

ANNUAL QUALITY REPORT 2021



**Inspiring and supporting
young people** to live
happy, healthy and
successful lives.



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Values

Our values form the foundations of our work to inspire and support children and young people to live happy, healthy and successful lives.

Working honestly and transparently, sharing our results and learnings.

Committed and ambitious in heart and mind, supporting the best outcomes for young people.

Caring

Showing compassion and empathy, placing the young person at the centre of all we do, taking their feelings and wishes into account.

Integrity

keys
group

Excellence

Accountable and intent to achieve the best in all we do. Challenging ourselves to the highest standards of learning, development and performance.

Passion

A warm welcome from our young people

When you see this sign - the young people and adults we support and educate have had their say.



“

Keys have supported me to be part of the Welsh 4Cs Young Commissioners Group which has given me the opportunity to share my journey of living in care with other young people. I have now decided to submit an application to be part of the Welsh Youth Parliament!

“

I'm lucky to have a team that really care about me and the other kids, there is always someone to talk to. I feel like they are all my second family. I like getting asked about things like new staff, decorating, trips and new young people rather than getting told about things.

“

My experience at Newdays

New days it's great,
New days it's fun,
I looked for the rain,
But they showed me
the sun.

They saw me angry,
They saw me mad, they
supported me through it,
now I'm not so bad.

I still have my moments,
don't get me wrong but
now I express by writing
my songs.

I feel a lot happier,
I'm sitting in my throne,
I'm so glad New Days is
my home.



Statement

I am pleased to share our third Annual Quality Report. The report remains an important part of our approach to share our ambition to deliver safe, high-quality care and education to children and young people in a transparent and open way.

It has been another challenging year. The coronavirus pandemic continued to loom large and it will soon be two years since it commenced. My colleagues have continued to show resilience and resourcefulness throughout with an unwavering commitment to supporting our children, young people, adults and families.

Despite the pandemic, the Group has continued to move forward and we have progressed on all the priorities we set for the year. Substantial work has taken place in developing our Clinical Service Strategy and on our transition model for young people moving into independence. The implementation of 'Keys Connect' and 'Journey to Independence' will I hope, have an incredibly positive impact on the way we deliver services in 2022 and beyond.

Looking outside of the Group the year has also seen the launch of a number of important reviews, the findings of which are anticipated in the forthcoming months. We are looking forward to seeing the recommendations arising from The Independent Review of Children's Social Care and the Competition and Market's Authority study of the children's social care market. The year will also see development of new regulatory standards for Leaving Care services that provide supported accommodation for our young people. We have contributed to the consultation on these standards and fully support their introduction.

Our focus in 2022 will be on delivering Keys Connect and Journey to Independence, preparing for regulation of our Leaving Care services and further strengthening our approach to safeguarding. We will also be doing more to promote and improve the diversity of our people particularly at management level and equipping all our colleagues with the skills and knowledge to support people from all backgrounds.

My favourite moments of the year have been when I have been able to spend time with colleagues and the children, young people, adults and families they support, something that has at least been more possible in the last twelve months. My thanks go to all my colleagues for the hard work, dedication and commitment they show every day.

David Manson, Chief Executive Officer

Our Progress

We are always striving to be better and to do the very best we can for the children, young people and families we support. Last year we set ourselves targets in priority areas where we need and want to continually improve. Here's our progress report.

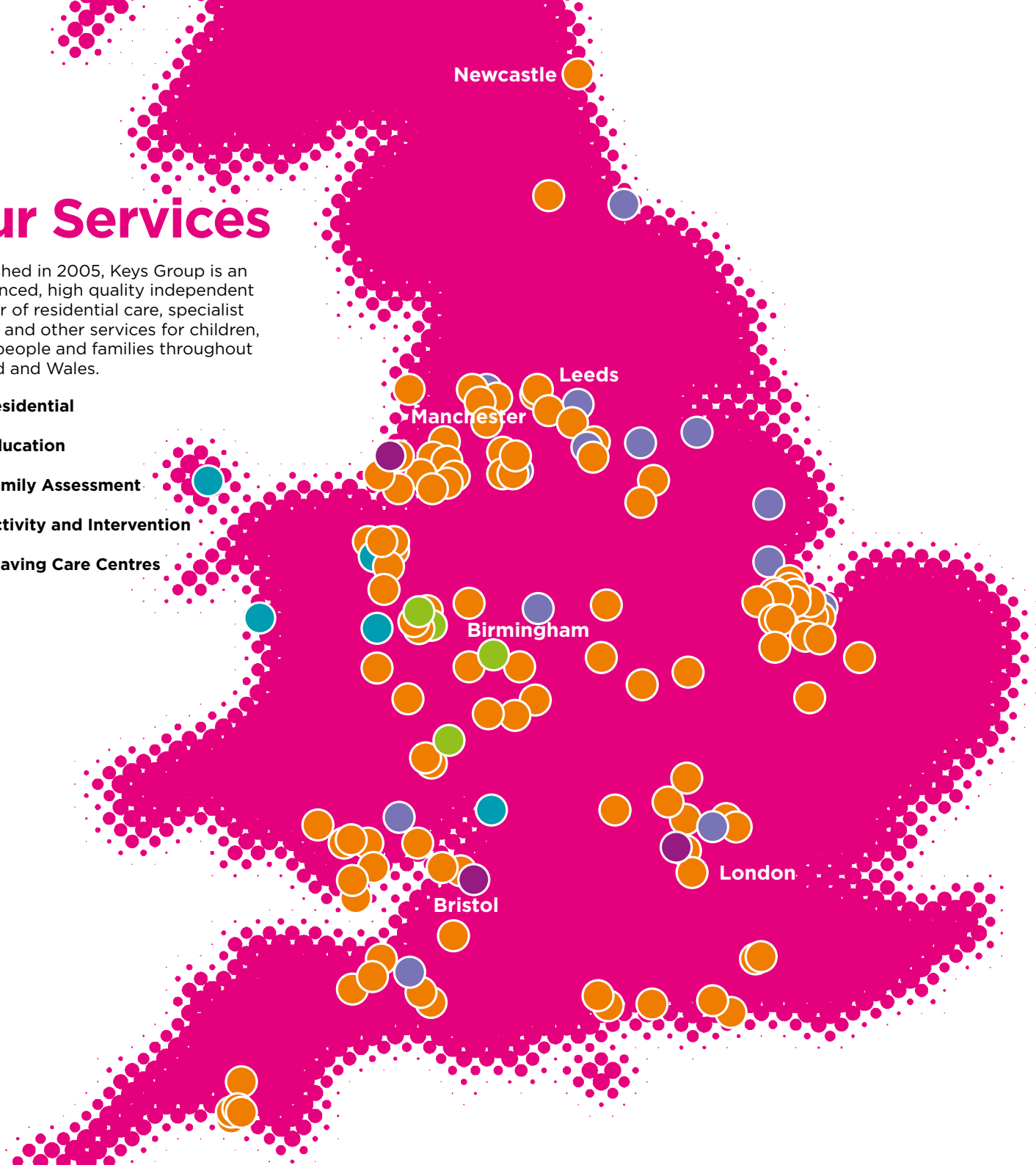
	Priorities for 2021	Status
Therapeutic Approach	Develop a Clinical Services Strategy describing how Keys Group will provide the best possible therapeutic and specialist services with the aim of keeping our children, young people and adults safe whilst delivering the right interventions to support delivery of their agreed outcomes.	To do this, we created Keys Connect. Grounded in the most up-to-date research, and led by our new Clinical Director, Keys Connect ensures all services deliver care and education from a clear therapeutic foundation. Project implementation commenced in early 2022.
Outcomes for Children and Young People	Develop and implement the model of Positive Behaviour Support, a strategy to further develop knowledge and skills across the company in supporting children, young people and adults to lead happy, healthy and successful lives.	At its core, Keys Connect is about helping children and young people to feel safe. It is a positive and inclusive approach to behaviour support and focuses on using minimal intervention. A programme to support enhancing staff skills is underway in a number of our services that support and educate children and young people with a learning disability and/or autism.
	Develop an innovative transition model for children and young people progressing from residential services into leaving care services.	Implementation of Journey to Independence is well underway. Working with partners at Smallfry ¹ the project is on target to complete in March 2022. Young people and other stakeholders have been key in developing the model, identifying where young people need support as they take their steps through to adulthood.
Keeping Safe	Conclude the work of the risk assessment and management working group to carry out a systems-based review within Keys Group.	A working group was established and reviewed and revised the Risk Assessment and Risk Management Policy. A new training programme was developed and a workbook created to support knowledge and understanding.
	Deliver the objectives identified in our first Safeguarding Annual Report 2020.	The report had a number of priorities to be delivered over the 2 years until 2022. The following has been achieved: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding training has been delivered to our senior leadership team • Our safeguarding policies have been reviewed • A shared risk protocol has been implemented to strengthen our relationships and partnership working • The voice of the child and people we support is being strategically led • A safeguarding lessons learned plan has been implemented There are areas on the work plan outstanding. A newly-appointed Safeguarding Assurance Manager will help complete the strategic priorities.
	COVID-19. To continue to operate pandemic contingency planning protocols across the organisation following relevant government guidance.	The COVID-19 response team continues to meet and administer all aspects of our pandemic contingency plan and risk management plan. A reconstitution plan has been completed to support organisational recovery. Additionally the lessons learned from managing this pandemic have led to a full review and improvement of all Business Contingency Plans across the Group.
	Systems methodology. To employ this best practice model across all internal learning reviews.	This methodology has been central to all internal learning reviews. The appointment of a Safeguarding Assurance Manager has further enhanced our work in this area.
Listening	Expand the Co-Production Strategy from the Cross Regional Project across all Keys Group services, using learning from the first year to improve implementation.	In 2021 a member of the Senior Leadership Team has been tasked with leading the organisation's, participation, involvement and co-production work, following on from the work that has been undertaken in the Cross Regional Project.

