

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 owned and operated by a large national provider. It provides care for up to three children aged between seven and 17 who may experience emotional, social and behavioural difficulties.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021.

We last visited this setting on 9 October 2020 to carry out an assurance visit. The report is published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection dates: 16 and 17 November 2021

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 19 February 2020

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
19/02/2020	Full	Requires improvement to be good
11/12/2018	Full	Good
22/02/2018	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
31/07/2017	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The manager and staff ensure that the environment is that of a family home. For example, children and staff are encouraged to wear slippers and comfortable clothes around the house. This creates a calm atmosphere, which particularly helps children who have had challenging or unsettling experiences in their lives. Children enjoy playful and happy interactions with staff. One child described the home as 'amazing' and said, 'I love being here.'

The home is decorated, maintained and furnished to a very high standard. It is warm and welcoming. A planned refurbishment of the kitchen and bathroom areas will further enhance the home and mean that children continue to enjoy their time there. Staff take particular care to ensure that children's bedrooms reflect each child's tastes and preferences. This ensures that children feel valued and take pride in where they live.

Children have made progress from their starting points when coming to live at the home. For example, one child is now in full-time education. Another child is engaging with a part-time educational timetable. This signifies good progress and attainment for these children.

The manager and staff prioritise children's health and well-being. Children are encouraged and supported to eat healthily and exercise regularly. Staff provide good advice and guidance on healthy lifestyles and choices. This helps children to develop healthier lifestyle habits that will benefit them now and in the future.

Children can express their views, wishes and feelings to the staff. Regular meetings, called 'family meetings' and 'table talk', take place. These facilitate good conversation and help children to raise any concerns they may have. Children also speak to involved professionals, such as social workers and independent reviewing officers. Children are helped and encouraged to contribute to their care plans and risk assessments. As a result, children are fully part of the life of this home and the decisions being made about them.

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

Children feel safe and supported. They do not leave the home unauthorised because they feel understood, trusted, and are helped to take responsibility for their decisions and behaviour. Staff place their trust in children and, because of the strong relationships, children do not want to let the staff down.

Staff practice is informed by a preferred therapeutic model. Staff know the children very well and are quick to recognise any changes in mood or demeanour. The culture of reflective practice in the staff team means that any concerns or worries about children's behaviour are quickly identified and acted on by staff.

Staff have a clear understanding of their safeguarding roles and responsibilities. They are confident to report any concerns they may have to managers or the appropriate agencies. They are skilled at providing support to children who have experienced difficulties in their lives. Staff respond very well when children share information of concern. This ensures that prompt and effective action is taken to safeguard children.

Staff manage behaviour well. The children respond well to strategies adopted by the staff to manage behaviour. The staff maintain clear behavioural boundaries, and children understand what staff's expectations of behaviour are. This has resulted in a period of stability without the need for sanctions or physical interventions. This is very good practice.

Strategies to manage risks to children are robust. Each child has a specific risk assessment and behaviour management plan which take account of their vulnerabilities. As a result, staff know how to protect the child and act proactively to minimise any area of risk or vulnerability.

Complaints are managed well. The manager responds to complaints in a very open and transparent manner. Effective working arrangements with other agencies ensure that any issues that arise are quickly and thoroughly addressed.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is led by a confident and experienced registered manager. She is passionate about her role and providing the best possible care for children. She is well supported by her own manager. She has high aspirations of the children and she knows them very well. The manager leads a culture which puts the children first. She has made a conscious decision not to impose negative sanctions but to resolve behavioural issues through discussion and guidance. This has led to a calm atmosphere, which benefits all.

The manager has a good understanding of the home's main challenges, particularly staff retention and recruitment. Several members of staff have recently left. The recruitment of new staff is underway. The manager has decided not to admit any new children until she feels confident in the sufficiency, skills and knowledge of the staff team.

Staff training is good. All staff are trained to a high level to meet the needs of each child. When new needs emerge for children, such as a diagnosed health condition, staff are quickly provided with additional training. This provides assurance that staff have the knowledge and skills to meet these needs.

Staff feel supported and receive regular, professional supervision. One member of staff said that the home feels like her second home and does not feel like work. Team meetings are used well to share information about children's emerging needs and to develop strategies to support children. The manager reviews the

effectiveness of these strategies and updates staff at subsequent meetings. This ensures that staff are fully involved in decision-making and can share their expertise. A qualified therapist offers support and guidance to staff to help them to meet the children's needs.

Management oversight is rigorous. The manager monitors each child's progress and the effectiveness of their care plans. She welcomes feedback from the home's independent visitor and acts quickly on any recommendations. She ensures that the culture of the home is open and reflective.

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: David Carser

Registered manager: Holly Robertson

Inspector

Pradip Panchmatia, Social Care Inspector

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