

# SC386522

Registered provider: Keys Education Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

The home is privately owned. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to three young people who are unable to live in their family homes.

The current manager was registered with Ofsted on 24 March 2015.

**Inspection dates:** 22 to 23 October 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:** 8 October 2018

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** outstanding

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement    |
|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------------|
| 08/10/2018      | Full            | Outstanding             |
| 28/11/2017      | Full            | Outstanding             |
| 12/01/2017      | Interim         | Sustained effectiveness |
| 05/10/2016      | Full            | Outstanding             |

## 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   |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| <p>The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>the staff—</p> <p>assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child;</p> <p>have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm;</p> <p>take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare;</p> <p>that the home's day to day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and protect each child effectively from harm.</p> <p>(Regulation 12 (1)(2)(a)(i)(iii)(vi)(b)(d))</p> | 05/12/2019 |
| <p>The registered person must keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision.</p> <p>(Regulation 16 (3)(a)(b))</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 05/12/2019 |
| <p>The registered person must ensure that all employees—</p> <p>undertake appropriate continuing professionals development.</p> <p>(Regulation 33(4)(a))</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | 05/12/2019 |
| <p>The registered person must maintain 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)(c))</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 05/12/2019 |

### Recommendations

- Under regulation 46 the registered person should review the appropriateness and suitability of the location and premises of the home at least once a year. The review should include the identification of any risks and opportunities presented by the home's location and strategies for managing these. ('Guide to the children's homes

regulations including the quality standards', page 64, paragraph 15.1)

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good**

The quality of care provided to children and young people is nurturing, responsive and helping them to have a positive experience and make good progress in their lives. Staff support children and young people to make positive changes in their lives at their own pace. There is a real focus on mindfulness at the home, with many resources available to support staff to help children and young people to be positive about themselves and their lives. This allows them to develop in confidence, build on their self-esteem and trust the manager, staff and other professionals involved in their lives. A young person said, 'We are loved and get lots of hugs from the manager and staff. They are always there for us and will sort any problems out that we have.'

The registered manager and staff support children and young people to achieve in education. School attendance has improved for all children and young people. The registered manager has developed effective communication systems with education providers and has taken action to address any concerns as they arise.

Children and young people's health and well-being needs are met well. Routine and specialist health appointments are attended as necessary to ensure that they receive suitable support and intervention to meet their physical and emotional health needs. Staff spend time talking to the children and young people about health-related issues to raise their understanding and awareness of the importance of maintaining healthy lifestyles.

Care planning for children and young people is good. Plans are detailed and include relevant information relating to the needs of children and young people and the action required to ensure that these are met. Local authority care and placement plans are followed by staff. As a result, the placement aims and objectives for children and young people are achieved.

Referrals are carefully considered to ensure that staff understand the impact of a new child or young person moving into the home. The registered manager and staff considered the lesson learned from the negative impact a previous admission to the home had on the young people living there. This consideration means that the home only admits children and young people whose needs can be met, and who will not have a negative impact on the children and young people already living in the home.

The registered manager and staff support children and young people to maintain contact with the people who are important to them. They enjoy regular contact with family members and close friends. One young person's contact with her family has developed from being supervised to unsupervised and now includes overnight stays at the family home.

The relationships between staff and children and young people are trusting and nurturing. Staff spend time with the children and young people and they enjoy many activities together, such as attending a skate park, going to the cinema and shopping. Regular conversations and key-working sessions take place. These sessions are targeted to the individual needs of the children and young people.

The home was in the process of being fully redecorated during the inspection and there are plans for a conservatory to be fitted to improve the home environment. The children and young people have been fully involved in choosing the decoration for their bedrooms and other parts of the home. There are photographs of the children around the home. This demonstrates that children and young people feel valued, listened to and have a sense of belonging at the home.

