

SC389174

Registered provider: Keys Group Progressive Care & Education Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to seven children who have learning and/or physical difficulties. Since the last inspection, there has been considerable investment to redesign the home to support an application for a change in registration. This was successful; four children can be accommodated as permanent placements and three children on short breaks. The home is privately owned by a large organisation. The parent company has changed since the last inspection.

Inspection dates: 13 to 14 November 2017

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
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The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: 8 February 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection:

None

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is outstanding because:

- The registered manager has shown exceptional leadership during a period of significant change and challenge. She has written a succinct statement of purpose that clearly describes the new profile of the home.
- The registered manager works well with a range of other professionals to ensure that the needs of children are met, for example by providing training for staff that is pertinent to the current cohort of children.
- The registered manager and staff monitor the home extremely well, especially through the monitoring and evaluation of incidents.
- The staff team is creative and innovative in its approach. This has resulted in children developing independence skills.
- Staff persist in their approach to reduce children's anxiety. This has resulted in children undergoing health procedures that were once thought to be impossible.
- Staff demonstrate a firm commitment to meet the needs of the children. They show remarkable resilience when tackling challenging behaviour that puts their own well-being at risk.
- Children feel safe in the home. Staff follow all plans carefully to promote children's welfare. They understand and follow child protection procedures. They challenge each other's practice when they believe it falls short of the high standards that are central to the culture of the home.
- Children with social interaction difficulties due to their disabilities make remarkable progress in their integration into the community.
- Staff use all means at their disposal to support children to go to school, for example by using a particular method of transport that a child enjoys.
- Children with communication difficulties have a voice. Staff understand what they are trying to say through speech, actions, picture exchange or behaviour.
- Children enjoy great relationships with staff and have 'pet names' for some of them. Staff enjoy spending a considerable amount of time with the children in their care and are highly responsive to their needs.

The children's home's areas for development:

- On occasion, children use worktops in the kitchen area as a place to eat their food. The worktops are showing signs of wear and tear with no plans to replace them. This detracts from the homely environment.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
08/02/2017	Full	Good
13/09/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
20/01/2016	Full	Outstanding
19/10/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

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. In particular, consider replacing the kitchen worktops. (Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards, page 15, paragraph 3.9) In particular, consider replacing the kitchen worktops.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children enjoy living permanently in the home or while they're on a short break. A parent said that their child is very happy in the home and checks his timetable to see if he is going for his short break as he looks forward to it so much. Children enjoy a wide range of activities outside the home such as a visit to see a steam train, fruit picking and a trip to the fun fair. They also love the activities within the home such as dressing up, baking and playing with a train set. A child with dyspraxia learned how to skip for the first time. Staff are innovative in their approach, for example purchasing different fabrics to meet a child's sensory needs. A parent said, 'My daughter is always happy to be there. They offer wonderful opportunities that she might not have at home.'

Children who experience social integration difficulties due to their disabilities make significant progress in their interaction with the community. They visit neighbouring homes within the same organisation for parties. They bake cakes and sell them for charity coffee mornings. They visit the local town to go to a cafe, including some children who previously experienced severe anxiety about travel and social interaction. A parent said, 'This is a massive step. We could not have imagined this a year ago.' A statutory report stated that this was a significant achievement from the previous experience where getting into a car was very traumatic for the child.

Children are not lonely in this home. Staff promote peer relationships within the home, including between children who are on short breaks and those who are placed more permanently. For example, they share the garden equipment including the hot tub. They do friendship art together and celebrate key anniversaries. Staff are aware of key events in other cultures and celebrate them. Children enjoy dressing up in clothes, sampling foods from other cultures and engaging in art projects to understand different religions. Staff were successful in finding a local special needs football team where a child has been able to make friends.

Children make significant progress in their health. They are able to attend health appointments and undergo health procedures that were once thought to be impossible. This has had a significant impact on their lives, such as a child no longer needing leg callipers and another child being able to have an eye test for the first time in nine years.

Staff follow detailed medication procedures to ensure that children receive the correct medication at the right time. This is especially pertinent for children on multiple medications who access the short break service. Staff ensure that medication supplies correspond with stock that they sign in and out of the home following the administration of medication during short breaks, to ensure that there have been no mistakes. Staff adopt the protocols for epilepsy management as advised by the epilepsy nurse.