¹ <https://smallfry.com/>

Our Services

Established in 2005, Keys Group is an experienced, high quality independent provider of residential care, specialist schools and other services for children, young people and families throughout England and Wales.

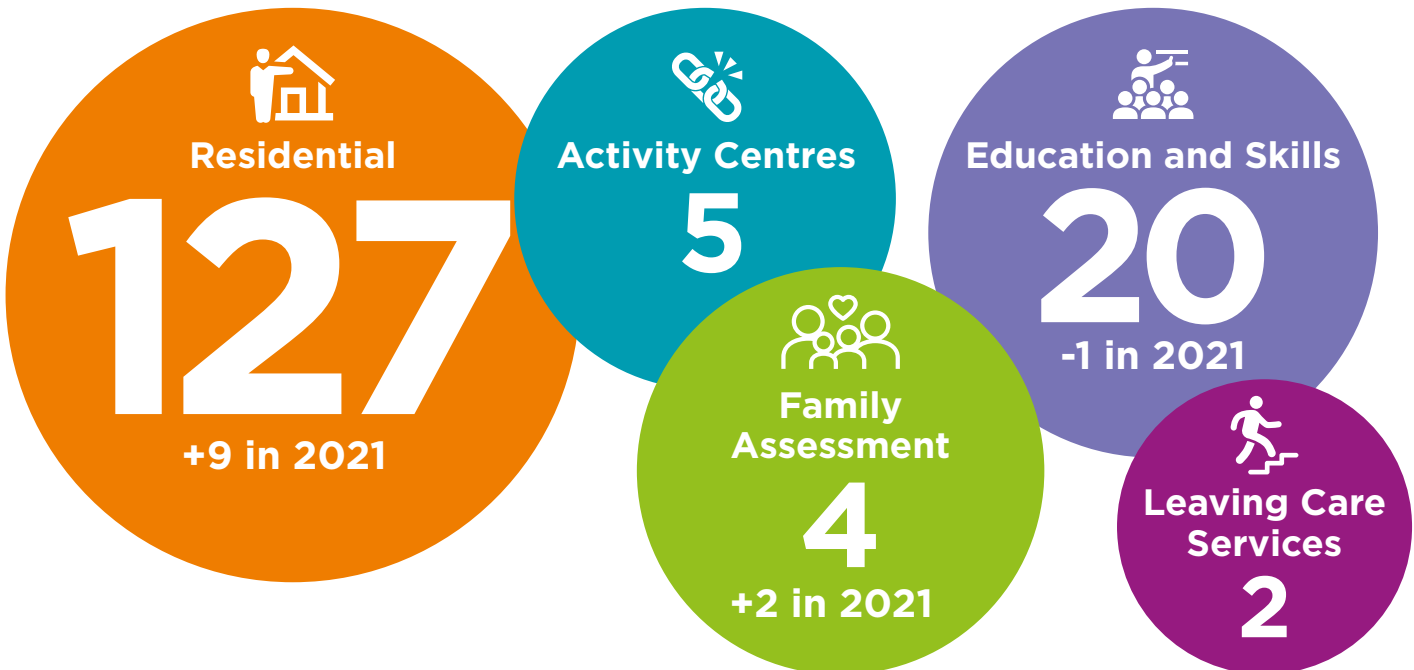
-  Residential
-  Education
-  Family Assessment
-  Activity and Intervention
-  Leaving Care Centres



Our services and how many people they support

		As of August 2021	From July 2020 - June 2021
Residential children's homes in England and Wales	Children and young people supported and cared for	376	544
Independent special schools in England and Wales	Pupils	562	565
Family assessment support in England	Families supported	13	62
Residential Homes (Activity Services) England and Wales	Children and young people being cared for short term in an activity-led support and care environment	26	115
Leaving Care England	Young people supported after moving on from residential homes	42	77
TOTAL		1019	1363

How many homes, schools and other services?



Growth & Investment

While the challenges brought by COVID-19 have slowed growth, we have continued to identify organisations sharing our values and have acquired high quality provisions including, in May 2021, Southern Adolescent Care Services and its three homes in Crawley.

Organic development has continued with a number of new residential and educational services in progress this has included the, opening of two new Family Assessment Centres in the Midlands - Clairmont and Rosavilla - creating an additional 15 places for families. They join our established centres Crown House and Victoria Villa in supporting local authorities or other agencies making decisions about the long-term living arrangements for children.

In a recent inspection Ofsted said: 'Support is well balanced against the need for assessment. As a result, parents feel listened to, respected and valued during the assessment process. Parenting assessments are carried out in consultation with parents from the moment they arrive at the centre until they leave.'

Crown House ensures that every family leaves with a "Memory Book". This is more than a collection of photos: it forms part of the children's life story work. It is important that children are given an honest account of their story and these books are the first step.



“

We couldn't ask for more support from staff and we were always looked after

“

The staff make your experience so comfortable, although they are there to do all necessary in assessments for the babies, they are also a great support to the parents.

Creating the right environment

We know how important the physical environment is, that it meets the needs of the people we support and is also a comfortable place for our colleagues to work. Over the course of the year, we invested more than £8m in improving our homes and schools.

We:

- Refurbished existing services
- Developed new services
- Changed layouts to meet people's individual needs
- Developed extensions for growing services
- Focused on landscaping and playground design to encourage engagement with nature and fun play promoting healthy activity
- Bought new vehicles

We listened very closely to the views and opinions of those who matter the most and created surroundings that echo the findings of the Office of National Statistics study- Children's views on well-being and what makes a happy life, UK: 2020².

In this report children said they valued places that are:

- safe
- quiet
- clean
- warm
- well looked-after
- with a relaxed, accepting atmosphere
- with nice walks or other facilities for children and young people nearby

We actively listen to children, young people and adults. Each proposal for investment has the 'Keys Questions' at the centre including: 'how does this help children and young people lead happy and successful lives?' and 'what involvement have children and young people had in arriving at this recommendation?'

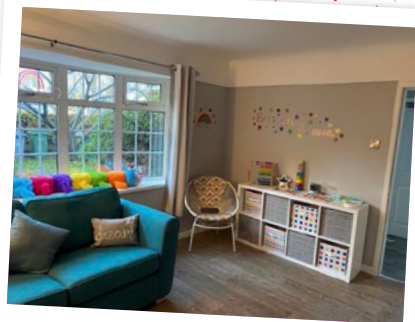


During a recent large refurbishment project at Newton House, a residential children's home, one of the young people engaged with the Estates Manager to draw up the detailed schedule for the refurbishment proposal and completed the walk around of the service discussing the plans.

Good News Story

We are all getting excited to relaunch the service in Greasby Road and thought it would be nice to share photos of the work completed within the home.

Greasby Road supports children with learning disabilities and was given a little make over. The children and staff love the new design and decor!



² <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing/articles/childrensviewsonwellbeingandwhatmakesahappylifeuk2020/2020-10-02>

Our Homes

Across our 127 homes, our skilled teams supported and have cared for more than 500 children and young people.

