

SC020594

Registered provider: Keys Education Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is a privately owned children's home registered to provide care and accommodation for up to eight children. It offers a 12-week programme to children who are in crisis. The programme includes children engaging in activities, staying in temporary accommodation, and camping. Ofsted does not inspect all accommodations used. However, the company is required to carry out its own risk assessments for each.

The manager is yet to be registered with Ofsted.

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.

We last visited this setting on 10 March 2021 to carry out a monitoring visit. The report is published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection dates: 18 to 19 August 2021

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| 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 | inadequate |
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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: 10 March 2020

Overall judgement at last inspection: Sustained effectiveness

Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement |
|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| 10/03/2020 | Interim | Sustained effectiveness |
| 02/07/2019 | Full | Good |
| 12/06/2018 | Full | Requires improvement to be good |
| 06/12/2017 | Interim | Declined in effectiveness |

Inspection judgements

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

Staff build good relationships with children. One child spoken to said that he has felt better since being at the home and is feeling positive about his future.

Staff successfully support children to attend and engage in a range of activities. These include paddle boarding, fishing, cliff jumping and climbing. The activities are organised with consideration of the interests of the children, and the skills of the supporting staff members. As a result, children are proud of their achievements and are having fun.

Children do not engage with formal education. The current arrangements to support children's education are limited and do not support children to return to education. Children do receive in-house educational awards in recognition for developing their independence skills. For example, one child learned how to cook his favourite meal. This approach supports children to develop independence skills.

The children are registered at local health services and are supported to attend appointments. Staff have a good understanding of the health needs of the children and support them to develop understanding around sexual health, drugs misuse and safe relationships. Consequently, children are in good health.

The newly appointed manager is working to improve the living environment. There is an ongoing programme of maintenance and repair. The communal areas of the home are well decorated. However, children's bedrooms lack personalisation.

The staff are aware of the importance of families and friends in maintaining children's identities. Staff take children who live at a distance from their homes to see their loved ones. Recently, the manager has introduced weekly calls with a child's parent to provide updates on care. This helps children to maintain relationships that are important to them.

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

For some children, risk-taking behaviours, such as going missing and drugs misuse, have reduced. However, the children's risk assessments are not effective. Risk assessments lack necessary detail and analysis. For example, in some assessments there is no consideration of 'triggers' or support measures for children. Currently, staff do not have all the necessary information and strategies to keep the children safe.

Impact risk assessments for children are poor. For example, one impact assessment did not address the impact of existing children or consider the health needs of the

child. The assessments fail to inform effective decision-making regarding suitability of placement.

Physical intervention is used to keep children or others safe. Children are given the opportunity to discuss their views following use of a physical intervention. However, the recording of physical interventions is poor. For example, one document failed to record the time of the intervention. This means that the manager is unable to fully evaluate practice.

Safer recruitment practice requires improvement. For example, the manager does not explore gaps in employment history. This does not ensure that only suitable people are employed to work with children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

Since the last inspection, significant changes in leadership management have had an impact on the quality of care provided to children. A new manager has been appointed and she is applying for registration with Ofsted. The acting manager and responsible individual acknowledge the weaknesses identified at inspection. They are determined to rectify shortfalls and, during inspection, took immediate action to compile a plan that detailed the improvements proposed.

Staff told inspectors that the acting manager is approachable and supportive. During a period of change, letters were provided from managers to staff to give reassurance. This helped managers promote stability with the team.

Not all staff have completed mandatory training. This includes medication and outdoor first aid training. In addition, there are identified gaps in training specific to issues related to children living in the home. Therefore, the manager cannot demonstrate that staff are suitably trained in understanding potential risks and offering quality care.

Children's case files do not contain all the information required. These shortfalls have not been addressed by managers. This means that staff do not have all the information they need to provide coordinated care.

Medication arrangements are not consistent. The records of administration lack essential information such as the name of the child who was given the medication and the date. The manager did not identify or respond to these shortfalls. This has the potential to place children at risk of harm and fails to address poor practice.

The statement of purpose is not updated in line with the regulation. There are children in the home that have stayed longer than the advised placement time. This means that Ofsted does not have the most up-to-date information about the care provided. In addition, the home is not operating within its registration. Each site used for accommodating children should be risk assessed. Risk assessments were not available for some of the accommodation used. This has an impact on the ability of managers to ensure that children are safe.

The monitoring systems of the home have not been effective in identifying and responding to issues. Furthermore, actions listed by the independent visitor have been frequently repeated. This fails to demonstrate that management has a clear overview of the home and understanding of its responsibilities.

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 registered person is to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child; and</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)(a)(i)(b))</p> <p>This specifically relates to the registered manager ensuring that the children's risk assessments are clear and consider compatibility between residents. In addition, the registered manager must ensure that each site used for accommodation is risk assessed.</p> | 7 October 2021 |
| <p>The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that—</p> <p>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>ensure that staff have the experiences, qualifications, and skills to meet the needs of each child;</p> <p>use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a) (2)(c)(h))</p> | 7 October 2021 |

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| <p>This specifically relates to the registered manager ensuring that all staff complete mandatory training and child-specific training. In addition, the manager should ensure that monitoring systems are effective at improving the care provided.</p> | |
| <p>The registered person must ensure that the home is at all times conducted in a manner which is consistent with its statement of purpose. (Regulation 16(5))</p> <p>This specifically relates to the amount of time a child stays at the setting, which should be clear in the statement of purpose and meets the requirements set at registration.</p> | <p>7 October 2021</p> |
| <p>The registered person must make arrangements for the handling, recording, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of medicines received into the children's home.</p> <p>In particular, the registered person must ensure that—</p> <p>medicine which is prescribed for a child is administered as prescribed to the child for whom it is prescribed and to no other child. (Regulation 23 (1) (2)(b))</p> <p>This specifically relates to the provider ensuring that medication is safely administered and that recording is clear.</p> | <p>7 October 2021</p> |
| <p>The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety.</p> <p>The registered person may only—</p> <p>employ an individual to work at the children's home if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3).</p> <p>The requirements are that—</p> <p>full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1) (2)(a) (3)(d))</p> <p>This specifically relates to ensuring that all gaps in employment are checked and information about the worker is clear and consistent.</p> | <p>7 October 2021</p> |
| <p>The registered person must ensure that—</p> | <p>7 October 2021</p> |

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| <p>within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes—</p> <p>a description of the measure and its duration. (Regulation 35 (3)(a)(iv))</p> <p>This specifically relates to the provider ensuring that recording of the interventions used is clear.</p> | |
| <p>The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which—</p> <p>include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child;</p> <p>are kept up to date. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b))</p> <p>This specifically relates to the need for a child's up-to-date care plan to be in place.</p> | 7 October 2021 |

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that where children are placed in the home and are not participating in education because they have been excluded or are not on a school roll, the registered person and staff must work closely with the placing authority so that the child is supported and enabled to resume full-time education as soon as possible. In the interim, the child should be supported to sustain or regain confidence in education. ('Guide to the children's home's regulations including the quality standards', page 28, paragraph 5.15)

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: SC020594

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Keys Education Ltd

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

Responsible individual: Matthew Mills

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Sophie Hills, Social Care Inspector
Helen Malanaphy, Social Care Inspector

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