Staff consider children's emotional health to be equally as important as their physical health. They ask children how they are feeling and interpret their mood from their behaviour. Children trust staff to understand their feelings, such as when children need some space or want to sit quietly. A professional said, 'Many homes would not have achieved the progress this child has made in settling emotionally and in trusting the support he receives.'

Staff are resourceful and creative in supporting children to go to school, some of whom experience long journeys. Staff make the most of children's interests, such as in trains by supporting a child to take the train to school. One child is currently experiencing difficulties in travelling to school. Staff have quickly involved other professionals to try to understand the underlying reasons for this and to agree strategies to resolve them. This is an ongoing area of work. Staff recognise that learning also occurs outside the school environment. A professional said, 'Although the home is not an educational placement they teach the children functional skills such as using money and counting.'

Children enjoy great relationships with staff. Some children like to give the staff 'pet names' that they find funny. Staff accept this and laugh along with them. It is clear that staff enjoy spending large amounts of time with the children. They are attentive to children's needs and what they are saying, understanding their individual idiosyncrasies. Staff are able to adjust care plans because of this careful attention to the children. An example is when a child pushed their plate away and left the room. Staff recognised this as unusual behaviour for this child and recorded the dislike of that particular meal in the care plan.

Children live in an environment where staff have adapted to meet their needs. For example, staff have purchased a specialist mattress for a child who is prone to destroying conventional mattresses. Children personalise their bedrooms, such as by the choice of colour. They also choose the furniture they would like, for example a standing mirror. Some children elect to have little furniture in their room, preferring a low arousal environment.

Staff employ an excellent approach in supporting children toward independence. The registered manager is inventive in her approach. For example, she commissioned an engineer to build a bespoke piece of equipment to help a child in the bathroom. The approach was successful. Children achieve far more independence with their personal care than was once thought achievable. Staff encourage children to develop their independence skills. Staff help them to manage a budget and to shop for items for their particular diets. Some children like to vacuum their own rooms.

Parents report excellent contact with their children, whether the children are living in the home or accessing the short-breaks service. Parents are confident that staff will contact them about any issues. They know how to access the complaints procedure if they are unhappy with any aspect of the care. There has been one complaint since the last inspection; the registered manager addressed this complaint to the parent's satisfaction.

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

Children are safe and secure in this provision. A parent said, 'My son sees it as a home from home.' Staff are attentive to what children are saying, no matter what their communication method. Staff are especially adept at interpreting what children are saying through their behaviour. They modify their approach or their plans to respond to the changing needs of the children. This means that children's anxiety is minimised as much as possible.

The registered manager has introduced a comprehensive child protection policy that staff understand and follow. Staff listen to children and report any worries they raise through the correct channels, for example through designated safeguarding professionals in the child's school. Staff hold each other to account and challenge each other's practice when they feel it falls short of the high standards embedded into the culture of the home. They raise any concerns with the registered manager who works exceptionally well with safeguarding professionals, seeking advice where necessary. All are kept safe in the event of a concern while necessary enquires are made. The registered manager is diligent at keeping a written audit trail that clearly shows the decision-making process to support any action taken because of a concern. Staff use body maps to record any marks or scratches they observe. They are aware of the type of self-injuries a child may inflict and are conscientious about reporting anything out of the ordinary.

Staff are trained in the home's chosen method of behaviour management intervention. They are skilled at using de-escalation and distraction techniques to minimise the use of physical intervention. They show remarkable resilience when faced with violent and challenging behaviour that puts their own safety at risk. They persist with the agreed strategies and contribute to professional reviews to understand and modify behaviour, for example through a change in medication. A placing social worker said, 'The staff have done brilliantly with (name of child). They have persisted when no specific triggers have been identified.' The registered manager works exceptionally well with others to increase her understanding of changing behaviours. She exhausts all options before requesting alternative provision. A parent said, 'The staff have been wonderful. They have done everything to accommodate my child.' A professional said, 'Things are stable for (name of child) as the staff are calm and are not phased when there is challenging behaviour.'

The registered manager adopts safer recruitment practice. She uses questions posed by young people during the interview process and explores applicants' understanding of equality, diversion and inclusion.

