the child in her new placement. The remaining children have been at the home for over one and two years, respectively.

The stability of placements gives children chances to work through issues and make good progress. Both children who live at the home currently are in full-time education. This is a significant improvement for them. It will enable them to improve their educational achievements and increase their chances later in life.

Children's health improves while they are at the home. Staff encourage children to attend routine appointments even when they are reluctant to do so. The staff make sure that children access health services that meet their individual needs. These include mental health services, work on substance misuse and therapy. One child has been able to reduce their medication while at the home.

The children have good relationships with the staff. A placing social worker said that her child gets on well with the staff and that the staff really care about the child. Another

social worker said that staff want the best for their child. Children enjoy spending time with staff, both at the home and during activities and trips. The staff and children have been away on holiday and on day trips to places like theme parks. All of this enables the children to have opportunities to experience enjoyable childhood activities.

The staff keep memory boxes for children. These boxes include photographs taken during the child's time at the home, reminders of the things that they have experienced, keepsakes such as brochures from places that they have been to and certificates that they have earned at school. These items will help the children to remember their childhoods and the time that they have spent at the home.

Some of the children are a long way from their family home areas. The staff take the children back to their home areas for visits when this is appropriate. The staff are working with one child's placing authority to help her maintain appropriate relationships in her home area, ready for a planned move back there in the future. This is particularly helpful as the child's home area is very different from the area in which the home is located.

There are clear plans for children. The staff know the children well. However, some staff were not fully aware of one aspect of a child's plan. This could lead to inconsistency among staff and confusion for the child.

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

Children are safer because of the work that staff do with them. The children go missing less than they did previously and, because of this, are less at risk of exploitation.

A placing social worker said that the staff are doing their best to keep their child safe and that they are working together to form strategies to reduce the risk of the child going missing. Another social worker said that the reduction in episodes of her child going missing and exploitation concerns is probably because of how settled she feels at the home.

When children do go missing from the home, the staff take appropriate actions to try and find them, report them as missing and make sure that they have return home interviews when they are back. There are alarms on children's bedroom doors and on external doors. The staff only activate the alarms on children's doors when they are needed. This prevents unnecessary intrusion into children's privacy.

Children said that they feel safe at the home. They can speak to staff about any worries or concerns. This is an important safeguard for them.

The staff are good at helping children to manage their behaviour. There has been a significant improvement in children's behaviour at the home and a reduction in calls to the police. The two children get on well at times, and there can be tensions between them at other times. Staff work in a restorative way to help the children manage their relationship. This helps the children to learn the skills to form social relationships.

One child is working with the youth offending team (YOT). The YOT worker said that staff take an interest in the work that she is doing and the ways in which they can support this. The worker said that there has been a 'dramatic' improvement for this child over the last four to six weeks.

The staff do some work with children to help them understand the risks of using the internet and social media. This could be improved through a greater understanding of the current issues and a more planned approach.

Staff know what they should do if they have any safeguarding or whistle-blowing concerns. However, when a member of staff did have concerns about a colleague's practice, the way in which they reported these, although immediate, led to a delay of three days before there was any further action. This did not have an impact on children because of the nature of the concern, but under other circumstances it could have done. It is important that staff follow the correct reporting procedures to make sure that there are safeguards for children.

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

The manager and staff care about the children and want them to do well. They know the children well. They are aware of their plans and of how they are progressing. However, some staff are not aware of the concept of unconditional positive regard, which is set out in the statement of purpose, as a way in which staff should work. Although, overall, the home does provide a safe and nurturing environment for children, it is misleading if staff do not work to the statement of purpose fully.

The registered manager works well with other agencies. She advocates for children and chases outstanding information. This helps to make sure that there is a consistent and effective approach to working with the children and a shared awareness of their plans.

Staff said that they value the management and leadership at the home, including their formal supervision. Most staff have regular supervision. However, the registered manager failed to address some significant and known practice issues for one member of staff. There was a gap of over 17 weeks between supervisions for this member of staff. Because of this, the opportunity to help the member of staff to understand the requirements of the role and make sure that they were fulfilling them was missed.

The registered manager monitors some elements of the home, but some significant areas have been missed. The staff training records are not up to date, and the registered manager is unaware of which staff members have undertaken which training. Although this information may be obtainable elsewhere, not having clear records at the home limits the opportunities to consider training through supervisions and to be sure that all staff have the training that they need.

Fire risk assessments are carried out and reviewed, but there are no clear records of whether the actions identified have been addressed. This could leave children at risk.

The registered manager and staff promote children's individuality and identity. Children can find out about and follow a chosen religion and express their sexuality with the support of staff. This encourages a sense of tolerance and acceptance for children.

Some areas of the home are worn or damaged. This does not provide a suitable homely environment for children. However, the provider is aware of these issues, and a major refurbishment was due to start a few days after the inspection.

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: SC370949

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Keys Care Limited

Registered provider address: C/o Pinsent Masons, 1 Lanyon Place, Belfast, Northern Ireland BT1 3LP

Responsible individual: Patricia James

Registered manager: Michelle Davie

Inspectors

Clive Lucas, social care inspector

Lianne Bradford, social care inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: <http://www.gov.uk/ofsted>

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