

SC429011

Registered provider: Keys Care Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is run by a large private organisation that operates a range of services nationally. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to three children.

This home is one of a group of six that make up a cross-regional project commissioned by six local authorities to provide a residential service for children in their local area. Children living at the home may attend a school also run by the provider and have access to in-house therapeutic support.

The manager was registered with Ofsted in July 2014.

Inspection dates: 31 July to 1 August 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: 24 April 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
24/04/2018	Full	Good
14/08/2017	Full	Good
12/01/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
07/07/2016	Full	Good

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

Recommendations

- Staff skills for safeguarding should include being able to identify signs that children may be at risk, and support children in strategies to manage and reduce any risks. Staff should encourage children to express their views about whether they feel safe both within and outside the home. Staff should support children to understand how to ask for help to stay safe and that the home is an environment which supports this. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 43, paragraph 9.10)
Specifically, recognising the impact of children's behaviour on other residents in the home.
- The registered person should only accept placements for children where they are satisfied that the home can respond effectively to the child's assessed needs as recorded in the child's relevant plans and where they have fully considered the impact that the placement will have on the existing group of children. The Statement of Purpose is an important document in the process of care planning as it sets out the needs of children the home is set up and equipped to care for. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 56, paragraph 11.4)
Specifically, strengthening the impact assessment to assess the likely risk posed between children placed together.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children experience warmth and attentiveness from staff who work closely with each child to provide a special home. One staff member commented, 'There is a personal touch to this home; staff are intertwined in the children's lives in a good way. This is a big family and we show the children how good life can be.' This is reflected in the quality of the relationships and level of respect evident between the children and staff.

Children enjoy living in this home, having built positive relationships with staff whom they trust. They receive support, which enables them to explore matters that are of importance, such as their health, relationships and well-being. With assistance, children are able to recognise their own talents and develop new interests, whether this is playing a new instrument or exploring their interest in beauty and fashion. The range of activities offered encourage children's curiosity, awareness and understanding of the wider world.

The manager has created a beautifully illustrated leather-bound journal. This is a story

of the life of the home as a 'family' celebrating the success of everyone. The pages are full of pictures and narratives of happy and funny memories. A 'word of the month', drawings, shared goals and the occasional joke truly capture the ethos of the home.

The manager has taken a creative approach to acquiring feedback from the children, their families, professionals and staff. She has introduced a range of appealing and unique hand-drawn forms to achieve this, resulting in a significant improvement in the quantity and scope of feedback received. Responses are used to influence change, and continuously improve the quality of care.

Children's opinions are actively sought and acted on. Daily discussions, one-to-ones and house meetings enable the children to influence every aspect of their care and contribute suggestions about the way the home is run. This includes recruitment of staff, improvements in the home and planning holidays abroad. Children are confident in how to raise a complaint and are supported to access independent advocates. This guarantees that the children's voice is heard.

Children engage in education. Bespoke packages are tailored to meet their individual needs. Close relationships between staff in the home and in schools ensure that children are fully supported. This has led to children achieving excellent attendance and results. One child's behaviour in school has improved significantly, which has improved their performance and resulted in them achieving excellent grades in their mock GCSEs. Another child, who suffers with a high level of anxiety, has been supported to prepare them for college by staff using a thoughtful relationship-based approach.

Good health is actively promoted. Staff work closely with a range of specialist health services to ensure that children receive the correct intervention. Staff recognise the connection between low self-esteem and health promotion. They offer a sensitive and supportive approach in addressing health needs and building confidence. As a result, children are encouraged to pursue a healthy lifestyle, good diet, self-care and healthy activities.

Staff create a welcoming and comfortable atmosphere in the home. The accommodation is full of character and well maintained. The children's bedrooms are spacious and uniquely decorated, and reflect their personalities and interests. The value of caring for pets is encouraged, with one child enjoying the responsibility of caring for their ever-increasing family of hamsters. Two homely lounges provide children with ample space to relax. A trampoline and large paddling pool encourage children to enjoy the garden.