Individual risk assessments inform staff how to keep children as safe as possible in all they do inside and outside the home. Due to the close supervision needed because of each child's disability, missing from care is not an issue. External contractors verify the physical safety of the environment. The registered manager challenges staff who, on occasion, prop fire doors open. Personal emergency evacuation plans are in place for each child so that staff know what to do in the event of an emergency evacuation. In this home, staff and managers ensure that the safety of the environment is afforded the utmost importance.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The registered manager has the necessary qualifications and experience. She is providing exceptional leadership. She has worked with experts to make extensive modifications to the building in order to cater for children on permanent placements as well as children on short breaks. The result is a warm and homely environment where children can enjoy their own living environments with an appropriate amount of separation, such as their own lounge and kitchen. Some children who are placed permanently in the home may choose to eat their meals in their kitchen, sitting at the worktop. This is chipped in some places along the edges, detracting from the otherwise homely environment.

The registered manager has led the home exceptionally well through this period of change. During the significant refurbishment works, she ensured that there was minimal disruption to the service, for example organising building works when children were not present in the home. The registered manager has shown excellent consideration of the needs of children who have disabilities. For example, she ensured that a slope was constructed so that wheelchair users can access the rear garden through the same door as non-wheelchair users.

The registered manager has rewritten the statement of purpose to reflect the amended category of registration. The presentation of this document is concise, ensuring that placing social workers are clear about the service that the home provides.

Since the last inspection, the registered manager proved the efficacy of her contingency plan in a real situation when there was a major water leak making some parts of the home temporarily uninhabitable. She made excellent arrangements for the care of children while the repairs were made.

The registered manager works extremely well with other professionals such as speech and language therapists and occupational therapists. She advocates for young people who are experiencing difficulties, for instance seeking advice from a behavioural support specialist. She utilises the skills of other professionals well, for example in providing staff with training in writing social stories.

The registered manager is effective in her monitoring of the home. She uses the statutory reporting systems to drive improvement. She keeps a close eye on significant incidents and ensures that staff are properly debriefed. She works with staff to reflect on

antecedents and to agree future strategies. Key workers are attentive to the ongoing and emerging needs of their key child. They are meticulous in their approach such as producing a monthly analysis of incidents in a visual format to inform other staff of trends.

The registered manager has addressed the challenges of staff recruitment. She has employed a number of new staff since the last inspection. She has used an experienced bank team as well as regular agency staff. Agency staff show a remarkable knowledge of the children, and their positive relationships with children were evident during the inspection.

The registered manager emphasises the importance of clear placement plans. These plans are comprehensive and are exemplary, including those for children on short breaks. They contain specific details about children's individual needs, such as an autism profile with targets for development and strategies to modulate arousal. She ensures that transition teams are involved at the right time and that plans for permanency are in place. She requests that placing social workers consider making applications for deprivation of liberty orders if necessary, as recommended at the previous inspection.

The registered manager demonstrates a determination to meet the holistic needs of each child, including those accessing the short-break service. She ensures that key staff provide comprehensive reports to reviews and that they attend in person if she is unable to. The registered manager has recently introduced a template to record outcomes from statutory reviews so that staff can take the agreed actions before the circulation of formal minutes. On occasion, the registered manager challenges other professionals, for example when she believes that minutes of a statutory meeting do not accurately reflect the discussion.

Staff hold the registered manager and their supervising managers in high regard. They value the support and guidance given both informally and through the supervision process. Staff are positive about the openness and availability of the management team. The registered manager keeps excellent records to track staff contact through, for example, formal supervision, team meetings and reflective discussions. Her meticulous oversight ensures that individuals are not isolated and that they receive the support they need.

The staff team is competent and professional. Staff speak of their desire to provide the best possible care and are equipped to do this through their individual professional development plans. They value each other's skills and work well together as a team, putting the needs of children first. A member of staff said, 'We are a very good, capable team, passionate in what we do.' A professional said, 'In all our dealings with the home, the needs of children come first and staff go out of their way to effect positive outcomes for those in their care.'

Parents say that all staff know their children well and can report on their children's day whenever they telephone for an update. Professionals report excellent working relationships and communication with the staff. Staff notify the relevant agencies,

including Ofsted, of significant events.

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: SC389174

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Keys Group Progressive Care & Education Limited

Registered provider address: Keys Attachment Centre, New Hall Hey Road,
Rossendale BB4 6HR

Responsible individual: Michelle Callard

Registered manager: Anna Satterthwaite

Inspector

Keith Riley, social care inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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