

SC397112

Registered provider: Keys ACE Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a private organisation. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to four children who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

The registered manager has been in post since July 2015.

Inspection dates: 26 to 27 September 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 **outstanding**

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

Date of last inspection: 12 November 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/11/2018	Full	Good
26/09/2017	Full	Good
08/03/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
06/12/2016	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 quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff— treat each child with dignity and respect. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b)(2)(b)(iii))	08/11/2019

Recommendations

- Staff should be familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. Staff should record information on individual children in a non-stigmatising way that distinguishes between fact, opinion and third-party information. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

In particular, staff should avoid the use of language that is not helpful to a young person's understanding.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Young people feel loved and cherished in the home. They are excited to share with the staff what they have been doing at school and when they return from seeing the people who are important to them. The staff show a genuine interest and constantly praise young people's progress and achievements.

Most young people make significant, positive and sustained progress from their starting points. Almost all have 100% attendance at school and college and are meeting or exceeding their educational targets. Young people enjoy a range of opportunities, including the school leavers prom, overseas school trips, Duke of Edinburgh's awards, voluntary work and they have represented Great Britain in international competition overseas. The home works well with schools to ensure that thorough planning is in place, so that young people can access the same opportunities as their peers who are not children looked after.

Young people enjoy good health and attend their appointments. Staff work with them in one-to-one sessions to help them understand personal health issues, including the onset of puberty and sexual health. The provider's therapeutic team support young people with their emotional well-being, to help them understand their feelings and to develop resilience. Care is now delivered within a therapeutic framework, with regular review of young people's progress, so that it is responsive to their needs. Young people are growing in confidence and can manage difficulties, for example in friendships, more assertively.

Activities both within and outside of the home are encouraged. Young people enjoy baking to raise money for charity, attend performing arts courses, care for their own pets and go for days out. They get to see the people who are important to them, such as family members and former foster carers, including overnight stays. This supports young people's sense of identity and, for some, is part of careful care planning with placing authorities to eventually move to foster care.

Young people who have made the transition to semi-independent or independent living are well prepared for this significant move. Some maintain telephone contact with the staff long after they have left the home. If young people share any concerns about their ability to manage living independently, the staff are proactive in communicating this with the placing authority.

If a young person's progress falters, or if there are safeguarding implications for other young people living at the home, the manager reviews the placement and appropriately notifies the placing authority. Placing authorities acknowledge the way that the home works with them until an alternative placement can be found.

Young people have a valued voice in the development of the home, through regular meetings and individual consultations. The home is currently going through a

comprehensive refurbishment to update and improve the physical environment and young people have already been involved in making changes and suggestions.

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

The staff have a good understanding of, and respond appropriately to, risks to young people's safety and well-being. Risk management plans are regularly reviewed and updated in response to any emerging risks. Direct work with young people helps them to understand why the staff are concerned. Young people say they feel safe and that their worries are listened to. They are confident that if they make a complaint, it will be responded to and resolved.

The police missing from home coordinator was positive in her feedback of how the staff follow procedures appropriately. The staff maintain regular contact with young people via telephone and face-to-face contact to ensure their welfare when they are away from the home. The staff have a good understanding of pull factors and do all that they can to encourage young people to return.

Working in partnership with social workers and other safeguarding professionals is effective to ensure that any risks to young people are minimised, for example when they are on activities outside of the home. This has enabled young people to enjoy opportunities overseas safely. It has also addressed safeguarding concerns within the community after the home's staff raised concerns through child protection procedures. The home's staff take advice and guidance from placing authorities to manage any safeguarding incidents between young people living at the home.

The home is currently undergoing extensive refurbishment and redecoration. External contractors are appropriately vetted by the provider before working in the home. However, during the inspection, it became apparent that some information had been shared about a young person who was away on an activity. While this did not compromise the young person's safety, it was not necessary for the details of the activity to be provided. The manager is acting to address the issue, to ensure that young people's information is respected.

Young people generally respond well to guidance from the staff. Negative consequences are rarely needed to address poor behaviour. When they are needed, there is good management oversight to ensure that they are fair and effective. Where necessary, the manager will ensure that the staff take a different approach and use direct work with young people to help them to understand and improve their behaviour instead. Young people's comments in the records show that they understand why their behaviour has been unacceptable. However, on some occasions, staff have used judgmental language that is not helpful to young people.

The use of physical intervention has reduced over time and significantly so for one young person since first arriving at the home. The staff use information shared by young people in debriefs to learn how to respond differently, and to help young people to regulate their emotions more positively.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The home is led by an experienced registered manager, who has the highest aspirations for young people who live there. Since the last inspection, he has led the staff team through significant changes in the practice approach used in the home and in recording systems. He has delegated more day-to-day tasks to the two deputy managers and is in the process of empowering the whole team to take greater responsibility in all areas of running the home. This allows the manager to have greater oversight in his own monitoring, and clarity in developing the service to improve outcomes for young people.

The manager is well supported by the current responsible individual, and through more comprehensive independent external monitoring visits, to drive forward improvements in the home and staff practice, and to improve young people's lives.

The manager has a clear focus on learning and responding to any occurring events. Evaluation of any significant events seeks to improve young people's experiences and informs practice. The manager is confident in challenging placing authorities and in acting as a strong advocate to ensure that young people's needs are met, particularly if they are placed away from their home locality. This ensures that services are in place to maximise young people's opportunities and achievements. As a result, most young people's progress is aligned with the placing authorities' plans.

There is clear, proactive communication between leaders and managers of the home and external professionals. Ongoing liaison ensures that any safeguarding concerns are addressed. Feedback from other professionals is positive. Many professionals note the quality of the relationships developed between the staff and young people. One social worker commented on the willingness of the team to work with the local authority beyond a notice period to enable an alternative placement to be found. She has recommended the home to commissioners and would be willing to place another young person there.

The staff feel supported and receive regular, high-quality and child-focused supervision. New staff are carefully vetted to ensure that they are suitable to work with young people. They complete all mandatory training through their induction before commencing shifts and are enrolled on to a suitable qualification. The staff currently undertaking the qualification are expected to complete within timescales. All staff access a range of training opportunities which specifically meet the needs of the young people. Training is identified through supervision and appraisal to ensure ongoing professional development.

A therapist now attends monthly team meetings to support practice within the research-informed approach being embedded. The staff are honest about the challenge of new ways of working but are positive about how this improves and guides their practice. Staff show genuine interest, warmth and compassion, which supports young people's developing confidence and progress. There is pride in, and celebration of, everything that young people achieve.

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: SC397112

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Keys ACE Limited

Registered provider address: Second Floor, Maybrook House, Queensway,
Halesowen, Worcestershire B63 4AH

Responsible individual: Sylvia Eboigbe

Registered manager: James Dawson

Inspector

Karen Willson: social care 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 looked after children, 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 <http://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://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted>.

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: <http://www.gov.uk/ofsted>

© Crown copyright 2019