

SC370956

Registered provider: Keys Childcare Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is privately owned and is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to four young people who have emotional, social and behavioural difficulties. The manager was registered by Ofsted, for this home, in December 2016.

Inspection dates: 1 to 2 May 2019

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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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: 4 September 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/09/2018	Full	Good
09/01/2018	Full	Good
30/01/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
14/07/2016	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 positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop and to benefit from relationships. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure that staff— help each child to develop socially aware behaviour; de-escalate confrontations with or between children, or potentially violent behaviour by children; have the skills to recognise incidents or indications of bullying and how to deal with them; and that each child is encouraged to build and maintain positive relationships with others. (Regulation 11 (1)(2)(a)(ii)(xi)(xiii)(b))	06/06/2019
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— ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b)(2)(e))	06/06/2019
For the purposes of paragraph (3)(b), an individual who works in the home in a care role has the appropriate qualification if, by	06/06/2019

the relevant date, the individual has attained the Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare (England) ("the Level 3 Diploma"). (Regulation 32 (4)(a))	
The registered person must notify HMCI and each relevant person without delay if there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there. (Regulation 40 (c))	06/06/2019

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. 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)
- As outlined in 10.1, the registered person should plan staffing levels to ensure that they meet the needs of children and can respond flexibly to unexpected events or opportunities. Staffing structures should promote continuity of care from the child's perspective. If children complain or give a view on how the staffing structure could be improved to promote the best care for them, appropriate action should be taken. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 54, paragraph 10.15)

Inspection judgements

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

Young people's progress has been hampered because they have been involved in some worrying incidents. At times, this has included bullying of young people by other young people and aggression directed towards staff. The staff and manager have not taken sufficiently robust steps to prevent these incidents. This has negatively affected the lives of young people and requires improvement.

Young people's educational experiences are variable. One young person recently withdrew from a college course. She is now undertaking work set for her by staff. She is not in education, training or employment. Another young person is attending a local secondary school. Unfortunately, she is struggling with the expectations and demands of

school. Staff encourage and try to support young people with their education, but these efforts are not yet fully effective because the behaviour of young people is an obstacle to progress in education.

The manager and staff are working to improve the physical condition of the home, to ensure that it is comfortable, well decorated and free from damage. Work is yet to be completed. Some internal doors need replacing. For example, a young person's bedroom door is damaged. Internal decorating is required to make this a comfortable home that young people can be proud of.

Staff have demonstrated commitment, perseverance and understanding when faced with challenging behaviour from young people. This perseverance is helping to improve the relationships between young people and staff. Interactions between staff and young people are now more positive. Staff and young people are engaging in recreational activities and spending positive time together. This will help to develop the trust between young people and staff, which will help young people to become more settled and to engage more readily with support services.

Young people see family members and those close to them regularly. The manager and staff realise the importance of working to agreed plans set by local authorities regarding contact arrangements. Staff will transport young people, sometimes for significant distances, so that they can see those close to them. Young people are kept safe during family meetings and are provided with reassurance and support. Consequently, young people maintain important relationships and retain their family identity.

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

Young people's relationships have been poor at times, leading to incidents of bullying. One young person was particularly badly affected. She felt afraid of the behaviour of some young people and the aggression directed toward her. The manager and staff implemented various strategies to improve this situation, for example mediation between young people and additional staffing. This proved largely ineffective and the aggression continued until the placements of some young people came to an end.

Staff have struggled to manage the behaviour of some young people. Young people have been involved in incidents of worrying and risky behaviour. This has included assaults on staff that have required police involvement, and damage to the property has been caused. Young people have placed themselves at risk of harm through their behaviour. This has included bringing alcohol into the home, and staff have worried about potential drug misuse. Staff undertake individual work with young people and provide education and advice regarding the harmful impacts of alcohol, drug misuse and negative behaviour. This work has not yet been fully effective.

Young people have raised some concerns about the behaviour of staff towards them. The manager has dealt with the allegations appropriately, referring them to the correct agencies and undertaking thorough investigations. The manager failed to notify Ofsted

about one allegation against a member of staff. This prevented Ofsted evaluating the actions taken by the provider and other agencies to keep young people safe.

Staff undertake a wide range of training and development that helps them to understand the risks and vulnerabilities of young people. This training involves safeguarding, training in relation to self-harm and the actions that staff should take to prevent young people going missing from care. In addition to training, the manager and staff have carried out detailed work following incidents, including post-incident monitoring reports and a meeting with a psychotherapist. This has enabled managers and staff to learn valuable lessons from incidents, to better inform care practice when managing future incidents.

Young people are better safeguarded because the manager ensures compliance with safer recruitment procedures. Potential new staff undergo a full range of checks to ensure that they are safe to work with young people. These checks have extended to temporary staff when the manager has required their services. This reduces the risk of young people being harmed by those caring for them.

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

The home is led by an experienced and committed manager. He is undertaking the required qualification, the diploma level 5. He understands the importance of completing this qualification within the required timescale. Unfortunately, the manager has not ensured that two staff members have completed their qualification within the permitted timescales. This is a shortfall.

The manager knows that, over the past few months, young people have been at increased risk from bullying and have become involved in destructive and worrying behaviour. He has acted to try and address this situation. This has included ending some young people's placements. The manager has a plan for improvement. This plan requires implementation in order to place the home on a clear improvement trajectory and to help young people make progress, to fulfil their potential and to ensure their safety at all times.

Staffing levels have been variable at times. Several staff members have been on long-term sickness absence. Consequently, the manager has been reliant on agency staff and on drafting staff in from other homes. This has affected the consistency of care provided to young people and the way that behaviour has been managed overall. This is an improving situation, with permanent staff returning to work and active recruitment under way to fill vacant posts.

Staff report that they feel supported and listened to by the manager. They receive regular professional supervision. Their training and development needs are regularly appraised. The manager provides them with positive feedback and will, if required, provide staff with appropriate challenge over their care practice. The staff team members are supportive of each other and they benefit from good shift handovers and regular team meetings. This means that staff are becoming a more cohesive team, with care practice that is underpinned by good communication across the staff team. This

benefits young people.

The manager understands the strengths and weaknesses of the home. He has a range of systems to monitor the effectiveness of the care and support provided to young people. The manager benefits from strong independent visitor reports that identify areas which are working well and those needing strengthening. The manager benefits from good oversight by the area manager, including regular individual supervision and consistent support when required.

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: SC370956

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Keys Childcare 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: Adam Tarrant

Inspector:

Phillip Morris: social care inspector

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