

# 1247773

Registered provider: Keys Group Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

The home provides care for up to five young people who may have learning disabilities. Two young people are accommodated under short-break arrangements, and three children live at the home. The home is run and managed by a large private company.

**Inspection dates:** 11 to 12 October 2018

**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:** 10 January 2018

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** improved effectiveness

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10/01/2018	Interim	Improved effectiveness
18/07/2017	Full	Good

## 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. Children's homes must comply with relevant health and safety legislations (alarms, food hygiene etc.); however, in doing so, homes should seek as far as possible to maintain a domestic rather than 'institutional' impression. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9). This relates specifically to improving the quality of the accommodation and facilities provided for young people.
- The registered person should oversee the welfare of the children in their care through observation and engagement with: each child; the home's staff; each child's family/carers where appropriate; and professionals involved in the care or protection of each child including their social worker, Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO), teachers, clinicians and other health professionals etc. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 54, paragraph 10.23). This relates specifically to seeking the views of stakeholders to inform the home's quality of care review.

### Inspection judgements

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

The home provides a highly supportive, caring and nurturing environment for young people, who make significant progress in relation to their individual starting points. Young people benefit from highly personalised, well-planned care that promotes their needs effectively and contributes to change and improvement in their lives.

A social worker reported:

I find the placement to be very effective in meeting the young people's needs. They have a wide range of experiences and strategies in place to promote young people's communication development, independence skills, emotional regulation and flexibility of thought. Since living at the home, his verbal communication has excelled, which in turn has reduced his anxieties and agitation.

Staff consistently have high aspirations for all young people. They maintain effective partnerships with young people's families, schools, social workers and other professional agencies to ensure that the young people benefit from the best possible help and all-round support. Such support enables young people's continuing progress across all aspects of their physical, social, emotional and behavioural development. A social worker reported that the home 'pursues and promotes regular link meetings with education to

ensure that behaviour strategies are consistent throughout the young people's lives'.

Staff work closely with health professionals to ensure that young people's specific health needs are met. Young people attend their routine health appointments with good support and encouragement from staff. Medical consent is in place, so staff are clear about the types of health decisions and responsibilities that are delegated to them. Young people have their medication stored and administered safely, by well-trained and competent staff.

The care provided by the home promotes young people's independence and empowers them. Young people are enabled to contribute towards their care and other aspects of daily living. They are involved in making everyday decisions, such as choosing their own individual food menus, clothing and preferred activities.

Young people show good improvement in their communication skills and self-care, due to the extensive support provided to them by staff. Staff communicate with young people using their preferred method of communication, which is inclusive of signs, symbols or visual supports. A social worker reported, 'The young person's independence skills have developed excellently, including being out in the community safely and regulating emotions more positively.'

The home maintains effective partnerships with the providers of young people's education, to support individual progress, achievement and learning. Young people enjoy excellent attendance at school and are learning and making progress. Relevant plans are in place to support young people's learning, targets and educational goals.

Staff maintain supportive and positive relationships with the families of young people. Young people who are looked after on a long-term basis are supported to have contact with their families. This ensures that they sustain their close relationships with the people who are most important to them.

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

The safety of young people is consistently at the centre of staff's practice. Staff have an exceptionally good understanding of young people's specific needs and emerging vulnerabilities and take appropriate action to address them. Young people are kept safe and develop a strong sense of personal safety. The registered manager ensures that young people who live or come to stay at the home are appropriately matched.

Young people become increasingly safer because of the actions staff take to support and protect them. Risks associated with each young person are well known and understood by staff. The use of clear risk assessment and effective safe working practices promote the safety and well-being of young people.

Young people are well supported and closely supervised by staff. High staffing ratios are consistently maintained to ensure the effective supervision of the young people. Young people do not go missing. However, should they do so, there are protocols and

procedures in place to secure their safe return.

Staff understand the triggers for young people's behaviour and they respond quickly to prevent incidents and behaviours from escalating. Restraint is only ever used as a last resort to protect young people from self-injurious behaviours or harm.

Staff are trained in child protection and know how to protect young people from abuse and other forms of significant harm. Staff know how to deal with allegations and how to report suspected abuse. There have been no allegations of abuse or disclosures from children since the last inspection.

Health and safety matters are addressed effectively to promote a safe environment for young people and staff. The home provides young people with a physically safe and appropriately secure living environment. However, due to the home now looking tired in places, there are plans under way for complete refurbishment and redecoration.

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

The home benefits from a well-qualified, knowledgeable and highly experienced registered manager who is passionate about young people and champions their needs effectively. The manager has consistently high expectations of staff and high aspirations for young people.

The home maintains highly effective partnerships with all other professional agencies, to meet young people's specific needs. The registered manager is a strong advocate for young people. She actively challenges those services that fail to deliver the help and support that the young people need to lead happy and fulfilling lives.

The registered manager is an inspirational leader. She demonstrates strong and effective leadership of the operation of the home. She ensures that staff benefit from regular, practice-related supervision. Consequently, staff are managed effectively and feel well supported and led.

Staff meet the aims and objectives, as set out in the home's statement of purpose. They consistently deliver a high-quality service that makes a positive difference to the lives of young people and their families.

Most staff are suitably qualified, and those without an appropriate qualification are working towards suitable awards. There are effective arrangements for staff's continuing professional development. Staff have access to relevant training that helps them to meet the specific needs of the young people at the home. Some training programmes are suitably specialised and are externally sourced.

There is effective scrutiny of the performance of the home. The home is visited each month by an independent professional who observes practice, examines young people's records and consults with parents and professionals to inform their opinion about the quality of young people's care and the arrangements to safeguard them and promote

their well-being. Reports are sent to Ofsted and the home, and are accessible to parents and social workers on request.

The registered manager closely monitors the progress that young people make and reviews the quality of young people's care. However, formal consultation to ascertain the views and feedback of the home's stakeholders is not in place. This means that the views of service users are not routinely used to improve the quality of care provided by the home.

The registered manager is consistently ambitious about securing the home's improvement. She has a good knowledge of the strengths of the service and makes good use of the home's monitoring activities to identify and eradicate any weaknesses in the service provided.

## **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:** 1247773

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

**Registered provider:** Keys Group Limited

**Registered provider address:** Maybrook House, 2nd Floor, Queensway, Halesowen, Worcestershire B63 4AH

**Responsible individual:** Melanie McGuinness

**Registered manager:** Ann Lorne

## Inspector

Anthony Kyem, social care inspector

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