

SC386505

Registered provider: Keys Education Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A private company owns this home. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for three young people who may have social and/or emotional difficulties.

The current manager was registered with Ofsted in June 2014.

Inspection dates: 30 to 31 January 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 **good**

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

Date of last inspection: 12 July 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/07/2017	Full	Good
13/03/2017	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
13/12/2016	Full	Good
24/11/2015	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 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 the safer area report is used in conjunction with a young person's impact risk assessment to ensure that the area is safe for them.	30/04/2019
Subject to paragraph (6), the registered person must establish a procedure for considering complaints made by or on behalf of children. (Regulation 39 (1)) This is specifically in relation to ensuring that external complaints and concerns are responded to formally.	30/04/2019
The registered person must ensure that all employees— receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(b))	30/04/2019
The registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ("a quality of care review") at least once every 6 months. In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating— the quality of care provided for children; the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it; and	30/04/2019

any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children. (Regulation 45 (1)(2)(a)(b)(c))	
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Recommendations

- Ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies on record keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective, and clear recording. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)
Further to this, ensure that all documents are signed by the author and manager.
- Ensure that the home's records on each child represent a significant contribution to their life history. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.5)
This is specifically in relation to ensuring that the steps taken by staff, to secure good progress and outcomes, are clearly recorded within the young person's documents.
- The registered person should ensure that staff can access appropriate facilities and resources to support their training needs. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.11)
In particular, ensure that staff receive bereavement training to support young people.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Young people live in a caring, friendly and supportive home. Staff give the young people the help that they need to flourish, by being patient, understanding and firm. A parent said, 'It is great to be met by smiling faces. I sleep so much better now because I know he is cared for well.'

Young people have good transitions in and out of the home. The transitional planning allows young people to visit the home prior to moving in, and to visit any proposed placement when moving on. The manager ensures that he has all the relevant documents from the local authority, so an informed decision can be made as to whether the staff can meet the young person's needs. This includes making sure that they are compatible with the other young people. The manager has a good safer area location report that identifies risks, such as the busy main road in front of the home, bodies of water close by and a bridge. However, he did not consider these risks in regard to the recent young person admitted to the home. Currently, this has not had an adverse impact on the young person's safety, but if not addressed it has the potential to do so.

Young people are making good progress in all areas of their lives, but the steps that

staff have taken to support them are not recorded well in the young people's records. Therefore, it is difficult to see their journey throughout the placement. In conjunction with this, several documents are unsigned by the author, staff and the manager. Some records have amendments that have been crossed out. This does not ensure that records are clear. However, young people's plans are updated regularly. Any changes to the plans are discussed thoroughly with the young people and during staff meetings. This means that everyone knows and understands what support young people need.

Young people can share their thoughts, views, wishes and feelings through regular key-worker sessions, house meetings and daily chats. Further to this, they are supported to attend their reviews and meetings. One young person said, 'The staff are great; they listen to me and help me to get my message across at meetings.' Young people talked about the range of activities that the home offers but mostly about how the staff welcome their friends into the home. One young person said, 'It is great - they can come and play on my console and staff sometimes pay for them to go out on an activity with me.'

All the young people are in school, and their attendance is good. Young people receive extra support from staff with any homework. One young person recently acknowledged that his maths needs improving, and the manager is seeking additional support for him. Another young person is making plans to go to college. Educational achievement is good because the staff work closely with educational professionals.

Young people are in good health and staff promote the importance of maintaining good health and general well-being. Staff have received training in administering medication. This means that the young people receive their medication in line with their prescription.

Young people have individualised contact arrangements in place to ensure that they see people who are important to them. These arrangements include taking some young people a good distance to their family home. A parent said, 'Contact has recently been established. I have visited the home and the manager has offered several options for my son to visit us, as we live quite a distance away. I cannot thank them enough.'

The home is warm and welcoming. The manager makes sure that any maintenance issues are rectified quickly. Young people said that they were fully involved with tasks in the home, such as decorating, food shopping and cleaning. Some tasks are given as an incentive or as part of building independence skills. As a result, one young person said that she was confident that she would have the necessary skills to look after herself when she moves on from the home.