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

The registered manager and the staff know the children extremely well. All the children benefit from the support available through the Cross Regional Project (CRP). This includes support from a range of specialists who work with the team and the children

through a range of assessment and consultation processes. This analytical approach informs care practice and enables progress to be carefully measured.

Risk assessments are relevant and frequently reviewed. They guide staff on how to minimise the risks arising from the children's behaviour. The manager's analysis of incidents is reflective and comprehensive. This enables the team to modify its responses and identify and review the most effective strategies to support the children.

New admissions have been carefully considered since the last inspection. Comprehensive assessments are completed in matching the needs of the children. However, they do not fully capture the potential impact that children's behaviours could have on each other.

Staff use a restorative approach to address and help children take responsibility for their behaviour. When incidents occur, children are helped to reflect on, and explore, their actions and the impact they have on others. Staff utilise support from the youth offending service and local police to provide early intervention when required. One child, with a history of being bullied, was supported to attend a national bullying event. With ongoing guidance from staff, they are becoming more assertive in managing healthy relationships.

Staff faced some significant challenges when one child's behaviour escalated. They tried several creative interventions to support the child and managed this difficult situation well. Ultimately, staff recognised that the placement had become non-viable, and made plans for the child to move on. However, in the interim their behaviour had some negative impact on other children in the home.

Staff value the monthly consultations with the therapist attached to the CRP project. This reinforces and advances the team's skills in delivering therapeutic care. Child-focused discussions support the staff to adapt and develop their approach and gain resilience in handling the children's behaviour. Staff provide the children with insight into their behaviour and explore strategies to help them in regulating their emotions. As a result, children are not engaging in risk-taking behaviours and incidents are now rare.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The registered manager leads the home with skill and dedication. Her devotion to the team and children is highly valued and respected. Staff describe her as 'relaxed but assertive' and a 'great manager with excellent leadership skills'. The manager has completed a 'Future Leader Programme' and has a plan to undertake a 'Visionary Leaders' course next. This commitment to her professional development has enhanced her skills and effectiveness as a leader.

The manager has established excellent relationships with a range of professionals. The CRP is successful in providing a consistent therapeutic approach across health, education and the home in providing good-quality support to the children. Established links with the police enable risk factors and intelligence to be shared. A joint forum involving other

providers is highly valued by the manager, enabling her to build relationships and extend her knowledge of a range of specialist services.

The manager and senior leaders in the organisation demonstrate an ongoing commitment to improving the quality of care for the children. Strategic decisions have resulted in an increase in staff numbers. Staff are carefully selected to ensure that there is a good balance of experience and skills in building the strength and impact of the team.

New staff are provided with a comprehensive induction into the therapeutic model of care and the ethos of the home. A period of shadowing experienced staff provides excellent support and mentoring, and encourages inclusion. Relationships in the team are based on mutual respect and staff report that morale is high.

The manager places great emphasis on the well-being of her team. Regular supervision allows staff to reflect and develop their practice. Appraisal meetings offer an opportunity to celebrate achievements, and there is a strong focus on self-development. Staff feel valued and supported, which builds their confidence and helps them to learn and grow. This deepens their skills and strengthens their practice.

Training is extensive and ensures that staff are provided with the necessary tools to upskill. The impact of training is regularly reviewed, with a focus on extending new training opportunities to advance practice.

Overall, the leadership and management of this service is excellent. The manager is diligent and forward-thinking, with a clear understanding of the strengths of her service. She utilises the support from her senior staff to monitor and develop the service effectively. Records are maintained to the highest standard and are reflective of her outstanding management skills.

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: SC429011

Provision sub-type: children's home

Registered provider: Keys Care Ltd

Registered provider address: c/o Pinsent Masons, 1 Lanyon Place, Belfast, Northern Ireland BT1 3LP

Responsible individual: Emma Beech

Registered manager: Zoe Tompkins

Inspector

Joe Davys, Social Care Inspector

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