

2494662

Registered provider: Keys Child Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is operated by a private organisation and is registered to care for up to 3 children who may experience social and emotional difficulties or learning disabilities.

The manager registered with Ofsted in June 2025. He is appropriately experienced and working towards completing the necessary qualification.

There were 2 children living at the home at the time of this inspection. The inspector met and spoke with both children.

Inspection dates: 5 and 6 January 2026

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	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 11 February 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/02/2025	Full	Good
07/11/2023	Full	Outstanding
14/12/2022	Full	Good
05/03/2020	Interim	Declined in effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are provided with long and stable placements at this home. They develop positive and trusting relationships with staff. Staff know children very well. They invest time in them and promote their well-being. They are nurturing in their approach and they understand children's individual communication needs. Staff are proud of the progress children make and talk about their development with enthusiasm.

Social workers, professionals and family report positively about the support provided to children and the impact this has on their progress. Children's individual progress is tracked and evidenced well in their written plans. Care, health, communication and progress plans are detailed, and they are regularly reviewed, updated and read by all the staff team.

Children are supported to engage in education. One child enjoys school and their attendance is excellent. Another child has been supported through a challenging time at school and when there have been barriers to them accessing education. Staff have worked effectively with the child's placing authority to identify an alternative school for the child and a planned transition is under way.

Children's health needs are well managed. Staff ensure that children attend routine and specialist health appointments to support their wellbeing. The staff team works with additional health professionals to ensure that children's health needs are reviewed regularly and met. Staff understand children's serious health needs, such as epilepsy. Seizure management plans provide staff with clear guidance about the action they should take and how to support children during and post seizure.

Children's views are sought in different ways. Direct work sessions using social stories and 'My Voice, My Choice' sessions engage children well using their individual communication styles. Children also have access to talking communication devices, feelings boards and the Picture Exchange Communication System to help them communicate how they are feeling, things they need help with and how they feel about their home.

Children engage in activities of their choice, youth clubs and recreational activities in line with their hobbies and interests. Photos displayed around the home reflect their fun days out with staff. Children are also supported to spend regular time with their families in line with their wishes and views and at their own pace.

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

Children are kept safe and feel safe at their home. This is because staff have a good understanding of children's risks, triggers to their behaviour and strategies that are effective in helping to keep children safe. When children are unsettled, staff respond to

them using a trauma-informed approach. This approach is threaded through all behaviour support plans and incident records. Staff provide children with clear routines and boundaries. This promotes a predictable home environment for children and helps them to manage their behaviours more effectively.

Children's risk assessments provide staff with clear information they require to work with children and to keep them safe. They include risk reduction strategies and full chronologies of risk behaviour so that staff understand the risks that they are monitoring.

Staff use effective de-escalation strategies to help children to regulate their emotions and to try to prevent an escalation of their behaviour and the use of physical restraint. When physical restraint is used to keep children safe, it is used minimally and as a last resort.

Children do not go missing from the home. Their vulnerabilities in the community are understood by the staff team and managed well. Incidents have reduced in severity and length. Children are supported to manage their emotions and communicate their feelings effectively through their individual communication styles.

Children are comfortable raising concerns in relation to their care. Staff understand their roles and responsibilities in dealing with safeguarding concerns. Consequently, an allegation made by one child was reported by staff without delay and explored by the manager to ensure that the child's views were taken seriously and that they were kept safe. The relevant safeguarding professionals were notified and action was taken to address the concerns. However, the manager failed to notify Ofsted of the allegation.

Consequences are not used at the home. Children are helped to understand how their negative choices impact on themselves and others. Positive rewards and recognition are used to promote good behaviour. Children receive certificates for their progress and verbal praise and encouragement is given daily. In addition, monthly awards ceremonies take place to celebrate children's achievements.

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

Leaders and managers took prompt action to investigate 2 medication errors that did not impact on children's health and wellbeing. Processes to monitor safe medication management have been implemented by leaders and managers but they are still ineffective. Leaders and managers have not ensured that the systems make staff accountable for ensuring that children have medication administered safely and as prescribed to reduce any potential risk to their health and wellbeing. This was raised as a requirement at the last inspection and has been restated.

Leaders and managers do not have effective oversight of staff training, leaving some staff with essential mandatory training not completed. There are some immediate staff training needs, including safeguarding and first aid. Immediate action was taken during

the inspection to ensure that these training courses were undertaken within a week of the inspection. Arrangements were also made to ensure that rotas were covered by staff who are appropriately trained to enable staff to complete this training. Some other staff training needs to be refreshed, such as the model of care additional training.

The registered manager's review of the quality of care report provides an overview of all key areas. Feedback from children, staff, family and professionals is included in the report to evaluate the impact of the service on children's experiences. However, the independent person does not regularly obtain feedback from local authority social workers and professionals working with children about the impact of the quality of care on children's experiences. This is a missed opportunity to obtain their views about the care provided.

There are some vacancies in the staff team, which are being recruited for by leaders and managers. This means that staff are required to cover shifts and there has been a high reliance on agency and temporary staff. There is no identified impact on children. However, the manager recognises that the staff team requires stabilising once new staff are in position to ensure continuity of care for children.

The members of the senior leadership team know children well. They advocate well for children and challenge other professionals when required to promote children's outcomes. The manager has oversight of all records, incidents and systems. This ensures that he understands children's needs and the practice of his staff team. Internal audits ensure that children's case files and records are kept up to date.

Staff are provided with regular supervision. These sessions are reflective. They promote discussion about children's progress, staff wellbeing and their professional development. Monthly team meetings are used to share lessons learned and to deliver workshops to develop staff knowledge. Consequently, staff feel well supported and they are positive about the current team and how it operates.

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, The 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
The registered person must make arrangements for the handling, recording, safe keeping, safe administration and disposal of medicines received into the children's home. In particular, the registered person must ensure that— medicine which is prescribed for a child is administered as prescribed to the child for whom it is prescribed and to no other child. (Regulation 23 (1) (2)(b)) Specifically, the registered person must implement systems to ensure that children have their medication administered by staff as it is prescribed. This requirement has been restated.	21 January 2026
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)) Specifically, the registered person must ensure that all staff have up-to-date safeguarding and first-aid training as a priority. Leaders and managers must develop a system so that they have an improved oversight of all staff training needs.	21 January 2026

The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there. (Regulation 40 (4)(c))	18 February 2026
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Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that any individual appointed to carry out visits to the home as an independent person makes a rigorous and impartial assessment of the home's arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children in the home's care. Specifically, the independent person should obtain regular feedback from external professionals involved in children's care to help them to assess the quality of care and safeguarding provided in the home in an effective manner. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.5)

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: 2494662

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Keys Child Care Limited

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

Responsible individual: Joanne Carter

Registered manager: Christopher Landry

Inspector

Cheryl Field, Social Care Inspector

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