

SC386505

Registered provider: Keys Education Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is one of several homes owned and managed by a limited company. The home provides care and support for up to three young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Inspection dates: 12 to 13 July 2017

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: 13 March 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: Declined in effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection

None

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because:

- The registered manager has addressed the majority of the issues from the last inspection. For example, the home is clean and tidy and the maintenance issues identified at the inspection have been addressed. A young person said that the

home looked so much better now.

- Young people are safe, happy, and healthy, and are taking part in education. They enjoy the same social experiences and activities as other young people.
- Young people are increasing in emotional resilience as they have very positive relationships with the staff. Consequently, they are able to talk to them about anything. Young people know that they are listened to and their wishes and feelings are carefully considered.
- Young people enjoy trusting and meaningful relationships with staff. They feel at home and develop a sense of belonging and stability. Staff are determined to maintain positive relationships when young people are struggling. As a result, young people enjoy spending time with them.
- Young people are protected from harm and are becoming increasingly safer. For example, the incidents of young people being missing from home are declining. Staff identify and understand the risks for each young person and take appropriate action to make sure they are safe.
- Young people are making good progress with regards to their education. Their attendance and attainment are improving and they have clear aspirations for their future employment opportunities. Staff are supportive and work in partnership with all education providers to ensure that each young person reaches their full potential.
- Complex contact arrangements are managed very well by staff. They go above and beyond to help young people feel safe and settled. This includes young people being able to see their family pets in the home.
- Monitoring of the home by the independent person is improving. The registered manager has a clear understanding of the key priorities for development in the home. He works collaboratively with senior managers and his deputy manager to bring about change, such as improving the quality of record-keeping.

The children's home's areas for development:

- Ensure that all maintenance issues are continually identified and are reported to the appropriate persons for repair work to commence.
- Ensure that the home's e-safety policy clearly outlines what staff should do in relation to reporting concerns around sexting and social media. Also, that the registered manager undertakes a refresher course in safeguarding.
- Ensure that young people's records contain up-to-date information, including how they are being supported in preparing to be a parent. In addition, ensure that the records are monitored effectively by the registered manager and senior staff.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
13/03/2017	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
13/12/2016	Full	Good
24/11/2015	Full	Good
29/09/2015	Full	Inadequate

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
12: The protection of children standard 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 premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health. (Regulation 12 (2)(d)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that maintenance work is reported and carried out swiftly.	30/08/2017
12: The protection of children standard 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 effectiveness of the home's child protection policies are monitored regularly. (Regulation 12 (2)(e)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that the policies surrounding e-safety and social media take into consideration relevant guidance on reporting concerns about sexual images and the action that staff should take.	30/08/2017
Ensure that the registered person maintains records ("case records") for each child, which include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child; are kept up to date; and are signed and dated by the author of each entry. (Regulation 36 (1) (a) (b) and (c)) In particular, ensure that care plans are in place for young people who are new to the home and other young people's plans reflect their current needs and support provided in relation	30/08/2017

to risk assessments, placement plans.	
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Recommendations

- Ensure that the registered manager undertakes a review that focuses on the care provided, the experiences of the children living there and the impact the care is having on the outcomes and improvements for the children. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.2)
In particular, ensure that the registered manager's reports are evaluative, identify what has gone well for young people, any shortfalls, and the action taken to address this.
- Ensure that staff understand and help young people to understand what makes a healthy, nurturing relationship. Young people should be supported to develop empathy towards each other. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 39, 8.10, 8.11)
Including preparing them to become parents in the future by exploring their rights and responsibilities, their emotional health and well-being, and where and how to access support.
- The registered person should ensure that skills in safeguarding are gained, refreshed and recorded in the home's workforce plan. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 43, 9.12)
In particular, ensure that the registered manager has up-to-date safeguarding training.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Young people enjoy trusting and meaningful relationships with the staff. Staff know the young people well and work out the best ways to engage with them. Staff are patient, and understand how difficult it may be for young people to learn to trust adults. They realise that some young people may need time and space to get to know new people and feel comfortable around them. The staff's friendly approach gives young people strong messages that staff care about them, are interested in their lives, and want what is best for them. Young people also become aware that this is a safe place for them to live. Young people who have moved in recently are developing positive relationships with staff and are beginning to show signs of settling in. Staff are sensitive to the young person's needs and provide lots of guidance, kind words and support. Young people are comfortable around staff.

