

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 owned and managed by a private company. The home provides care and support to three children who can no longer live at home.

The manager registered with Ofsted in September 2014.

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

Inspection dates: 29 to 30 September 2021

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: 11 March 2020

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/03/2020	Full	Good
30/01/2019	Full	Good
12/07/2017	Full	Good
13/03/2017	Interim	Declined in effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children benefit from well-planned and personalised care that promotes their needs effectively and this contributes to sustainable change and improvement in their lives. As a result, they make good progress in relation to their individual starting points across aspects of their physical, social, emotional and behavioural development.

There are effective plans in place for when children come to live at the home and children are part of the process. A child said, 'It was great to see where I was going and to meet everyone.' As a result, the child has settled well and reports that she has good relationships with the staff and other children living in the home. A social worker said, 'In terms of the placement, I feel [child] is very well supported by her keyworker and staff. Communication with myself has been excellent... I have established positive working relationships with a number of the team.'

Children said that their views, wishes and feelings are taken seriously. They have opportunities to talk to staff and they are encouraged to comment on all aspects of their care. Records that are kept in the home show the progress that children are making. However, there is little information on how this progress is achieved. Therefore, this does not show the child's journey throughout their stay at the home.

Children receive the support they need to sustain contact with their friends and families. As a result, they enjoy the time that they spend with the people that are most important to them.

Staff maintain effective partnerships with health professionals to promote children's physical and emotional well-being. In addition to this, children receive additional support with their mental health. As a result, they are learning to regulate their emotions and make positive changes in their behaviours. For example, children said that they can talk to staff about any concerns or anxieties that they have and this helps them to not let things build up or overwhelm them.

Children are encouraged to attend school, an alternative education provision or college. They receive the help and support they need to overcome the barriers they may have experienced with their education. Staff work closely with the providers of children's education and have all the necessary educational documents. However, information from these documents has not been included in the home's education plan, such as the child's attendance, academic level and educational targets. Therefore, staff did not know what levels the children were working towards. This hinders the staff's ability to help the children with their homework or educational projects.

Children are being prepared for becoming independent. For example, they are routinely involved in shopping, helping to prepare meals, doing their laundry and helping with chores in the home.

The home is warm, welcoming and decorated and furnished to a good standard. The children take pride in their home and help with chores. They personalise their bedrooms, which gives them a sense of belonging.

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

Children said that they were safe, happy and cared for well at this home. They said that they can talk to staff about anything and that this reassures them.

Risk-taking behaviours, such as going missing from care for lengthy periods of time, self-harm and substance misuse, have reduced significantly, considering children's starting points. Generally, staff have a good understanding of the children's specific needs and emerging vulnerabilities and take appropriate action to manage them. However, some children have different strands to their self-injurious behaviour, but they are not clearly separated within the child's risk assessment. These risks would require different responses and actions by the staff. In contrast to this, the staff training does cover all different aspects of self-injurious behaviour. Therefore, staff were able to demonstrate what action they would take if an incident was to occur.

Staff apply the home's rules and boundaries consistently to promote a safe environment for children. Children discuss the rules and boundaries of the home in their meetings. One child raised an issue of people talking over her. She suggested using a wooden spoon to hold up when it was the next person's turn to talk. Children said that this had been successful and that they all get their chance to talk and be heard.

Consequences used to address negative behaviour are monitored by the registered manager. This ensures that the use of consequences is balanced, fair and proportionate. Staff help young people to self-regulate their own behaviour. They anticipate issues well and have a good understanding of the triggers for children's behaviour. Consequently, staff respond to incidents in a calm, controlled, professional and sensitive way.

Children are protected from abuse and all other forms of significant harm. Staff are trained in child protection and are skilled and knowledgeable in relation to their safeguarding roles. Staff prioritise the safety of children and are always alert to the risk of harm. Children are kept safe and develop a strong sense of personal safety. Social workers said that multi-agency working and communication are a strong feature of the home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is led by a suitably qualified manager who has the experience to undertake his role. He oversees a stable staff team with the qualifications, training and experience needed to meet the specific needs of the children.

The registered manager leads the staff team by example. He is an inspirational leader who stimulates staff's enthusiasm and channels their efforts effectively. Staff share and implement the home's ethos, approach and philosophy in caring for children. They meet the aims and objectives, as set out in the home's statement of purpose, delivering a good-quality service for children. A social worker said, 'The placement is fantastic, and the child is improving in all areas.'

Staff maintain highly effective partnerships with the families of children, schools, social workers and other professional agencies to ensure that children benefit from effective help and the best possible all-round support. Staff ensure that the needs of children are prioritised and met effectively. However, the manager has not always sent notifications of serious events to Ofsted in a timely manner. This reduces the regulator's oversight.

Most of the staff have a recognised childcare qualification. Newer staff are working towards a childcare qualification. Training and development opportunities are detailed and thorough. Therapeutic support from a clinician provides additional support to staff. As a result, collectively, members of staff report that they are supportive of one another and are happy to come to work. Staff are positive, focused and enjoy their work. They said that they have the skills and opportunities to develop further.

The manager and senior staff provide regular supervision to the staff team. However, the senior staff have not received supervision training to help them in this role. This does not ensure that all staff receive the same quality of supervision that is based on informed practice. Further to this, the home's workforce plan does not detail the timescales for supervision of staff.

The registered manager uses the home's internal and external monitoring activities to identify improvements. But he has not reflected on the actions detailed within the last regulation 45 report to show how the home is continuing to improve or develop. This has not impacted on the good care that children receive.

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)) This is specifically in relation to ensuring that children's self-injurious risk assessments are clear.	31 December 2021
Employment of staff The registered person must ensure that all employees— receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(b)) In particular, ensure that supervisors receive supervision training.	31 December 2021

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff have the knowledge and skills to understand each child's education and training targets and their next steps for learning. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 27, paragraph 5.11)
- The registered person should have a workforce plan which can fulfil the workforce related requirements of regulation 16, schedule 1 (paragraphs 19 and 20). ('Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.8)

- The registered person should make best use of information from independent and internal monitoring. Specifically, ensure that the identified actions within the regulation 45 report are evaluated and reflected on. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24)
- The registered person should ensure that the home's records on each child represent a significant contribution to their life history. Specifically, ensure that the steps taken by staff to secure good progress and outcomes are clearly recorded within the young person's documents. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.5)
- The registered person should ensure that they have a system in place so that all serious events are notified, within 24 hours, to the appropriate people. Specifically, ensure that notifications are clear and that they are sent in a timely manner to Ofsted. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 63, paragraph 14.13)

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people, 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: 2nd Floor, Maybrook House, Queensway,
Halesowen, Worcestershire B63 4AH

Responsible individual: David Carser

Registered manager: Michael Merrison

Inspector

Pam Nuckley, Social Care Regulatory Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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

© Crown copyright 2021