Our teams work alongside health and social care partners and with children and young people to develop individualised care plans, identifying individual strengths and areas in need of development. These plans and safe and secure trauma informed therapeutic approaches support children and young people to achieve their potential.



It is important

all our people are equipped with the relevant knowledge and skills to meet a child and young person's needs - especially in these areas of expertise:

“

The way in which you and your team have run things at Adoquin have contributed to how quickly Stephan has settled and made progress in all areas. It is always lovely to work with a placement who remain child focused and strongly advocate for the children in their care.”

Feedback from a Social Worker

Exploitation

Sexually harmful behaviours

Substance misuse

Self-injurious behaviours

Offending behaviours

Eating disorders

Emotional, behavioural difficulties

Learning difficulties/ disabilities

Autistic spectrum disorders

Our Schools and Skills

We educate more than 550 pupils in 20 schools and provide structured day services in our two adult-focused day services. Pupils who come to our schools may have experienced difficulty learning within a mainstream environment and may be considered to be:

- children/young people who are difficult to place
- at risk of being a Child Missing Education (CME) over a long-term
- vulnerable because of learning or mental health challenges
- at risk of being criminalised or being permanently excluded

Our schools follow the National Curriculum and teach the core subjects of Literacy, Numeracy, Science and ICT plus various vocational subjects including humanities, citizenship, PSHE and physical education.

Our teaching staff work creatively to deliver flexible learning meeting the individual needs of pupils. Our schools offer safe and unique environments in which pupils develop trust in the school community. Feeling safe and without being at risk they develop the skills need to function and succeed in the wider outside world.



Westfield House School has had some wonderful feedback from a commissioner who said:

“Westfield House School is quite possibly the best school I have worked with. The commitment of every member of teaching staff and the dedication of the head teacher know no bounds.

“I feel so proud of the progress our young person has made within this school and this is largely down to the understanding, kindness and nurture shown within the school.

“I wish every school looked upon looked after children like you do at Westfield House. Thank you all for making life better for ‘K’ and for showing her you care and there are people who will walk alongside you in life despite the challenges.”

Good News Story

Broadwood School - 100% of our Year 11 achieved 3 GCSEs in English, Maths and Art. In Art 100% of our learners achieved a GCSE with 66% achieving a grade 4 or higher. One Year 11 pupil achieved 4 GCSEs grade 3 and above his highest grades being a 5 in Maths and a 6 in Art. 100% of our Year 11s have secured a positive post-16 destination.

Good News Story

The animal care department at Somerset Progressive School has been very busy. Even during a lockdown, the animals at the school needed to be looked after.

During the summer, one of their bantams hatched 6 healthy chicks. They have a new billy goat that has been loaned to the school to help assist with their goat breeding programme. His name is Bagel.



Our Leaving Care Services

We recognise the challenges young people face when moving into adulthood and on from living in care.

Our Leaving Care Services aim to bridge that by giving young people the best chance of living a fulfilling independent life in their local community. We work alongside our statutory partners, parents and others with parental responsibility to offer individual support packages to young people aged 16-21 years to support and develop their self-care and independent living skills.

We use the Young Person's Star™³ to guide the support provided and enabling the young person to agree their own goals and track their progress.

The Outcomes Star is part of a series of renowned tools that support young people moving to independent living.

The Young Person's Star covers eight key outcome areas for independent living:

- Accommodation
- Work and learning
- People and support
- Health
- How you feel
- Choices and behaviour
- Money and rent
- Practical life skills

“

During her time in Leaving Care Sara has achieved great outcomes and gained some essential practical life skills.

“The future is bright for Sara, she is moving on to her forever home, is committed to her studies and hopes to become a midwife one day”.

“It's the only place I ever felt safe”

“It's the first placement where I felt loved”



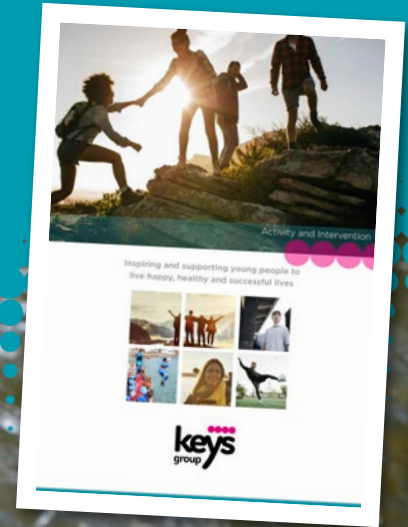
³ <https://www.outcomesstar.org.uk/>

Our Activity and Intervention Services

A number of our residential services provide activity and intervention placements offering short term specialist support aimed at enabling young people to settle back into longer term placements.

We use a range of exciting activities to engage each young person in an individual and challenging physical programme, including activities such as: **mountain biking, canoeing, kayaking, abseiling, bouldering, climbing, mountain walking and horse riding**, as well as slower paced activities (beach walking, fishing, visiting farms and parks).

On completing the programme, the young people show and express improved levels of self-esteem, confidence and positivity. Achieving things they never thought were possible, managing risks and developing new skills gives the young people a sense of hope for the future.



ADVENTURE ACTIVITIES
AALA
 LICENSING AUTHORITY



Our response to the COVID - 19 Pandemic

In January 2021 The Children's Society produced a briefing stating:

'The coronavirus pandemic has disrupted the life of every child in the country. It is not only an unprecedented public health emergency, but also a challenge our society and our economy have not seen in peacetime.'⁴

Keys Group has taken its responsibility for managing the response to recovery from the covid pandemic seriously. Work began in earnest at the end of February 2020 with the initiation of our business continuity plan. The Keys Group Pandemic Response Team has used our framework model (see page 17) to ensure effective good governance. This has included daily communication with our teams to ensure the fast moving changes, advice, guidance and laws were quickly and effectively applied. We explored the impact of new and increased risks and sought to enhance our knowledge to keep everyone safe.

We created journals for everyone to keep and record their own memories and sent postcards to our children and young people.

Throughout the pandemic all our residential services and leaving care services remained open. On a very small number of occasions we initiated

remote learning and support for our schools and adult skills centres. Even when the restrictions were at their tightest, our schools were resolute in providing home schooling and school dinners to those pupils who were unable to attend. We might have easily expected the challenges to be too great, but this was never the case. All our services, our dedicated people and the children, young people and families came together, pooled resources and let their imaginations soar to realise creative alternatives. We harnessed this energy asking our services to reflect, to examine what has worked well, what changes we needed to keep and what do we need to continue to do to support each other. These exercises have led us to make improvements for the longer term, including in our Business Continuity Planning.

We have experienced sadness and loss along with our communities and know that there is still much recovery and discovery to take place. We continue to employ good infection control measures, encouraging and supporting everyone eligible to receive the vaccine. However, our strong reconstitution plan has allowed us to effectively address each area and use our reflective exercises to determine our path forward out of the crisis.

⁴ <https://www.childrensociety.org.uk/sites/default/files/2021-01/the-impact-of-covid-19-on-children-and-young-people-briefing.pdf>

We can never ignore the impact of this pandemic, we have seen over 2000 episodes of our people having to self-isolate since March 2020 and 80% of our services having to manage positive COVID-19 cases.

2,000
instances of
self-isolation



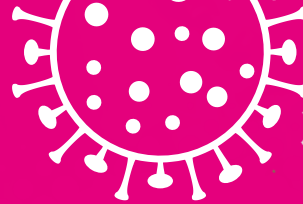
27,000
hours lost



97
furloughed
to shield and
keep safe



114
service departments with a
positive covid test



Everyone has been AMAZING!

Here are some of the many ways that our teams worked tirelessly to continue to support our young people and adults.

Improved Team Stability and Consistency

Rotas and work plans rescheduled, people adjusting their lives to meet the needs of our children and young people, reduced use of agency staff, reduced movement of staff, much quicker recruitment and induction processes. Working to agree plans with families and carers to adjust contact arrangements. Commitment and willingness to go above & beyond, isolating with children.

Creativity and Innovation

Seeking ways to improve, looking to best practice in the sector and learning from others. Organising and supporting:- activities, events, competitions, fashion shows, discos, parties, baking, sports, growing veg, decorating, giving to the community, singing, new hobbies, art projects, well-being projects, participation examples, fun events, engaging with nature, birthday celebrations....
the list is too long.

Supporting and Helping Each Other

Working effectively to connect and communicate with people – phone calls, video calls, supervision, team meetings, quiz nights, competitions, checking in, helping out, delivering goods, collaborative working inside and outside Keys and getting the message across about good infection control measures.