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

There is good evidence that children and young people who live in this home are significantly safer because of the care and support that they receive. A young person said, 'The manager and staff do everything to keep us safe. We have regular discussions about risks that we may face, such as knife crime, sexual relationships, missing from home and mobile phone safety.' Consequently, children and young people feel safe and well cared for.

Children and young people have detailed and effective risk assessments that identify the strategies to manage and reduce risks. Risk assessments are generally regularly reviewed and updated when changes in risk are identified, which helps staff to keep the children and young people safe from harm. However, the risk assessment for one young person had not been updated following a missing-from-home incident a few days prior to the inspection. The delay in updating the risk assessment could potentially place the young person at risk of harm.

Records following a recent missing-from-home incident for two young people do not include sufficient information about the action taken by staff to locate the young people and encourage their quick and safe return home. Furthermore, the registered manager and staff did not consider the potential risks the young people faced during the time that they were missing. For example, despite one young person remaining missing overnight, the manager and staff felt that the young person was safe because they know her well and she had informed staff during a telephone call that she was 'fine'.

The registered manager and staff have established consistent boundaries in the home, and they have successfully supported children and young people to understand behavioural expectations. Furthermore, they help children and young people to respond to difficult emotions and situations in a safer way. As well as being good role models, staff utilise effective behaviour management strategies, such as de-escalation, rewarding positive behaviour and starting every day as 'a new day'. This approach means that children and young people are settled, and they are able to regulate their behaviour and emotions more effectively.

The home's location review contains limited information relating to the risks that the home's location presents. The location review does not demonstrate that the registered manager has sought safeguarding information and intelligence about risks in the community from other relevant professionals.

Recruitment practice is robust and safe. Recruitment checks, including Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks, gaps in employment and references are obtained, explored and verified to make sure that only the most suitable staff care for children and young people.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good**

The registered manager is experienced in children's residential care and appropriately qualified for her role. She demonstrates genuine commitment and high aspirations for the children and young people in her care. Feedback from staff and external professionals on the leadership of the home is without exception positive. A headteacher commented on the registered manager and staff's holistic approach and drive to achieve the best for children and young people.

Children and young people are cared for by a committed staff team whose members share an ethos of providing good-quality care. Since the last inspection, a number of long-standing members of staff have left due to their own personal circumstances. Therefore, almost half of the staff team are new staff, with little experience of working in children's residential care. The registered manager and experienced staff team members have supported the less-experienced staff as best they can.

Recording systems are a particular concern for the registered manager. A new electronic recording system has been implemented by the company which is not currently effective. For example, due to the poor wi-fi at the home, the system will often crash, resulting in information being lost. Additionally, some records cannot be fully completed or evaluated by the registered manager until all tasks have been completed, for example debriefs and independent return home interviews. Consequently, the delay in the registered manager evaluating incidents can result in poor practice not being identified and addressed. This was evident in a missing-from-home incident record viewed at this inspection. Although this did not impact directly on the young person, it has the potential to do so.

Staff receive regular supervision that helps them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children and young people. Additionally, team meetings also allow the manager and staff the opportunity to discuss the needs and progress of the young people, staff practice, and to share information from training and research, which enhances their knowledge and skills. However, despite staff being asked to research county lines and online safety for a team meeting, there was no evidence of this being completed.

Some staff have not completed all of the mandatory training refresher courses required by the company, such as the administration of medication, emergency first aid and fire safety. Furthermore, staff would benefit from formal training on safeguarding matters, such as county lines, to equip them with the knowledge, understanding and skills to

manage all potential risks.

The home's statement of purpose is child-focused, and it sets out the home's ethos and how the manager and staff will meet the needs of the children and young people they care for. However, a child was admitted to the home against the age range identified in the statement of purpose. Furthermore, the statement of purpose has not been sent to Ofsted when it has been updated in line with regulation.

## **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:** SC386522

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** Keys Education Ltd

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

**Responsible individual:** David Carser

**Registered manager:** Susan Davies

## Inspector

Lisa Mulcahy, social care inspector

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