

2513340

Registered provider: Keys Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a private company and was registered in January 2020. The home cares for up to four children with social and emotional difficulties.

The registered manager is suitably experienced and qualified.

Inspection dates: 22 and 23 August 2023

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: 21 September 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/09/2022	Full	Good
11/01/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
18/10/2021	Full	Inadequate

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

At the time of the inspection, three children were living in the home. One child has lived at the home for over a year. The other two children have lived in the home for several months. Since the last inspection, one child has moved out of the home.

The manager ensures that staff are skilled and equipped to meet all children's needs. This enables the staff to prepare and support children well so that their moves into the home are smooth and successful. Although one child's placement ended when notice was served, this was due to an escalation in unsafe behaviours that impacted on the other children living in the home. The manager supported the child throughout the transition process.

Staff genuinely care about the children and are committed to helping them achieve their full potential. The children are consulted about all aspects of their care, and as a result, they experience positive affirmation, which encourages them to achieve their goals.

The home is warm and welcoming and has a family atmosphere. Children's belongings fill the home. Their photos are proudly on display, and soft furnishings help to create a nurturing environment. Children personalise their bedrooms, which allows them to take a sense of pride in their home and promotes their well-being.

Managers and staff understand the importance of education. They work in partnership with schools and the placing authority to find children a suitable provision that reflects their learning needs. They have successfully supported all children to reintegrate into education despite them having a history of poor school attendance. This helps children to maintain a daily routine that supports their academic needs.

Children are helped to stay in touch with people who are important to them. Staff support family visits and recognise the importance of these relationships. One family member told the inspector, 'Apart from them being at home, I wouldn't want my child to live anywhere else.'

Children are positive about living in the home. One child told the inspector, 'I love it here; the best thing is the staff who look after me and being able to stay with my sibling. The only thing that could make it perfect would be having my family live here too.' It is a home where care for everyone is promoted. Staff and children celebrate and cherish their individual and shared successes. These positive relationships and experiences have resulted in children developing a sense of security and belonging.

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

Children have individual behaviour support plans. Staff use de-escalation techniques such as the PACE (Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity and Empathy) model of care and distraction techniques to support children. As a result, incidents of restraint are rare. Staff physically intervene when children show behaviours that place themselves or others at risk of harm. Staff understand the reasons behind behaviour and provide good support to children afterwards. This helps children to move on from the incident. The manager provides close scrutiny of all incidents and measures of control to ensure that their use is fair and proportionate. Good management oversight and prompt action to address issues mean that children are treated fairly and stay safe.

Children told the inspector that they feel safe and could identify a trusted adult. This means that children do have someone they can talk to if they have any worries. Children know how to make a complaint, and any complaints are taken seriously. As a result, children feel listened to and valued.

The manager and staff place a high priority on keeping children safe. They work in partnership with placing authorities to protect children and promote their safety. The effectiveness of these relationships helps children to feel safe and secure. Staff are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities, and they have a good knowledge of whistle-blowing procedures. The depth of staff's safeguarding knowledge is continually reflected on during team meetings and supervision sessions.

When children go missing from care, staff follow the joint protocol effectively. Searches conducted by staff and persistent attempts to make contact show children they are cared about. Proactive collaboration with parents, local authorities and the police supports children to return home safely. Missing-from-care incident records are clear, enabling thorough monitoring of these events by the manager.

The manager and staff demonstrate a good understanding of the children's vulnerabilities and potential risks posed to them. Clear guidance and strategies to follow are recorded in written risk assessments. However, on one occasion after a significant incident where the police attended the home, one child was arrested and spent time in custody. The child returned home the same evening and continued to display unsafe behaviours. Despite this, the child was allowed to go on free time in the community after only being back in the home for 40 minutes. As a result, the child was later reported as missing from home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

A suitably qualified and experienced manager leads the team. The manager keeps children at the heart of all she does. She is passionate and ambitious for the children and ensures that this ethos spreads through the staff team. The manager has good knowledge of children's starting points and what they have accomplished since living at the home. She is fully involved in children's lives.

The majority of the staff hold the required level 3 diploma. A small number of staff are currently working to achieve this, and plans are in place to ensure that they complete it within the required timescales. Staff are provided with a wide range of training that informs their practice and meets the children's individual and diverse needs. Team meetings and supervision sessions take place monthly and are used as a place for reflection and learning. Important issues are tracked and discussed, and children are at the centre of all practice.

Training in therapeutic approaches and an understanding of attachment theory underpin staff practice. Regular consultations with the in-house therapist are used well and are effective in improving staff practice. This enables staff to better understand the reasons behind some of the children's behaviours and provide a nurturing environment in which children thrive.

The manager has established good connections with partner agencies. Professionals are positive about the communication with the staff team and about the care provided for the children. One social worker told the inspector, 'The communication from the home is a strength. They have implemented different strategies to keep children safe and have consistent rules and boundaries.'

The manager has good oversight of the home. Effective auditing tools are used, which produce action plans to develop the staff's practice further and promote consistency in the home. Therefore, the manager has a good understanding of how well this home is supporting children and the extent to which the aims for each child have been achieved.

Staff speak positively about working at the home. The manager is well regarded, and she is nurturing towards the team. This means that staff work in an environment where they feel well supported. There is effective support and challenge, and the manager ensures that all actions are reviewed. This means that poor practice is addressed effectively and that good practice is promoted.

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 protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)) The manager must ensure that there are safe strategies in place to reduce the risk of harm to children.	7 January 2024

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: 2513340

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: Gemma Moore

Registered manager: Sarah Avery

Inspector

Marianne Grandfield, Social Care Inspector

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