A young person wrote this wonderful poem at their home, Old School House capturing the impact of the pandemic and their resilience.



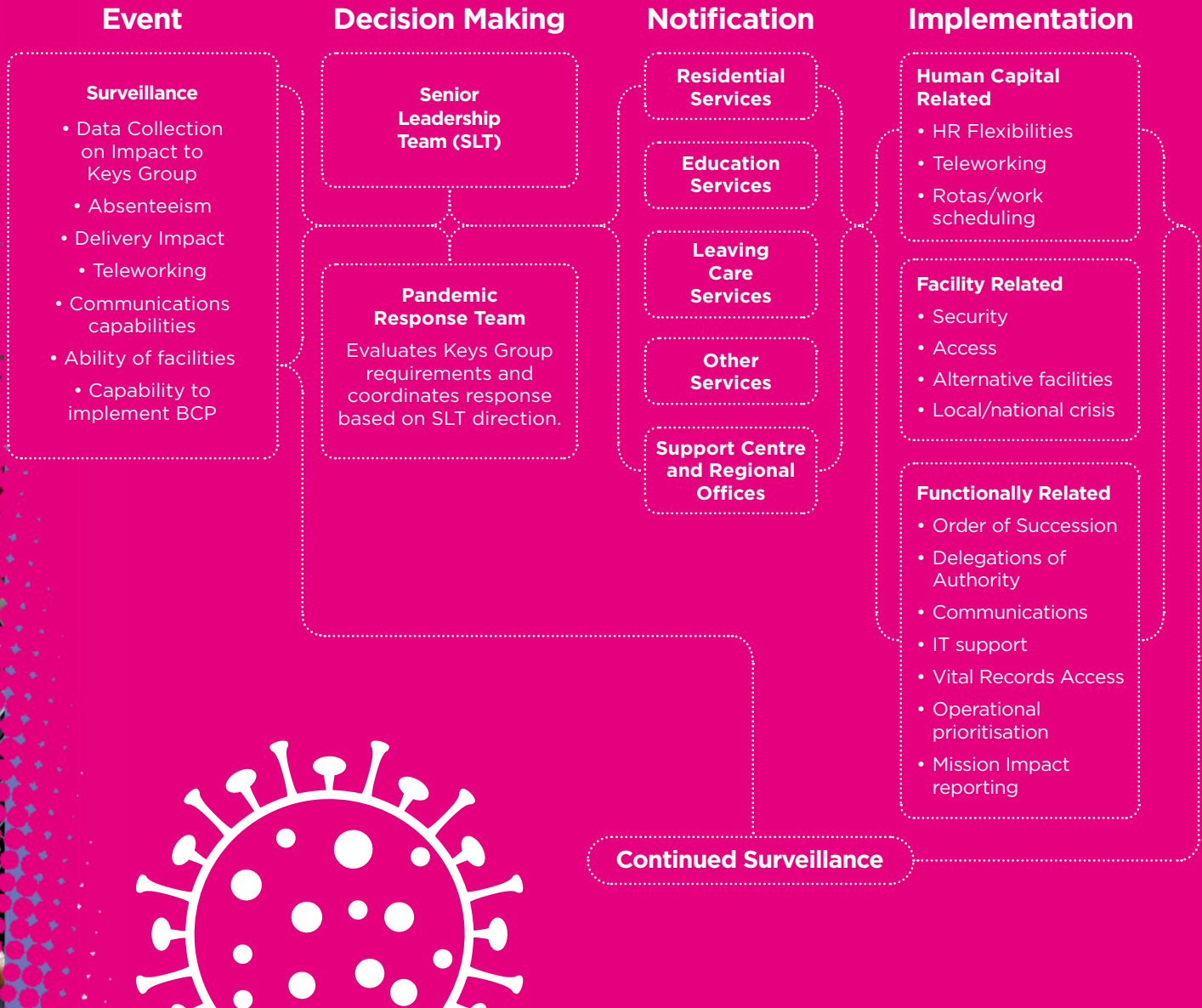
Covid Reflection Poem

COVID 19 has hit the World hard
The only place we can go is in the yard
Wearing a face covering is awkward
We need to do this to move forward.
We all have to social distance
A lot of people have needed NHS's assistance
NHS have saved people's lives
Sir Captain Tom won our hearts and minds
Washing your hands will stop the spread
You should do this for 20 seconds as they said.
The past 12 months have been difficult for all
From this day on we will stand tall.

Planning Ahead

Writing and continually updating effective contingency plans, risk assessments and communicating these to all. Sourcing PPE, and supplies. Keeping up-to-date with all the new information and being ready to respond. Keeping everyone safe, responding to outbreaks and the need to isolate and safely accommodating new children.

Keys Group COVID-19 Pandemic Response Framework



Our Quality Indicators

Over the past 12 months, we have continued to improve and adapt how we record and collect data. We believe being equipped with accurate information, and taking time to analyse what that means, ensures that we can work to continue to reduce risks across the organisation, keep our focus on quality improvement and children, young people and adults achieving their potential and being safe.

Adverse Incidents and Serious Untoward Incidents

The safety and well-being of everyone in Keys Group is of the highest importance. We use electronic systems to support our incident reporting with the aim of continually learning and improving to make our organisation safer. However, despite these efforts and the continued improvements across the sector, the inherent risks and complexity of supporting, caring for and educating vulnerable children, young people and their families mean that it would be unrealistic to expect Keys Group to be entirely free of incidents.

By using a whole system approach, we continually examine our systems, processes and behaviours in their entirety and how they work to deliver a sustained reduction in risk, rather than simply applying an immediate fix that too often does not lead to positive and sustained change and/or improvement.

In the 12 months to July 2021, there were a total of 11,367 incidents which span a spectrum of categories from cases and outbreaks of Covid-19, minor accidents to 11 serious untoward events. Our policy defines a Serious Untoward Event as:

'An adverse event where the consequences to service users, staff, others affected by the event, or the organisation are so significant, or have the potential to be so

significant, that a heightened level of response is required.'

Using a framework to support curiosity, through examination and drawing on good practice we aim to fully reflect and learn when incidents happen.

Accidents

Accidents make up 8% of all our events. In 2021 we added additional categories to our accident reporting which help us to further analyse all accidents. While slips/trips and falls continue to be the highest recorded category of accident, being struck by an object, trapping part of the body and burns /scalds follow in second and joint third place respectively.

The RIDDOR regulations place a duty on all employers to report certain serious workplace accidents, occupational diseases and specified dangerous occurrences (near misses) to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

From July 2020 we submitted 37 RIDDOR reports to the HSE. 54% of these were directly related to COVID-19 infections with 46% being reported due to employee lost time and employee specified injury and are comparative to last year's figure prior to the pandemic. Our Head of Risk Management employs our clear RIDDOR reporting protocol to monitor and administer all RIDDOR reports, ensuring reporting to the HSE within the set timeframes along with detailed investigations and implementation of any lessons learned.

Missing from care and police involvement

At the start of 2021 children and young people supported by Keys contributed to a research project by Missing People, which later formed the report:

Missing People – Children's views on being reported missing from care (April 2021)⁵. Coordinated by our National Police Specialist Advisor, Steve Challinor. Young people from across our services gave their important views on being reported missing, highlighting the importance of young people having their say about their care and support. There are intrinsic links between the role of the police, providers of children' social care and children who go missing. This research acted as a springboard for Steve to speak at a conference organised by Cheshire Police entitled 'The Voice of the Child'.



Key Findings: What do children want?

When the police do have contact with a missing young person, they should act supportively and respectfully towards them.

Young people do not want the police to automatically be contacted if they are not where they are supposed to be. They want decisions around contacting the police to be made based on their own unique situation, including any risks and the circumstances at that time. The police should not be contacted as a disciplinary measure. However, it is vital that they are contacted when a child is at risk of coming to harm.

The young people we consulted want carers, social workers, and the police to avoid making assumptions about them and why they might have gone missing. These professionals should try to understand their reasons, acknowledging that every child is different and will be facing different challenges.

It is not inevitable that young people will go missing. Carers should genuinely attempt to mitigate any issues that may cause a young person to go missing. This should include building positive relationships with the young people in their care and getting to know them. This can also help to inform decision making if the child is not where they are supposed to be.

Professionals should try to understand the unique challenges facing looked after children, including the conflict in wanting to be treated like other children but also needing their often complicated circumstances to be taken into account.

For the 12 month period to March 2021, there were 679 recorded incidents of children in our residential children's homes being missing from care.