Young people are provided with individualised care and support. However, this is not always recorded effectively in their plans. For example, some care plans do not reflect the upcoming changes for young people in relation to becoming a parent. This means

that while support is offered to help them to understand their rights, role and responsibilities, it is not happening in a planned or organised way. This means that vital information or access to services may be missed, leaving the young person at a disadvantage as to what to expect in the future. The registered manager is working with the social worker on ways to support the young person and their partner in the upcoming months, but again these plans have yet to be finalised.

Other young people are being appropriately prepared for their futures. All young people are encouraged to be as independent as possible. This includes keeping their bedrooms tidy, putting their laundry in the basket for washing and helping to prepare simple snacks.

Young people's healthcare plans are improving and staff clearly understand and address each young person's individual needs. Older young people are taking more responsibility for the self-administration of their medication. Staff actively promote young people's physical health and emotional well-being. They also encourage young people's awareness of healthy lifestyles, including the importance of healthy diets, exercise and good personal care.

Staff manage young people's specific health needs well. They closely monitor young people to make sure that they are healthy, supporting them to attend routine health checks, including the dentist and optician. Staff also ensure that young people always have suitable medical advice and treatment when they are feeling unwell. Staff help to improve young people's emotional well-being by providing them with warm and positive relationships that help them feel safe.

Young people's participation and progress in education has improved since they moved into the home. Staff support young people to establish improved routines which enable them to engage fully in education. Young people who previously missed a lot of school are now attending every day, working hard and achieving positive results. The registered manager and staff are ambitious for every young person to do well. A tutor has been employed for one young person who has recently moved into the home until a school place can be sourced for her. The young person is reluctant to engage with the tutor and has not been engaging with her education for some time. The tutor said that staff are guiding her as to how best to support the young person. As a result, the tutor is carrying out short burst of learning with her, so as to gain her confidence. This is helping the young person to settle into a new routine and environment.

One young person confidently explained that he was doing well in his building course at college. He has aspirations to pursue a career in the building trade once he completes his course. Staff said that he is working hard and is always up and ready to go to college. Another young person is now enjoying school. He spoke excitedly about the upcoming 'open day' and how he was looking forward to his dad being there. He invited various staff members as well, who declined, saying that he should enjoy his time with Dad, but that they wanted to know all about it later that day.

Young people only come to live at the home when the registered manager is satisfied

that the staff have the skills and expertise to meet each young person's assessed needs. Careful consideration is given to the impact on young people already living in the home. For example, the registered manager speaks to social workers and others, including the existing young people, to gain their views on new young people moving into the home.

Young people enjoy a wide range of self-chosen activities. One young person excitedly explained that he 'loves' to go horse riding on a Saturday. He rides Gypsy, who is a black and white horse. He confidently explained what he has to wear to keep himself safe and the treats he takes to Gypsy. Young people make positive friendships in the community. This is actively supported by staff, who make arrangements to take the young person and his friend out on a range of activities, such as going to the cinema. This supports the young person's friendships effectively and means that staff have a good understanding of who their friends are, their parents and where they live, as any good parent would do.

Staff manage young people's complex contact arrangements sensitively. They ensure that young people can see those people that are important to them. A positive example of this is the arrangement for an older sibling to bring the family dog to the home to see a young person. This was extremely well received by the young person, who visibly relaxed on seeing the family dog.

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

Young people live in a safe place and are protected from harm. They feel safe and are able to talk to members of staff if they are worried or upset. The registered manager and staff understand their roles and responsibilities in protecting young people. Their care and support are helping young people to be increasingly safe from the risks of abuse, neglect and exploitation. For example, through monitoring episodes of going missing from care, staff have successfully reduced these incidents for one young person. This is because they worked successfully with the social worker to allow the young person to have overnight stays with their partner. This means that they are no longer reported as being missing. However, their risk assessment has not been updated to reflect all of the current information. This means that valuable information is missing, which may hinder the staff's search for the young person or other enquiries.

