

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 manager is suitably experienced and qualified. She registered with Ofsted in May 2024.

At the time of the inspection, three children were living in the home. All children were present during the inspection and spoke with the inspector.

Inspection dates: 25 and 26 November 2024

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: 22 August 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
22/08/2023	Full	Good
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

Relationships between adults and children are warm, affectionate and loving. Children have built strong relationships with the staff who care for them. This helps children to build trust and to feel safer and relaxed in their surroundings.

Children are incredibly positive about living here and say that the best thing about living here is how the staff look after them. 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 two children living at the home for some time and developing a sense of security and belonging. One child told the inspector that they want to live at the home until they are 41.

Staff ensure that children have positive experiences and try new things. This provides children with the opportunity to gain new experiences and have fun. Staff identify and nurture children's interests well. For example, children have attended horse riding and swimming lessons and have been on holiday to Spain and Scotland. One child had their first birthday party at a local go-kart track. Additionally, staff carefully consider how activities help children's development. They balance the number of free activities children go to with paid activities well.

Staff work with children in a fun way. Important conversations that staff have with children are engaging. They are individualised to each child and focus on their needs and behaviours. This supports children to make good progress in important areas. Staff are skilled at teaching children to develop their understanding around risk, for example, discussions have been about car safety, anger management and appropriate touch.

Since the last inspection, the home has undergone some renovation work, with a newly fitted kitchen and bathrooms. The Victorian tiles in the hallway have also been restored. Most areas of the home create a nurturing and homely feel; however, some areas of the home are still in need of repair, and although reported, these repairs have not been carried out in a timely manner. For example, wallpaper has been torn and there is water damage in the bathrooms. There is a development plan to make further improvements to the home.

The laundry room was locked, which restricts children's access around their home. The managers took prompt action to rectify this during the inspection. The lock was removed, and a new door was ordered.

Two children living in the home are making good progress in their education and have full-time attendance. However, the manager does not place sufficient emphasis on supporting one child to attend their education consistently. They do not ensure that there is a consistent plan for staff to follow to ensure that they are supported to

regain confidence to return to school. This does not support this child's learning needs.

Internal care planning processes need improvement. These plans detail clear targets and enable staff to track children's progress and achievements. However, they do not always mirror statutory care plans and all up-to-date information. This leaves staff without the most current information about children's needs and the arrangements for their care.

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

Staff are clear about their responsibilities to protect children. Staff understand the child protection policy and know how to report a safeguarding concern. The manager has an effective system for recording, reporting and monitoring safeguarding concerns. The manager liaises appropriately with the designated officer, sharing incidents involving concerns about staff practice or allegations. This ensures that there is independent oversight to keep children safe.

Children know how to make a complaint. When children have complained, managers take their views seriously. Children receive a child-friendly and timely response from the manager. As a result, children feel listened to and valued.

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 police supports children to return home safely. Missing-from-care incident records are clear, enabling thorough monitoring of these events by the manager.

Managers and staff demonstrate a great understanding of children's vulnerabilities and potential risks posed to them. Clear guidance and strategies to follow are recorded in written risk assessments. This awareness is embedded in the staff's day-to-day work, which reduces and minimises the risks for children effectively. Staff are directed in how to manage and mitigate the risks identified for each child. Staff are highly skilled in diversion, distraction and de-escalation, which demonstrates that the strategies identified are being used and are effective. This helps to ensure that children are protected from harm.

Due to the positive relationships enjoyed between the children and staff, the use of physical intervention is rare. Discussions are held with children and staff as soon as possible after an intervention, to ensure that they have opportunities to reflect. This helps children to develop empathy and promotes positive relationships within the home. Children are encouraged and supported to rejoin activities in the home as soon as they feel able to.

There are safe systems for the storage, administration and disposal of medication. There are clear protocols for staff to follow. However, on one occasion, staff administered one child with the incorrect medication; this did not cause any impact

to the child. This practice was swiftly addressed, and the appropriate action was taken, which has resulted in no further medication errors.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is passionate about the service and advocating for children. She, alongside the responsible individual and therapist, role models a nurturing and therapeutic approach to children's care. The manager exemplifies a strong knowledge of children's progress and a commitment to respecting their individual identities.

The manager has created an open and inclusive culture that places children at the centre of practice. She values and promotes good teamwork well. She is ambitious for the children and ensures that this ethos spreads through the entire staff team. As a result, children build positive relationships with the staff, whose skilled and caring practice increases the bonds between them.

Managers' monitoring systems are embedded into practice, which ensures that they have a good oversight of the home and take action to address issues as they arise. Oversight of the home is effective. Managers, therefore, have 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 are provided with a wide range of training that informs their practice and meets children's individual and diverse needs. Additionally, the home has sourced external training to support staff to identify, monitor and assess risk for one child's specific behaviours, which has supported the staff's understanding of the child and has resulted in practice improving. Team meetings 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 staff practice.

The manager has established strong connections with partner agencies. Professionals are positive about the communication with the team and about the care provided for children.

Some staff do not receive regular supervision or annual appraisals in line with the organisation's internal policy. Managers are unable to assess whether some staff are making progress and whether they understand their roles and responsibilities in providing care to children and how to keep them safe. The responsible individual has planned an upskilling session with the line managers to improve this practice.

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 quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; provide to children living in the home the physical necessities they need in order to live there comfortably; provide to children personal items that are appropriate for their age and understanding; ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to— meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(vii)(viii)(c)(i)) This specifically relates to ensuring that the home is well maintained, and maintenance tasks are completed in a timely manner.	30 March 2025
The education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— help each child to achieve the child's education and training targets, as recorded in the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(i))	30 March 2025

This specifically relates to ensuring that all education options are exhausted to support children to attend education and make progress academically.	
The registered person must ensure that all employees— undertake appropriate continuing professional development; receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience; and have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (4)(a)(b)(c)) This specifically relates to ensuring that all staff have regular reflective supervision in line with the company policy.	30 March 2025

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that all children's case records (regulation 36) are kept up to date and contain all relevant information known about the child in line with the local authority plans. Case records must be kept up to date and signed and dated by the author of each entry. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.3)
- The registered person should ensure that, just as in a family home, children are able to access all shared areas of the home unless there are specific reasons why this would not meet a child's needs. Limits on privacy and access may only be put in place to safeguard each child in the home (regulation 21(c)(i)). Any decisions to limit a child's access to any area of the home and any modifications to the environment of the home must only be made where this is intended to safeguard the child's welfare. All decisions should be informed by a rigorous assessment of that individual child's needs, be properly recorded and be kept under regular review. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.10)

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: Casey Starbrook

Inspector

Marianne Grandfield, Social Care Inspector

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