This is a 27% reduction in the number of incidents from the previous year. This welcomed reduction can be attributed to a range of factors including improved multi-agency working, especially with our police partners, improvement in knowledge of why children go missing, improved understanding of effective risk management from our professional care staff, and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic including the effect of national lockdowns on behaviour.

For the 12 month period to March 2021, there were 140 recorded incidents of young people missing from care in our leaving care services, this figure remains unchanged from the previous year.

We understand the importance of multi-agency working in fully understanding the needs of each child and the reasons they go missing. We will therefore continue to work collaboratively with these partners. Critically we will also continue to listen to each young person, developing our understanding of why they go missing and supporting them in developing alternative strategies to manage risks and develop their strengths.



REDUCTION

In the reporting period 16% of untoward events recorded police involvement with missing from care episodes representing 54% of this.

Keys Group National Police Specialist Advisor in association with our Learning and Development Department provides our people with 'missing from care training'. This increases awareness of the risks associated with young people going missing from care, prevention and how to appropriately manage any incidents. In addition, the Specialist Advisor acts as a conduit with local police forces, improving multiagency working and delivering better outcomes for young people who go missing.

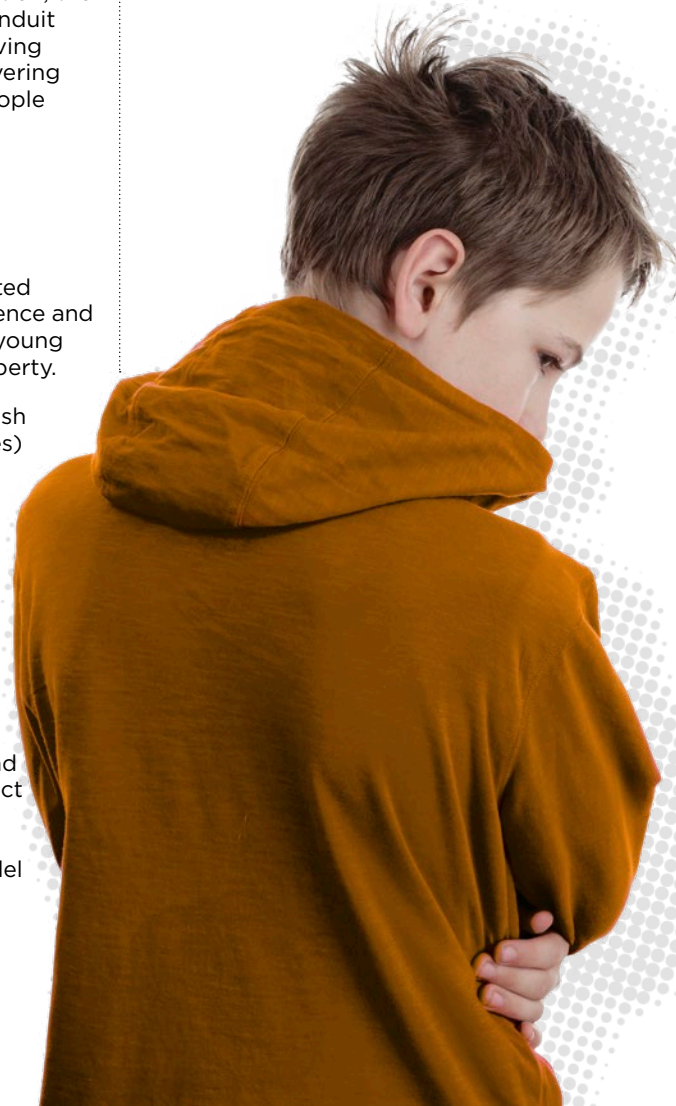
Violence and Aggression

4978 (44%) of all events reported across Keys Group involve violence and aggression from children and young people towards people or property.

We connected with BILD (British Institute of Learning Disabilities) to support our work to reduce the incidence of violence and aggression and the use of restrictive interventions, through the use of Positive Behaviour Support (PBS). This took us on a journey of examining best practice and working with all disciplines in Keys Group to develop our unique Keys Connect Model, more about which can be found on page 29. While Keys Connect does not promote a sole focus on only behaviour, this trauma and attachment informed model views behaviour as reflecting the internal world of the child or young person.

It is principally through developing a shared understanding and connection with the child that behaviour that challenges can be reduced.

Recognising the individual needs of all our children and young people is essential and therefore the Keys Connect model provides flexibility in allowing PBS to have greater focus across our services for children and young people with learning disabilities and autistic spectrum disorders.



Self-Injurious behaviour

In the 12 months to July 2021 there were 1381 episodes recorded of self-injurious behaviour this representing a 30% rise on prior year.

In July 2021 the UK Government COVID-19 mental health and wellbeing surveillance: report⁶, chapter 4 Children and Young People suggested that children and young people's mental health has been 'substantially impacted' by the COVID-19 pandemic where 'between September 2020 and January 2021, there was a decline in wellbeing and increased anxiety.' The report also stated that specific groups have been disproportionately affected, naming children with special educational needs, females, children who are disadvantaged, children with pre-existing mental health needs, children from Black Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds and children who are Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBTQ+).

Young Minds also reported in their January 2021 survey⁷ that 'The pandemic has had a devastating impact on many of the young people... some told us that they are deeply anxious, have started self-harming again, are having panic attacks, or are losing motivation and hope for the future.'

In recent years greater emphasis has been placed on the importance of all children and young people's mental health Transforming Children and Young People's Mental Health Provision: a Green Paper and Next Steps July 2018 -UK Government⁸.

In response to more children being referred to us with existing self-injurious behaviour, and the increase



in episodes this year, we have adapted and enhanced our services to meet this increasing need, to reduce risks and keep children and young people safe. Including:

- Continued access to our Specialist Advisor of self-injurious services to provide guidance, training and support
- Specialist Support Team Briefings on best practice advice and guidance distributed
- Mandatory multi-agency pre-discharge planning for any child who receives hospital care for self-injurious behaviour
- Standard and consistent approach of short term close observation of a child or young person who is presenting with self-injurious behaviour risks that is overseen by the specialist advisor
- Mandatory self-injurious behaviour training for all front line care and education staff

⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-mental-health-and-wellbeing-surveillance-report/7-children-and-young-people>

⁷ <https://www.youngminds.org.uk/media/esifqn3z/youngminds-coronavirus-report-jan-2021.pdf>

⁸ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/728892/government-response-to-consultation-on-transforming-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health.pdf

- Additional enhanced self-injurious behaviour training
- Trained Mental Health 1st Aiders in all schools
- Allocated psychologists and therapists to all services
- Improved and enhanced risk assessment and risk management system

We continue to monitor this worrying trend and work with and challenge, where necessary, all our multi-agency partners to ensure a consistent and agreed plan of care/education is in place and reviewed regularly.

NSPCC - Why do teenagers and children self-harm?

The reasons children and teenagers can self-harm are often complicated and will be different for every child or young person. Sometimes a child or teenager may not know the reasons they self-harm.

For many young people, self-harm can feel like a way to cope with difficult feelings or to release tension. The physical pain of hurting themselves can feel like a distraction from the emotional pain they're struggling with.

Notifications to Regulators

Between July 2020 – June 2021 we reported 1252 matters to our regulators (Ofsted, CIW and CQC) - a 30% rise in the number of notifications to Ofsted from the previous period. This was because of an additional requirement to report if children and young people had contracted COVID-19.

Number of notifications	
Ofsted	993
CIW	259



Crescent House

A young person at Crescent House completed this lovely drawing celebrating Pride Month.

Complaints and Compliments

To July 2021 there were 249 complaints reported, an increase of 46% on the previous reporting period. We were committed to developing how we actively listen, learn and through workshops have ensured that all our people recognise a concern/complaint and understand the importance of listening, thoroughly investigating while maintaining accurate records and reporting in accordance with our procedures.

80% of complaints were classified as Stage 1, a 5% increase from last reporting period. Of the 249 complaints, 20% were classified as Stage 2 complaints.

Complaints received	% of total
Young Person	64%
Family Member	12%
Neighbour	10%
Local Authority	3%
School	1%
General Public	1%
Regulatory Body	1%

We have two stages to our complaints process:-

Stage 1 - Where a complaint is made, a local investigation undertaken and the complainant is satisfied with the outcome

Stage 2 - Where a complaint has been unable to be resolved at Stage 1 or the complaint is of a serious/complex nature

We continue to focus on the importance of actively seeking feedback and seeing complaints positively, of breaking down any barriers for anyone who wishes to complain and knowing that where people are able to make their voice heard is an opportunity to resolve issues in an open and reasonable way before they even become complaints.

