

2507631

Registered provider: Keys Educational Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned by a private provider and offers care for up to 4 children. The provider states in the home's statement of purpose that care is provided for children with social and emotional difficulties. At the time of this inspection, 3 children were living in the home.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since May 2024.

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 March 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: 28 May 2024

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
28/05/2024	Full	Requires improvement to be good
05/09/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
24/10/2022	Full	Good
23/03/2022	Interim	Improved effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Three children were living at the home at the time of the inspection, and all 3 children spent time with the inspectors. Children speak positively about their experiences of living at the home and speak warmly about the care they receive. One child talked about an improvement in their mental health since living at the home. Importantly, all children say that they understand how to complain and know that their views will be taken seriously.

Children make good progress from their individual starting points. Staff support children to build confidence and engage in new activities. Overall, children's progress reflects the positive impact of consistently good care. While children's progress is supported, there are opportunities to strengthen this area of practice. Clearer planning around children's individual goals and progress, would further support staff with helping children achieve better outcomes.

Children's engagement with education is inconsistent. Two children are engaging with school on a full-time basis and are meeting their targets. One child is engaging with education on a part-time basis through some tutoring in the home. Outside of these tutoring hours, there is a lack of support to help this child access structured activities that support learning. This means that they are not being helped to achieve their educational potential.

Children are encouraged to maintain important relationships with family members, including enjoying important family trips. Children can invite friends to the home. In addition, children develop relationships with staff that are trusting and secure, helping children to feel safe, valued and supported. When children have sleepovers with friends, staff communicate regularly with the child and seek to form relationships with the friends' parents.

Children benefit from a range of enjoyable and meaningful activities that reflect their interests. One child has been supported by staff to attend a theme park abroad with family and they are now planning a trip to London. Another child attends a weekly club at school.

The home environment is warm, welcoming and maintained to a high standard. Children have a say over the decoration of their bedrooms, which promotes a sense of belonging.

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

Children living at the home are supported to feel safe and protected by staff, who are therapeutic in their approach. When incidents occur, staff use a range of de-escalation

techniques to try to calm children down. Some incidents have taken place where physical interventions have been used. These have been brief and proportionate. Staff prioritise rebuilding relationships following incidents and spend time supporting children to reflect following incidents.

There is effective management oversight of incidents. Leaders and managers review incidents carefully to understand triggers and patterns of behaviour. This helps to inform future planning that reduces the likelihood of incidents taking place and supports children's emotional well-being.

When children go missing from home, staff take prompt and appropriate action. They effectively search for children and make efforts to remain in contact with them. Staff follow agreed protocols, including liaising with the police and contacting relevant people in the child's network to try to bring children home safely. When the manager identifies any concerns with regards to staff practice, these are addressed swiftly in follow up discussions.

Staff respond effectively to risks associated with exploitation. For example, one child has faced risks relating to criminal exploitation. The manager has ensured timely referrals to external agencies. Strong multi-agency work is evident, with effective information-sharing in meetings with external agencies. External professionals recognise and value the manager's leadership in coordinating a safeguarding response, which contributes positively to protecting children.

Safeguarding concerns relating to staff practice are taken seriously. Allegations are reported to external safeguarding agencies appropriately. Interim safety measures are put in place, which ensure that children's safety is prioritised. Appropriate action is taken following investigations, including referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service where appropriate.

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

There has been a consistent manager in post since the previous full inspection, which has provided some stability for children. Leaders and managers have undertaken considerable work with staff to address the concerns raised at the last inspection. However, there remain some areas of weakness that are impacting on children's day-to-day experiences and progress.

Since the last inspection, there have been numerous changes with staffing, including the frequent use of agency staff, which has contributed to some instability in the home. The impact of this, alongside 2 children moving into the home in quick succession, has affected children's ability to settle, build relationships and feel secure. The changes in the home have had an unsettling impact on one of the children.

Management oversight is not sufficiently robust. Two children do not have clear plans in relation to developing semi-independence skills. In addition, planning for children's futures is not always clear. There is a lack of coordinated planning around one child

moving on from the home. While there has been some challenge to the local authority around this, more work is needed to ensure that this child has a clear plan that will support a successful transition.

Team meetings and staff supervision take place regularly. There is good reflection around the children's needs and challenges in the home, and concerns around staff practice are highlighted in supervision appropriately. While some reflective practice is undertaken, more could be done to identify creative solutions to challenges, to further support staff and promote children's progress.

Staff report progress with their unity as a team. They feel supported through training and opportunities for development. Children's family members and external professionals speak highly of the care provided in the home and recognise the therapeutic approach used by staff.

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 care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that when children are admitted to the home, there is careful planning around the timing of children moving in to help children settle quickly and reduce the likelihood that resident children will be negatively impacted.	13 April 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— understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(f)(h)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that there are appropriate plans in place to monitor children's progress and set out how staff are to support children with developing	13 April 2026

independence skills. In addition, where children engage with education on a part-time basis, there should be clear plans to help staff support children with accessing educationally themed activities outside of formal schooling.	
In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff— if the registered person considers, or staff consider, a placing authority's or a relevant person's performance or response to be inadequate in relation to their role, challenge the placing authority or the relevant person to seek to ensure that each child's needs are met in accordance with the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 5(c)) In particular, the registered person should challenge the placing local authority when there are delays in decision-making and planning or shortfalls that are having an impact on caring for children.	13 April 2026

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: 2507631

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Keys Educational Services Limited

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

Responsible individual: Jenna Hydes

Registered manager: Ann-Marie Pollard

Inspectors

Minnette Sims, Social Care Inspector
Katrina Woods, Social Care Inspector

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