

1239953

Registered provider: Keys Educational Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a private company.

The home provides care for up to four children who may have social and emotional needs.

The manager registered with Ofsted in June 2020.

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

Inspection dates: 18 to 19 May 2021

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 4 February 2020

Overall judgement at last inspection: improved effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/02/2020	Interim	Improved effectiveness
09/04/2019	Full	Good
07/01/2019	Full	Inadequate
21/02/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

Difficulties arising from the pandemic have had a significant impact on the quality of care and support children have received this year. Over the past year, five staff have left, two children moved into the home and three children left in an unplanned way. During this period and in accordance with government restrictions, the registered manager managed the home remotely.

Leaders and managers failed to ensure that the management provision was sufficient during this time to make robust decisions about the suitability of staff to meet the needs of children new to the home. In addition, the registered manager did not fully assess the impact that one child's needs would have on the children already living in the home. The registered manager has reflected on this period. She has learned lessons and identified several areas where practice can be improved. She subsequently applied the lessons learned when a new child moved into the home.

At the time of this inspection, two children are living at the home. A child who has recently moved in experienced a positive introduction and move into the home. The registered manager made good use of the information provided by the placing authority and the child's previous placement. She used this information to assess whether the child's needs can be met by staff and in relation to the child already living in the home.

One child's educational need is not being met well enough. This child moved into the home during the peak of the pandemic and was unable to secure a suitable school place. Since the easing of restrictions, the registered manager has secured an educational placement for her. A blended education package was introduced. Despite encouragement from staff the child says that she does not like school and does not like going. The registered manager has been persistent in escalating her concerns with the placing and hosting authorities to try to find the right educational provision for the child.

Children's care and support plans are currently under review. The registered manager is in the process of introducing child-centred plans. This approach will provide children with the opportunity to contribute to their own plans and targets.

Children are supported to maintain relationships with family members and friends. During the lockdown periods, children stayed in contact with loved ones remotely by using telephone and video calls. One child told the inspector that she understood why she could not travel long distances to see family members and is happy that she is now able to see her family and friends on a regular basis.

One child engaged positively with the inspector. She confidently shared what progress she has made since living at this home. She spoke about the adults who care for her and the relationships and attachments she has formed with them. The

child's social worker confirmed the progress the child has made, which she said has been beyond her expectations.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

Safeguarding concerns are managed well, and records of these concerns confirm the actions taken in response. Safeguarding concerns are appropriately reported to external agencies and Ofsted. When poor practice is identified, the registered manager takes effective action and works closely with the safeguarding agencies.

Lessons learned from investigations are considered and implemented into practice. Records are well maintained, detailing the actions taken and outcome. Children say that they feel safe and that staff look after them well.

Children know how to make a complaint and use the complaints procedures well. They confirmed that any concerns they have are responded to and they are happy with the action taken.

The registered manager ensures that staff are provided with information that they need to consider when children are taken out or spend time with friends in the local community. Despite this, the registered manager has not assessed the risk of the home's location in relation to access by the emergency services. This has the potential to place children and staff at risk in the event of an emergency.

Children's behavioural risks are known and responded to well. Individualised risk assessments provide staff with clear guidelines and instructions on how to identify, manage and mitigate behavioural risks.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

Since the last inspection of this home, a new manager has been appointed who is registered with Ofsted. In line with government COVID-19 guidelines, the registered manager has managed this home remotely for a period of time. As a result, leadership and management oversight of this home has been restricted and not effective.

In the last year, all new staff recruited were unable to complete basic mandatory training. As a result, they lacked confidence and the skills to manage all of the children's complex needs and behaviours. Since the easing of restrictions, the registered manager has ensured that all staff are up to date with basic mandatory training. Despite this good work, opportunities available for existing staff to undertake continuing professional development are limited.

During the time that the registered manager was working remotely, she made good use of electronic services. She maintained regular contact with the staff team members, who confirmed that they felt supported and received regular formal supervision.

In recent months, the manager has returned to working directly in the home. She has used this time to reflect and learn from significant events. She has introduced a development plan and shared her findings with the team. The staff said that they feel motivated and determined to improve children's experiences and the quality of care they provide.

Independent monitoring and the manager's monitoring of the home's records and operation are effective. Reflective practice and lessons learned are central to the manager's monitoring activity. Actions identified are shared with team members, who collectively consider what actions need to be taken to maximise children's experiences and progress.

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
<p>The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(b))</p> <p>In particular, the registered person should ensure that the compatibility risk assessment considers the severity of risk and the impact one child's needs and behaviours can have on other children living in the home.</p>	30 June 2021
<p>The registered person must ensure—</p> <p>that all employees undertake appropriate continuing professional development; (Regulation 33 (4)(a))</p>	30 June 2021

Recommendations

- The registered person should continue to escalate concerns to the placing and hosting authorities to ensure that the child's education plan is implemented in practice. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 27, paragraph 5.11)
- The registered person should encourage children to see the home's records as 'living documents' that support children to view and contribute to the record in a way that reflects their voice on a regular basis. In particular, the registered person should ensure that person-centred plans are introduced. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 58, paragraph 11.19)

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people, 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: 1239953

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Keys Educational Services Limited

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

Responsible individual: Steven Cairns

Registered manager: Michelle Grabham

Inspector

Sharron Escott, Social Care Inspector

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