Staff take appropriate action to involve social workers, the designated safeguarding officer and the police when they have concerns about young people's safety. They work effectively with young people, social workers, schools, health professionals and the police to understand and manage the risks to young people's welfare.

Staff are aware of the threat that the internet and social media can pose to young people's safety and well-being. Staff are aware of the need to report any concerns, such as sexting, to the registered manager or deputy and not to share the images with others as this can result in criminal charges against them. This is not reflected in the home's safeguarding and e-safety policy, which was updated in April 2017. The policy does not provide effective guidance to staff on how to manage such situations and

social media more generally.

Staff work effectively to help young people understand risks and to develop the skills to manage risk so that they can keep themselves and others safe. This has included helping young people to learn the skills required to resolve disagreements positively. This has seen a reduction in the number of physical interventions in the home.

Staff promote acceptable behaviour based on positive relationships with young people. They give young people clear and unambiguous expectations for behaviour. Staff constantly praise, reward and celebrate young people's achievements. Young people receive rewards for getting to school on time and helping to keep their home clean and tidy. These rewards support young people to understand the benefits of positive behaviour, make positive choices and to manage difficult emotions safely. A social worker said, 'Staff manage [name of young person]'s behaviours well. He has come on in leaps and bounds and is much happier.' Another professional said that the staff have never given up on their young person, saying, 'They have always been there supporting him despite his behaviour.' Staff use humour or negotiation to deflate any escalating situations effectively. This provides ample thinking time for young people, which allows them to consider what they are doing and change the course of their actions.

The maintenance and cleanliness of the home are much improved. Repairs have been carried out in the young people's bedrooms to replace damaged furniture, such as broken wardrobe doors. Window restrictors have been replaced to help keep young people safe. This has significantly enhanced the safety within the home and provides a more homely environment for young people. However, the monitoring of maintenance in the home is not yet robust. The letterbox on the front door has not been replaced, the electric cupboard to the side of the property is damaged and the door is unlocked. The stair and landing carpet is worn and is a tripping hazard. The registered manager and staff are not yet scrutinising the home on a daily basis to ensure that these issues are reported quickly and addressed.

Overall, young people are pleased with their bedrooms. Young people can see the improvements since the last inspection and said that the home is 'much better now.'

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

A qualified and committed registered manager leads the home. He is also the manager of another one-bed home a short distance away. A deputy manager supports him in the home. The registered manager and deputy have made good progress in addressing the shortfalls since the last inspection. As a result, young people are happier and more settled in the home and their health, well-being and safety are improving. The ongoing maintenance, e-safety policy and quality of record-keeping require further attention. However, the registered manager is aware of the areas for improvement and is taking steps to rectify them. The consequences of the shortfalls in recording are minimised as staff have a good understanding of each young person's current needs.

Monitoring by the independent person is helping to drive forward improvements in the

home. This is because they take the time to talk to the staff, the manager and young people as well as scrutinising records. Internal monitoring by the manager, deputy and senior staff in the home is not yet robust. They have missed errors in reporting and have not finalised a care plan for the newest young person in the home. The impact of this is minimised, as it is clear that detailed discussions are taking place on a daily basis about how to support the young person in the interim period.

All staff have high aspirations for young people. A staff member said, 'We want the young people to be able to experience everything any other child would, to be happy and safe and enjoy life.' Staff know the progress that young people are making and the areas where they need additional support, though this is not always reflected in their records. Staff are proud of the young people's achievements, such as their progression in school. For young people, their increased security and their sense of belonging in the home is a massive step forward for them. This is reflected in the friendships they are building with other young people. A young person said that they are 'happy here'. An independent reviewing officer said, 'I am impressed with the commitment of the staff at the home. The registered manager identified the need for additional staffing for [name of young person]. This happened and allowed him to settle.'

Staff have regular opportunities to enhance their skills, knowledge and understanding through training opportunities. They are up to date with all mandatory training, with the exception of the registered manager, who has not attended a refresher course for safeguarding. The registered manager has a clear understanding of his role and works effectively with social workers, placing authorities, police and local designated officers to keep young people safe.

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 difference 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: SC386505

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Keys Education Limited

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

Responsible individual: Marc Murphy

Registered manager: Michael Merrison

Inspector

Chris Scully, social care inspector

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