To drive improvements forward, a member of the Senior Leadership team is examining how we involve and provide opportunities for those we care and support to provide feedback.

Safeguarding and Exploitation

7% of all our adverse events are an incident that could affect the safety of the child/young person or other.

It is our collective responsibility and moral duty to do all we can to protect our children and young people's well-being and to keep them safe. In November 2020, we ran a communication campaign across the Group bringing focus to 'Our Responsibility to Protect'. We run regular awareness raising campaigns to ensure that the most up-to-date best practice is shared across the organisation.

We provide training, support and guidance so any concern about a child/adult being at risk is effectively alerted, raised as a concern and effectively managed.

- Safeguarding Policy and procedure
- RADAR – embedded safeguarding reporting workflow
- Contacting the Director of Human Resources and/or Director of Quality directly
- Whistleblowing Policy



- External Whistle-blowing reporting hotline in agreement with Navex Global
- ‘SpeakingUP’ App and Hapi App
- Contacting one of our 5 specialist advisors for advice, support, guidance and training
- Mandatory training in Safeguarding, Exploitation, County Lines and Radicalisation. Keys Group is committed to holding further events, with planning already underway

We recognise the importance of continually raising awareness, encouraging debate and highlighting the need for everyone to be alert both within and outside Keys Group.

In April 2021 we welcomed over 150 participants to our first event Exploitation; Listen, understand, recognise, protect, prevent.

The event led by our National Specialist Advisor for Exploitation, considered how we all, as professionals, can ensure that by listening to children and young people, we are better able to understand what exploitation is and recognise the signs – so that we can protect our young people from exploitation and prevent it from happening. The event heard from experts with lived experience of criminal or sexual exploitation who are using their experiences to help young people. The event also included Victoria Wilde from the National Crime Agency, who was involved in the Rotherham Child Sexual Exploitation investigation, Operation Stovewood.

“

Thank you to all at Keys for this exploitation event, it has been great and I will making sure my colleagues are aware of the resources. I will also be feeding back to my team that, given the opportunity again in the future, they should attend this event.”

Family Support Worker

Vehicle Safety Campaign

In May 2021 a study of incidents identified 15 involving vehicle safety over a 3 month period. An analysis was carried out and a number of areas identified for improvement. We have over 368 vehicles within our fleet and ensuring the safety and wellbeing of passengers, drivers and the public is of prime importance. To raise awareness we launched a staff targeted safety campaign, we introduced vehicle safety posters to services and encouraged conversation through our weekly communications, and this was in addition to the requirements of our Work-Related Driving Policy and our plans to introduce specific driver awareness training.



Regulatory Inspection

Throughout 2020/21 the normal regulatory inspection process was suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Regulatory bodies in England and Wales conducted remote monitoring and assurance visits throughout the lockdown phases of the pandemic this meant that no rating was provided.

81%
national
average
all children's
homes

83%
national
average all
independent
special
schools

80%

90%

% good and above at March 2021



100%

(no priority action notices)



No inspection
grade

(2 services dormant)



No inspection
grade

Our Schools

At March 2021, 90% of Keys Group Independent Special Schools were rated good or outstanding by Ofsted. Our focus on quality has remained over this period, we have continued to assess and benchmark our schools against the expected regulatory standards, we have called on external expertise to continue to examine the quality of our education provision, to maintain an independent eye and support our school governance process, in the absence of regulatory inspection.

Ofsted Report

In June 2021 Ofsted published the Review of sexual abuse in schools and colleges.⁹ The review recommended that 'schools and college leaders act on the assumption that sexual harassment is affecting their pupils, and take a whole-school approach to addressing these issues, creating a culture where sexual harassment is not tolerated.'

The report made a number of recommendations for local and national change. We have examined the report and its findings and have taken the following action to implement the recommendations and already have systems in place to monitor any adverse incidents with focus on our trends and patterns.



		Outstanding	Good	Requires improvement	Inadequate
All non-association independent schools	1,138	13%	64%	13%	9%
Other Independent School	579	11%	61%	14%	14%
Other Independent Special School	559	16%	67%	12%	5%
Keys Group Independent Schools	20	5%	85%	10%	0%

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/non-association-independent-schools-inspections-and-outcomes-management-information#history>

Ofsted Report Recommendations	Keys Group Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School and college leaders should develop a culture where all kinds of sexual harassment are recognised and addressed, including with sanctions when appropriate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have made all head teachers and teaching staff aware of this publication We have revised our policies to reflect the elements of this publication We have revised our safeguarding procedures and developed a safeguarding roadmap to assist everyone in recognising and reporting concerns. All schools within Keys Group are members of the PSHE Association
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The RSHE curriculum should be carefully sequenced with time allocated for topics that children and young people find difficult, such as consent and sharing explicit images. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have reviewed our curriculum and ensured that RSHE is taught within our PHSE curriculum. In delivering PSHE, Keys Group adopt five key principles: 1. Regular lessons on the timetable 2. Delivered as a whole subject 3. Delivered by trained Teachers 4. Delivered in all Keys Schools 5. Taught from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools and colleges should provide high-quality training for teachers delivering RSHE. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have created a workforce development plan that outlines the quality training required for teaching staff. In this next year we will be focusing on ensuring that teachers are supported to deliver RSHE.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved engagement between multi-agency safeguarding partners and schools. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keys Group schools are committed to effective partnership working including safeguarding partners. Our revised Safeguarding Roadmap provides our staff a consistent framework within which they can engage multi-agency safeguarding partners, ensuring timely responding and effective reporting to both support ongoing proactive shared working and in response to concerns.

Our homes

As of March 2021 80% of our homes in England were rated good or outstanding with Ofsted. Ofsted suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020 and did not carry out routine inspections during the 2020 to 2021 inspection window. For this reason, inspection profiles published by Ofsted have changed very little, any small changes are due to services that have deregistered. Visits throughout this period were determined by Ofsted based on the following

- the most recent inspection judgements
- the amount of time since the last inspection
- whether the provider is newly registered and so has not yet been inspected
- any other information that Ofsted hold about a provider

Although assurance visits did not result in an overall effectiveness judgement, they were used to identify any services with serious and widespread concerns. Of the 648 private children's homes that received an assurance visit, 71 (11%) had serious and widespread concerns identified.¹⁰ In Keys Group of the 33 homes that received an assurance visit 1 (3%) was identified that had serious and widespread concerns. A comprehensive improvement plan was put in place immediately and concerns were confirmed as rectified in a further monitoring visit.

As of 31 MARCH 2021

Percentage of all providers rated outstanding	17%	Percentage of Keys Group Homes rated outstanding	11%	Percentage difference	-6%
Percentage of all providers rated good	64%	Percentage of Keys Group Homes rated good	69%	Percentage difference	+5%
Percentage of all providers rated requires improvement	17%	Percentage of Keys Group Homes rated requires improvement	20%	Percentage difference	+3%
Percentage of all providers rated inadequate	1%	Percentage of Keys Group Homes rated inadequate	0%	Percentage difference	+1%

Young people enjoy good, trusting relationships with the adults who care for them. Once the COVID-19 restrictions eased, a new young person was admitted to the home. This transition was well managed and the group of young people quickly developed positive relationships with each other. One young person has also successfully moved on from the home, having made significant progress.
Ofsted Assurance Report – Peregrine House

Two homes were inspected in Wales to March 21 and both homes had no areas identified for immediate action. Regular and ongoing remote monitoring continued throughout 2020 and 2021 with Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) inspectors contacting our homes on numerous occasions using focused questioning and the sharing of documents and information to monitor the homes, with no issues being raised.

Children are settled, safe and secure at the home. They have positive relationships with each other and receive robust and targeted support to achieve their outcomes. They have opportunities to share their thoughts and feelings and to take measured risks and develop self-responsibility.
Care Inspectorate Wales Report, for Phoenix House

We continued our Independent Visits to all our homes throughout the COVID-19 restrictions, at times visits were carried out remotely, but through a clear process, we ensured that our homes received independent assessment regards the children's safety and their wellbeing.

¹⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/inspection-outcomes-of-the-largest-childrens-social-care-providers/largest-national-providers-of-private-and-voluntary-social-care-march-2021>

Managing Our Risks

Our Governance Committee continues to be held every quarter. We continue to improve our reporting abilities to enable leaders to see clearly the areas that require attention. Our

Safeguarding Subcommittee also continues to meet quarterly, reporting to the Governance Committee they explore our safeguarding data and recommend areas for improvement across all our safeguarding practices.