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

Young people said that they have warm and trusting relationships with staff and feel safe. They said that they could approach any one of the staff and that they would listen, do what they could or pass on a concern to the right person. A professional said, 'The staff take pride in their relationships with the young people. I feel that [name of young person's] continuing progress is down to this.'

Staff attend regular training sessions. Training has included health and safety, child sexual exploitation and county lines. This is regularly refreshed. This means that the staff team has the skills and knowledge to support and keep young people safe.

Staff understand how to manage safeguarding incidents. The manager investigates these promptly, which ensures that the young people are safeguarded. Staff inform Ofsted when there are significant incidents in the home so that the regulator has oversight of patterns and trends.

There has been a significant reduction in young people going missing from the home. A professional said, 'The work that the staff have done with my young person is remarkable. By including her boyfriend, family, and listening to her, this has made a significant difference. I cannot thank them enough.' When young people do go missing, they are protected in line with agreed protocols. The manager ensures that an independent person completes return interviews. This means that young people have the opportunity to discuss any concerns with someone independent of the home.

The positive behaviour of young people is continually promoted and rewarded. Physical intervention had increased in recent months, due to a new young person's anxieties. A combination of constant reassurance and support from the staff has allowed the young person to settle into a routine. As a result, intervention has gradually reduced. Records show that the manager reviews the interventions and that debriefs take place with the young people and staff.

There are good reward and incentive systems in the home. The young people can earn extra money for helping around the home and keeping to their routines, such as attendance at school. Staff have celebrated accomplishments, such as good school reports, with the purchase of personal items. When young people stray from their routine or display unacceptable behaviour, they are offered a choice that includes a reparation task. This means that young people learn from their mistakes and can put things right.

The inspector did not look at staff recruitment files on this occasion. However, previous inspections have found the company's practice to be robust. Regular health and safety checks mean that the home is physically safe and secure.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is suitably qualified and experienced. He also manages another home that has been judged good by Ofsted. He spends equal time between the homes and he is supported by a deputy in each home.

Four members of staff have recently left the home for personal reasons and career opportunities. In the interim, two identified agency workers and two bank staff have covered the staffing shortfalls. The manager said this has ensured that the young people have consistency of care. A young person has developed a strong relationship with an

agency staff worker, and the agency staff worker has accepted a position within the home. Further to this, recent recruitment interviews have identified another two members of staff and they are awaiting checks to be completed to start work at the home.

Last year, staff supervisions were not regular because of staff shortages and staff sickness. The home did not have a deputy manager to cover the manager's paternity leave. Supervisions have improved with the recruitment of a deputy manager, and staff said that they feel supported by the manager. Most of the members of the staff team hold a relevant childcare qualification, and one member of staff is working towards this qualification. New staff have an induction to the company that consists of completing all mandatory training and undertaking shadow shifts within the home. Young people are given the opportunity to provide feedback on staff's performance as part of the member of staff's probationary period.

The manager and staff work collaboratively with a range of agencies and professionals involved in the young people's care. When services have been slow to respond, or not available, the manager has challenged these shortfalls effectively. For example, when the manager challenged a local authority about the lack of information within a new referral document, he was able to make an informed decision that the home could not meet the young person's needs. Similarly, the manager has challenged social workers effectively about the lack of paperwork, such as education and healthcare plans. This means that young people usually receive the services that they need, and staff have the knowledge to support young people well.

The young people, staff and the manager have generally good relationships with their neighbours, the community support worker from the police and with local amenities. However, a member of the public raised an anonymous complaint with the police about loud noises coming from the home. The police informed the manager, but he did not address this as a formal complaint. Therefore, it is difficult to see the action he took in response to this.

External monitoring of the home is good. The independent visitor regularly identifies areas for improvement, such as supervisions. However, the manager does not take the findings through to his monitoring and review report. Further to this, the manager's report lacks evaluation and does not include consultation with young people, parents, professionals and stakeholders to have an overall view of the service.

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: SC386505

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Keys Education Limited

Registered provider address: Keys Group, Maybrook House, Queensway, Halesowen, Worcestershire B63 4AH

Responsible individual: David Carser

Registered manager: Michael Merrison

Inspector

Pam Nuckley, social care regulatory inspector

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