

# 1242216

Registered provider: Keys Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

The home is privately owned and is registered to provide care for four children with social and emotional difficulties.

There is an experienced manager who is in the process of registering with Ofsted.

### Inspection dates: 14 and 15 February 2023

|                                                                                           |             |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| <b>Overall experiences and progress of children and young people,</b> taking into account | <b>good</b> |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|

|                                                             |      |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| How well children and young people are helped and protected | good |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|------|

|                                           |      |
|-------------------------------------------|------|
| The effectiveness of leaders and managers | good |
|-------------------------------------------|------|

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

**Date of last inspection:** 16 November 2021

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement            |
|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| 16/11/2021      | Full            | Good                            |
| 19/02/2020      | Full            | Requires improvement to be good |
| 11/12/2018      | Full            | Good                            |
| 22/02/2018      | Interim         | Sustained effectiveness         |

## Inspection judgements

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

Leaders have been steering the home through a period of transition under a new management team. This has involved changing some of the care practices in the home. The manager is currently embedding and strengthening therapeutic approaches to the care of children which is helping them to make progress. There are two children living at the home. They have started to trust the manager and staff and this is helping them to build strong relationships.

Children are in good physical health. They are encouraged to prepare and cook healthy meals. Children receive very good support with their emotional well-being and developing their sense of identity. The manager arranges additional support from specialist agencies where necessary. This helps children to feel accepted for who they are.

The manager and staff support children to spend time with people who are important to them. Families are made welcome and regularly spend time with the children at the home. The importance of pets is also promoted, and staff help children to take care of their animal companions. This enables children to make emotional connections and take age-appropriate responsibility for the animals.

Children are finding it difficult to attend school. This is due to their individual experiences. The manager and staff are helping children to attend education through sensitive approaches. The manager also attends regular professionals' meetings, ensuring that early help care plans are in place where needed. The manager has advocated for a child well where bullying was a problem. As a result, the school has been required to address this issue to help the child feel safe again and start learning.

The manager and staff create learning opportunities in the home. Children's achievements are celebrated through certificates, 'my highlights books', photographs, and positive comments books. This helps children to feel valued and increases their self-esteem.

Children are benefiting from a recent refurbishment of the home. However, there are remaining areas of the house and garden that require attention. There were swear words on one child's bedroom walls and wallpaper removed in another child's room. Managers are considering ways in which they can support children with expressing their feelings in alternative ways, for example through different types of artworks. The garden contains discarded and unused items and presents as neglected. Managers recognise the importance of ensuring that these issues are addressed to make the garden an accessible and enjoyable space for children.

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

Children are cared for safely. The manager and staff ensure that children are protected through effective management of known risks. Where new risks emerge, the manager and staff respond in a timely way and work with involved professionals to mitigate risks. Risk assessments are detailed and contain relevant information. They are reviewed regularly, particularly following incidents. Current safety planning is proving helpful in increasing safety for children.

Leaders and managers identified that some incidents involving children were not managed well by the previous management team. This has now changed, and incidents rarely occur. The manager and staff use their skills, experience and understanding of trauma to help children manage their feelings. Physical interventions are seldom required. Where interventions are necessary, they are used only to ensure that children and staff are safe. Details of incidents are recorded well, and children are well supported after the event.

The manager and staff provide a well-coordinated response when children are missing from care. This has been a particular issue for one child. There is now a robust safety plan in place which the child is managing well, and she is no longer going missing. Police have given excellent feedback about how children have been safeguarded while away from home.

Children rarely make allegations. There has been one allegation made by a child since the last inspection. This was reported to the relevant professionals, ensuring that meetings were held to establish the right course of action. Leaders and managers ensured that the child was kept informed of the outcome and she was spoken to very sensitively about the incident with her views and feelings listened to. This transparent practice ensures that children feel confident that their concerns are taken seriously, and they are kept safe from harm.

Staff are recruited safely, overall. One shortfall was identified where a short gap in employment for one member of staff had not been fully explored. Managers recognised the importance of addressing this following the inspection.

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

There is a dedicated and committed manager who has established good relationships with children and staff. She has a therapeutic and collaborative management style. The manager listens to staff when making decisions and is committed to a trauma-informed approach to care practice. The manager is making a steady impact on the home, which has assured Ofsted that previous weaknesses in practice have been addressed.

The responsible individual has undertaken an extensive evaluation of the home. This process identified several areas for development, including the matching of children and some limitations in responding to children's emotional needs. The responsible individual has shown determination and has ensured that children's care has

improved where necessary. Her work alongside that of the manager has improved the quality of life for children.

Leaders and managers have learned from previous experiences with children living at the home. They now pay close attention to gathering information prior to children moving in. Transitions are well planned and include input from professionals, children and staff. This helps children to prepare and settle into the home.

There is a strong, diverse staff team that knows the children well. Staff are professional, motivated and enjoy being in the home. They benefit from a good range of training, including both mandatory and specialist courses. Learning is shared across the team and the home's development plan reflects the work being done to upskill the team. Increasing the knowledge and skills of the team has helped staff to increase their confidence in caring for children.

The manager provides regular supervision, which has a focus on children's needs as well as development needs of staff. The manager addresses issues of concern, and actions are regularly set and reviewed. This provides good oversight of practice in the home.

## 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 quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who—</p> <p>understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children;</p> <p>use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to—</p> <p>meet the needs of each child;</p> <p>enable each child to participate in the daily life of the home. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)(i)(ii))</p> <p>This specifically relates to ensuring that all areas of the home, including the garden and children's bedrooms, are maintained to a standard which maximises children's enjoyment, comfort and relaxation.</p> | 28 March 2023 |

### Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that recruitment of staff safeguards children and minimises potential risks to them. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1)

### 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:** 1242216

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

**Registered provider:** Keys Care Limited

**Registered provider address:** C/o Pinsent Masons Llp, The Soloist Building, 1 Lanyon Place, Belfast, Northern Ireland BT1 3LP

**Responsible individual:** Katie Harrison

**Registered manager:** Post vacant

## Inspector

Laura Walker, Social Care Inspector

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