Our quality team have continued to support services ensuring that expected standards continue to be met and exceeded and where shortfalls are identified, work with operational teams to achieve sustained improvements.

Responding to consultation

In May 2021 the Department of Education in England sought views on the proposed standards for unregulated provision for looked after children and care leavers aged 16 and 17¹¹. We responded to this consultation supporting the regulation of these services.

We continue to keep a keen eye on all developments in the sector. We are closely following the Independent Review of Children's Social Care¹² and the Children's Commissioner (England) Big Ask Big Answer¹³ projects and will consider fully the outcome of these important reports.

¹¹ <https://consult.education.gov.uk/children-in-care-and-permanence/unregulated-provision-children-in-care/>

¹² <https://childrensocialcare.independent-review.uk/>

¹³ <https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/the-big-answer/>



Our Projects for Improvement

Throughout the last 12 months we have been focused on delivering projects to improve the support, care and education we provide. We have looked outside Keys Group and outside the sector to encourage creative thinking to generate new and exciting ideas that we can develop into clear plans for improvement.

Journey to Independence

This year we have been working on developing a transition 'roadmap', outlining a young person's journey to independence. We want to ensure that young people have the best preparation for life after care and have the skills, knowledge, confidence and resilience to become successfully independent.

We have developed a transition 'roadmap' consisting of key checkpoints which start with residential preparation for leaving care, through to independent living and beyond. We want to, as much as possible, reduce the fears and anxieties young people in care often experience as they approach adult age, and ensure that they can look forward to a bright future.



Our young people have been instrumental in sharing their views on the services they have or are receiving as they move on from care. They have highlighted what the essential aspects of support are from their perspective and these are a central theme of the project.

Young people sharing their experience told us that it was difficult moving from a children's home with lots of people around to living alone. They were fearful of asking for help in case this made them look less independent. Some articulated the mental struggle this created particularly where the move to independence was sudden. These are key insights being addressed within the Journey to Independence model.

We will be launching Journey to Independence in March 2022 and look forward to sharing some great outcomes.



“

Young people stated that they found it difficult going from having lots of people around them and a high level of care to being alone

Keys Connect

We have continued to review our clinical model and developed Keys Connect. We appointed our new Clinical Director, Dr Christopher Robinson and his team to take forward the implementation of our revised model.

The model has been developed in response to:-

- Developments in knowledge and understanding about trauma and attachment
- Changes in the sector since the last review of our clinical approaches in 2015
- The growth of Keys Group
- The need to ensure that a model was consistently understood and applied
- The need to ensure that clinical and specialist resources are available to support all service divisions
- The increased incidence of violence and aggressive behaviour



Keys Connect aims to:-

- Update and revise our model of therapeutic care and education
- Fully establish a consistent Keys approach to care, support and education
- Fully embed a model that all our people can support and articulate
- Ensure there are effective processes that support the delivery of the clinical model
- Implement the best ways of measuring outcomes across all our services
- Reduce the incidence of violence and aggression and use of physical intervention



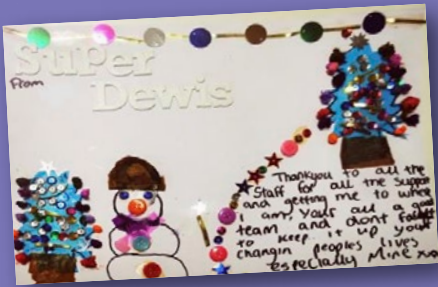
Voice of the Child

We have always strived to hear the voice of the child, however in 2021 we acknowledged that our strategic approach was fragmented and required a well understood framework. We have many current mechanisms for listening to those we support, care and educate. These include:-

- 1:1 time with a child/adult, through key work sessions, therapy sessions etc
- Service led meetings within our homes and leaving care services
- Pupil forums within our schools
- Internal surveys
- Contribution to events, competitions
- Membership of local and national forums
- Stories shared across the organisation

We are working harder to understand better how we hear the child's voice, recognising that there are many opportunities that may go unnoticed or are not harnessed collectively.





Christmas Cards

A young person from Dewis created this lovely piece of art to show his appreciation to the team.



Good News Story

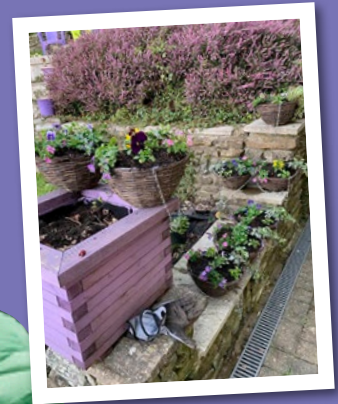
Hazel House held a Comic Relief Red Nose fun day raising almost £400 for the charity. The staff dressed as superheroes and people paid to take part in Bushtucker trials, wet sponge and cream pie throwing (at the manager and staff!) and, because so much money was raised, three of the male staff members had their legs waxed!

The young people at the home held a cake sale and set up all the activities for the day.



Good News Story

Coed Duon wanted to support Papyrus and discussed this as a house. One of the young people at Coed Duon had reflected that the previous year he made some hanging baskets with the home's manager, and that he had found it really helpful in taking his mind off things! They decided to organise making hanging baskets and seeing if they could sell them to the other homes and potentially staff in the region. They had a few issues on the way with supply regarding Covid-19 and the weather, but have now made and sold just under 30 baskets enabling them to donate just under £60 to the cause. Orders are still coming in and the boys are enjoying making them and are looking forward to seeing photos from the other homes when they fully start to bloom in a few weeks!!



Our People

Our people are our single most important resource in the work we do.

Our People Strategy states that: Our people are vital to the delivery of our strategic priorities, plans and vision and values.

There are 7 strands to our overarching People and Organisation Development Strategy



Keys 2021 People Survey



In March 2021 Keys undertook its first ever people survey. As noted in the introduction to the survey, colleagues are the most important people in ensuring that Keys vision and values are achieved.

We are all involved in making a difference to the lives of the children and young people - as well as their family and friends and want to ensure we deliver the highest quality of support and education.

This was your opportunity to tell us what you think about how we are doing and where we need to improve. This report provides summary details of what you told us.

Overall the results were very positive.

The table below shows the top 5 most positive areas according to you:

Area	Question	Positive
Your Job	Providing compassionate support is important to me	97.76%
Your Job	I am clear about what is expected of me in my job	93.24%
Your Job	I understand clearly how my work contributes to achieving the organisation's objectives	91.04%
Your Manager	My line manager is accessible to me when needed	84.59%
Your Job	My job makes good use of my skills and abilities	81.74%

The top 5 areas we need to improve as identified by you are shown below:

Area	Question	Positive
Your organisation's leadership	I am well informed about Keys business performance and results	20.85%
Your Job	I feel free to speak my mind without fear of negative consequences	19.66%
Your Job	I believe I have access to good career progression opportunities	18.64%
Your Job	When changes are made that affect me, communications are well handled	17.65%
Your organisation's leadership	Our leaders recognise the contribution of colleagues and the work they do	15.27%

The goals of this People Strategy are to;

- Attract and retain the best people by providing a great place to work
- Safely recruit people using rigorous, fair and professional selection methods based on our vision and values
- Provide induction and career support to give people the best possible start
- Develop people's personal and professional skills and knowledge throughout their careers, providing ongoing support to help them achieve their full potential in the Keys Group environment
- Recognise people's achievements and provide structured routes to progress their career
- Develop staff forums to consult with colleagues and to obtain feedback on company initiatives
- Reward people fairly within transparent and appropriate remuneration frameworks; remaining competitive and allowing for changing external pressures
- Embed a supportive culture which is inclusive, positive and fair; where opportunities are open to all, people can lead and are led effectively and change is well managed
- Provide an environment where health and wellbeing are actively promoted, where people feel engaged with the wider Group and valued for their contribution

We know that in the last 18 months the COVID-19 pandemic has had an unprecedented impact upon the social care sector and gaining stability within the workforce as is mirrored in the wider labour markets. Throughout the lockdown restrictions we saw a marked reduction in the utilisation of agency staff and greater stability was gained within our teams.

We have been keenly following the developments across the whole social care sector and specifically the children's care sector as we have moved through this crisis. We have used the information available to analyse our own data and while our workforce has remained largely stable over the preceding 12 months we have seen a recent increase in the turnover of our people.

With this knowledge we have been focusing on recruitment and retention of people and echoing The Independent Review of Children's Social care paper - The Case for Change¹⁴, 'we know we have more to do to recruit, retain and support a high quality workforce'.

