

1255796

Registered provider: Keys Childcare Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is operated by a national organisation in partnership with the local authority. It provides care and accommodation for up to three children who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

The manager has been registered since March 2017.

Inspection dates: 9 to 10 April 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: 23 May 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
23/05/2018	Full	Good
08/01/2018	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
16/08/2017	Full	Good

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

Recommendations

- Staff should continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)

In particular, staff must act to protect children and adults from aggression, racist abuse, sexualised behaviour and language.

- The registered person should ensure that skills in safeguarding are gained and refreshed. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 43, paragraph 9.12)

In particular, ensure that staff have training to enhance their knowledge and skills to recognise and be alert for any signs that might indicate a child is at risk from harmful sexual behaviour. Furthermore, ensure that staff have the expertise to address harmful behaviour, including racist and sexual language, and to help children to develop safe and healthy relationships.

- Records of staff supervision should provide evidence that practice-related supervision is being delivered. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.3)

In particular, ensure that the record of supervision shows: the discussions that have taken place about professional practice; that staff have reflected critically on their work with children, colleagues and other professionals, and their involvement in any serious events; and identify their learning and how this is being used to inform practice and find the best ways to support children.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The child living at the home is receiving good-quality care that is meeting his assessed needs and making a difference to his life.

The child has a strong sense of belonging and trusting relationships with the adults caring for him. He can talk to them and knows that they will listen and try their best to help him. A social worker said, 'He gets on really well with his key workers. He loves the banter with them. They get him, and he sees this.'

The manager agrees to look after a child only once she is satisfied that staff can respond effectively to the child's assessed needs. She also carefully considers each child's compatibility with the children already living at the home. The manager identifies each child's vulnerabilities and the precautions needed to manage any assessed risks.

The manager and staff have created a home learning environment that supports children's education. For example, the staff have helped a child to settle into a new school, where his attendance has improved significantly to over 90%. He is also making pleasing academic progress.

Staff work effectively with teachers, social workers and the virtual school to manage any difficulties and overcome barriers. They help children to do well and to achieve their full potential. For example, the staff have worked with a school and a training provider to arrange a work placement for one child, with an electrician. The child is loving the experience, and is highly motivated and working hard. When another child was previously permanently excluded from school, the staff helped her to see the benefits of continuing with her education and the value of gaining qualifications. This support helped her to re-engage in education, which, in turn, increases her future life chances.

Staff encourage and support children to develop their hobbies, interests and talents. They are helping one child to follow his love of fishing. He goes fishing at every opportunity. Staff take him, make sure that it is safe and get him the equipment that he needs. This is an important part of his life. He is growing in confidence and has a sense of calm, as well as pride in himself in his achievements. He loves talking about fishing and sharing his skills with staff, such as showing them how to hold a fish and keep it calm before returning it to the water.

Children see their families regularly. Staff make sure that it is a safe and positive experience for everyone involved. This has helped children to rebuild relationships with their parents, brothers and sisters and relatives. One child is seeing his mother more often and staying overnight with her.

Recently, the staff have supported another child to return to live with her family. The move was planned carefully with the child, her family, social worker and the other professionals involved in her life. Together, they made sure that she and her family were

ready and that the right help was in place to support them as they looked towards the future.

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

Children live in a safe, supportive and reliable home environment. The manager and staff's knowledge and professional practice protect children from harm.

Staff understand the impact of children's adverse experiences on their development. They have a clear insight into the reasons behind children's behaviour and provide children with the warmth, structure and consistent boundaries that they need to feel safe and emotionally secure.

Staff speak to children clearly and in ways that the children find easy to understand. The staff do not overload children with too much information. For example, when the manager saw that one child was starting to get anxious about when he was going fishing, she took him through his plan for the day, step by step, and he calmed down immediately.

Staff work positively with children to find the best way possible to support, empower and help them to deal with their feelings. Staff use well-informed strategies that help children when they are having a difficult time. They intervene calmly and confidently, and encourage children to make the right choices. For example, staff helped a child to choose not to get involved in another child's negative behaviour.

The staff are adept at helping children to find their own coping strategies, such as fishing, listening to music or going for a drive with staff. One child has now started to come to staff to let them know when he is beginning to find things difficult and to ask for help. As a result, he has not needed physical help to stay safe in the last least three months. Previously, when living at the home with another child, he had struggled to cope with strong feelings and to manage his behaviour. Both children struggled to get on at times, and this had led to safeguarding concerns because the staff were not always successful in managing risks involving aggression and harmful sexualised behaviour.

The manager took decisive action to deal with these concerns. She worked effectively with social workers, the local authority and police to manage the situation safely. The risk of harm reduced and suitable plans for each child's care and support were developed. This included the professionals recognising that one child's needs were best met by not living with other children.

The manager and staff have put the learning from this experience into practice. For example, they are developing a consistent way to address children's use of racist and sexualised language. However, staff would benefit from opportunities to improve their knowledge and skills regarding the risks associated with harmful sexualised behaviour, such as how to address such harmful behaviour and how to help children to develop safe and healthy relationships.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager provides clear and effective leadership. She is ambitious for children to live in a safe and supportive home where they can achieve better outcomes and lead happy and fulfilling lives. The staff share these high expectations and work hard to provide children with the support and guidance that they need.

The manager has a detailed and accurate understanding of the home's strengths, and acts to improve the quality of care that children receive.

The manager has made good use of training, advice and guidance from the organisation's psychologists and behaviour support team to develop a trauma-aware way of working with children. Staff's practice is better informed about the impact of children's experiences on their emotional development and relationships. This approach is having a positive impact on children's sense of safety and emotional well-being.

The manager and staff actively engage with other agencies to make sure that each child's needs are met. The staff communicate clearly with these partners to make sure that everyone has an up-to-date picture of children's lives. The manager challenges other services, including schools, assertively to make sure that children receive the support that they need. The manager is now meeting regularly with the local authority to plan and consider which children the home can best support.

Staff contribute fully to the ongoing assessment of children's needs and the planning for their care. Children's records and person-centred plans now provide a detailed picture of their lives and include accurate information to measure their progress.

The manager provides each member of staff with good support, guidance and encouragement. The staffing arrangements make sure that children receive continuity of care and build safe and stable relationships with the adults looking after them.

Staff have regular opportunities through practice-related supervision and team meetings to reflect on their work with children and to improve their practice. However, the records do not always capture the discussions that have taken place about professional practice. For example, they do not show how staff have reflected critically on their work with children, nor do the records identify the staff's learning and how they are using it to find the best ways to support children.

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 difference 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: 1255796

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Keys Childcare Limited

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

Responsible individual: David Carser

Registered manager: Angela Laurie

Inspector

Nick Veysey, social care inspector

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