We have a plan to introduce an Applicant Tracking System to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of our recruitment process and to review the overall experience of the candidate throughout the recruitment process and beyond into our induction programme.

We have appointed a new Head of Human Resources and Head of Organisational Development to support and achieve the goals set out in our People Strategy.

We know that our clinical model (Keys Connect) and the objective of achieving positive experiences and outcomes for our children and adults, is dependent on a skilled and experienced workforce.

To ensure that we continue to listen to our people we have held a number of people engagements initiatives throughout the year, the first being through a People Survey. We analysed the views and opinions and shared the findings and our actions across the Group.



Our people believe that compassionate support to the children, young people and adults we support and educate is important and an essential element of our EPIC values, however we also have analysed the areas our people identified for improvement and have an action plan in place to address these.

People's Forum

12 representatives from across the company meet quarterly with David Manson (CEO) and Paul Newton (HR Director) to inform, consult and tell us their views about how things are going and what's of concern to them.

Managers'/Headteachers' Forum

12 representatives from across the company meet quarterly with David Manson (CEO) and Paul Newton (HR Director) to inform, consult and tell us their views of how things are going and what's of concern to them.

Revised Appraisal and Talent Matrix

Piloting a new system focused on our pathways for promotion and career planning.

Emerging Leaders

Created an 'Emerging Leaders' programme for our deputy managers which started in August 2021 with the next programme scheduled for January 2022.

Chartered Management Institute Degree

Our first managers have enrolled in a fully funded Chartered Management Institute degree programme.

Future Leaders Programme

Our 6th cohort of our successful Future Leader programme is underway and 20 leaders have already completed the course with 38 leaders currently participating

Long Service Awards

We have introduced long service awards recognising people in achieving 5, 10, 15, 20 and 25 year's service who will receive, on the anniversary of their appointment, a cash sum.

Maternity/Paternity Leave

We have improved our maternity and paternity leave company pay scheme. We recognise that 61% of our people are women and we have had 70 people go on maternity/paternity leave in the last year. This scheme will reflect the terms offered by the public sector.

Life Assurance Benefit

We have a fully funded Life Assurance benefit for all our people who achieve 1 years service. This offers financial protection to their family and loved ones.

Learning and Developing

In the last year we have spent more than £2m on learning and development opportunities for our people. We have expanded the number and range of apprenticeship programmes available.

Qualifications and Credit Framework

(Vocational training and apprenticeships)

- 81% of our managers are qualified to QCF Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management for Residential Childcare (England) or Level 5 Diploma in leadership for Health & Social Care Services (Children and Young People's Residential Management Wales)
- 27% of our deputy managers are qualified to QCF 5 or equivalent, a programme we have opened up to this role in the last year and 18% are enrolled on the programme
- 49% of our care practitioners are qualified in QCF Level 3 Diploma in Residential Childcare, England Level 3 Apprenticeship Diploma in Health and Social Care (Children and Young People), Wales or equivalent with 36% enrolled on the programme
- 41% of our Education Support Workers & Teaching Assistants are qualified in the Level 3 Teaching Assistant Apprenticeship and 31% enrolled on the programme

We offer a wide range of apprenticeships and are constantly expanding the range with 498 people participating in a range of vocational training, including 16 people from our support services.

Level 7 Senior Leader - Degree

Level 6 Digital & Technology Solutions Professional - Degree

Level 6 Chartered Manager Degree

Level 5 Children, Young People & Families Manager

Level 5 Leadership for Health & Social Care Services (Wales)

Level 5 Operations Departmental Manager

Level 5 Leader in Adult Care

Level 4 Children, Young People & Families Practitioner

Level 4 Network Engineer

Level 4 Software Developer

Level 4 Preparing for Leadership & Management in Health and Social Care (Wales)

Level 3 Teaching Assistant

Level 3 Health & Social Care (Children & Young People) - Wales

Level 3 Lead Adult Care Worker

Level 3 Business Administrator

Level 3 Recruitment Consultant

Overall, in the period July 2020 - July 2021 there have been 41,435 training sessions in a range of topics. We have also expanded the range of our mandatory training. Our compliance remains below target in these areas as the programmes are rolled out across the Group.

In the last 12 months we have delivered 8776 webinar training and face-to-face sessions over 975 courses and 32,659 e-Learning courses, this includes our induction programme which all frontline colleagues attend before working in our services.

We continue to look for opportunities to develop and provide high quality services where the safety and wellbeing in supporting and educating children and adults is threaded through all learning opportunities.

Mandated Training Compliance as at July 2021	August 2021 %
Equality & Diversity	90.12
Fire Safety	87.23
Food Safety	92.77
General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)	90.15
Health & Safety	91.96
Induction Programme	90.15
Manual Handling	90.04
Safeguarding Foundation	91.91
Infection Control	87.39
Administration of Medication	72.81
COSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health)	78.89
E Safety	90.01
Radicalisation	87.20
Reporting & Recording	74.85
Risk Management	73.89
Child Sexual Exploitation	84.33
Gangs County Lines and Criminal Exploitation	72.29
Fire Warden	77.64
Self-Injurious Behaviour	64.89

Our Systems of Support

IT Services

Through 2020 and most of 2021 we have never experienced a greater dependence on technology. Due to the investments made in technology by Keys Group, we have been able to keep all our services, schools and back-office support running throughout the pandemic with little interruption to business as usual. Who would have thought video conferencing would become an essential part of our daily work lives? However this function has enabled us to collaborate, keep organised, host meetings and keep in touch while we work and teach remotely. Our IT helpdesk provides daily support to services responding with a 99.5% resolution rate within a month.

Projects Team

We have continued to invest in technology. The Keys Group IT Services Project Team is a coordinating unit providing a focal point for project management (PM) within IT Services, developing and implementing a practical approach to project management.

Since our last report, several significant technology projects have been delivered or are currently in flight. These include an integrated people management application (HRIS). This application allows managers working remotely access to up to date staff information, provides a simple timesheet solution, live annual leave calculations and more. It has helped streamline our pay roll processes, reducing manual inputting errors and leading to efficiency gains.

We continue to identify opportunities to apply technology to support our work. We are currently implementing a referrals systems called The Link, and making enhancements to our finance system and maintenance reporting system, which is currently being piloted.

Cyber Security

Cyber-attacks against organisations are commonplace and routine, requiring constant operational analysis and response. The targeted nature of some cyber-attacks requires emergency action to protect user's accounts and core systems. There is ample evidence that malicious actors have developed more sophisticated and professional strategies resulting in a rise in attacks across all sectors, including social care. We continue to invest in technology and services to move from incident response and recovery to incident identification and prevention. We have also invested in a Cyber Training platform by Sophos. We use specifically targeted dummy threats which are sent to users, and those engaging are issued with a mandatory eLearning course. This approach, and the actions taken, will help minimise what is an increasing and far more sophisticated form of attacks.

Estates and Maintenance

We have an estates and mobile maintenance team that support the maintenance and development of all of our environments. We understand the importance of ensuring that our pre-planned maintenance is checked for all sites and to July 2021 we had 97.8% compliance in the following areas.

Compliance Area	%
Fire Risk Assessments	99.4
Asbestos Re-inspections	98.9
Emergency Lighting	97.4
Fire Alarms	99.4
Fire Extinguishers	96.4
Boiler Safety Certificates	97.5
Misc. Gas Certificates	97.1
PAT Testing	94.5
Fixed Wire Electrical	100
WHRA	100
TMV Servicing	97.8
Legionella Sampling	95
Overall Compliance	97.8%

Our response maintenance team receive over 1300 requests in a month with 75% of requests completed in month.

Our Future and Priorities for 2022

1. To implement Keys Connect – our model that will ensure every service within the Group provides care and education with an enhanced therapeutic foundation.
2. To implement Journey to Independence – The Future is Bright – a clear pathway supporting young people as they move forward into adulthood.
3. To establish and implement an Education Quality Framework.
4. To establish and implement a Safeguarding Quality and Assurance Framework.
5. To strengthen how we listen and respond to the voice of the children, young people and adults we support and educate.
6. To improve the diversity of our people particularly at management level and above together with equipping all colleagues with better knowledge and awareness of different cultures and backgrounds.
7. To establish a charity board to provide a more coordinated approach to our charity work across the organisation.
8. To consider our impact on the environment and ways this can be reduced, including understanding better the Group's current carbon impact and ways that this can be reduced.
9. To achieve Investors in People accreditation and become a Real Living Wage employer.



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