

2692117

Registered provider: Keys Child Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and managed by a private provider. It provides care for up to five children with learning disabilities.

Five children were living at the home at the time of this inspection.

The manager registered with Ofsted in December 2024. The manager is currently on extended leave, and an interim manager is in post.

Inspection dates: 5 and 6 November 2025

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: 4 June 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/06/2024	Full	Good
04/04/2023	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are supported to build positive relationships with staff. Staff treat children with dignity and respect. Staff spoke fondly and with pride about the children they care for.

Children are encouraged and supported to engage in meaningful activities that promote their hobbies and interests. They enjoy activities such as trampolining, walks, shopping and football. Staff also respect children's preferences for home comforts and low-stimulus environments, while encouraging children to express themselves through play.

Staff support children to communicate using their preferred communication aids, ensuring that they can contribute to day-to-day decisions about their care. Regular direct work sessions take place to support children to prepare for changes, develop independence skills and express their views, wishes and feelings.

Staff support children to attend routine health appointments with the dentist, doctor and looked-after children's nurse. They also seek specialist health input when needed, such as children and adolescent mental health services, occupational therapist, epilepsy services and emergency health services. Medication is suitably stored and administered. However, when pain relief medication is administered the reason for this is not always documented and the quantity of liquid medication is not clearly documented. This restricts the ability for accurate auditing.

Children's education needs are well met. Staff work closely with schools to ensure that consistent support strategies are in place for children. When there are difficulties with children's attendance at school, staff work proactively with education staff to identify solutions and support children's regular attendance.

There are suitable arrangements in place to support children's time spent with their family in line with agreed plans. This ensures that children can maintain relationships with those who are important to them.

The home provides a warm and welcoming environment. Appropriate arrangements and adaptations are in place to ensure that the home is a safe environment for children. Children have their own individual living space and have contributed to the decoration and themes in their home. This supports children to feel a sense of belonging and to express their personalities.

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

When safeguarding concerns are raised, leaders and managers act swiftly and inform the relevant professionals. Children's welfare is a priority throughout. Most staff understand whistle-blowing procedures; however, there has been one occasion when whistle-blowing

concerns were not reported promptly. The manager has identified this and taken suitable action to address it.

Children's support plans and risk assessments are detailed documents, which are reviewed and updated regularly to ensure that information remains current and relevant. Plans include clear guidance and strategies for staff to follow to enable them to provide consistent care and responses to children. Staff understand these plans and put them into practice.

When it has been necessary to hold a child to keep them safe, interventions have been reasonable and proportionate. Staff are trained to carry them out safely. Children and staff are supported to reflect on the incident afterwards. The manager maintains oversight of all incidents to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the measure used, identify any triggers and update support plans to support staff development.

When children require the use of mechanical restraints, such as harnesses for travelling or reins to keep them safe in the community, it is recorded in their plans so that staff understand how and when these should be used. However, this equipment is not regularly reviewed by an occupational therapist to make sure that their fitting remains correct and is still suitable for the child. Additionally, there is no recording of the occasions where mechanical restraint has been used for children where the use of this is not detailed in their education, health and care (EHC) plan or within their deprivation of liberty order.

Staff support children during periods of distress by following the strategies detailed in their plans. This provides consistency of care to children. Staff can identify triggers for children's behaviours, due to their positive relationships with them. Support plans are regularly reviewed and updated, and staff are able to de-escalate incidents. Consequently, the number of incidents for all children has reduced in frequency.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager has had a positive impact on the home since she took over the role. The registered manager is currently on extended leave. There has been a robust and planned handover between the registered manager and the interim manager, who has now submitted her application to register with Ofsted.

Managers are supported by a team of deputy managers who share their ambitious vision for what children can achieve. Leaders and managers know the children well and effectively use internal and external monitoring processes to highlight positive practice and drive improvements.

Since the last inspection, there has been some instability in the staff team, with a high number of staff leaving and new staff joining. Existing staff have positive and trusting relationships with children, which provide some stability and consistency for them while they build relationships with the newer staff. This has helped to reduce the impact of staff changes on children who live at the home. When the use of agency staff is

necessary, the manager prioritises the use of regular staff, wherever possible, to ensure consistency for the children.

Staff enjoy working at the home and feel valued and supported. There is a positive ethos within the home, and the staff team aspire to improve the lives of the children they care for. Staff have clear roles and responsibilities and a shared sense of ownership and accountability. They work well as a team and managers lead by example.

Staff have completed a wide variety of training on topics to help them support children's individual needs. In addition, team meetings are held often and are well attended. Staff understand their value. They are used as an opportunity for staff to share relevant information and reflect on the previous month.

Supervision sessions take place regularly. They are practice related and used for reflection. They are child focused and also used to support staff welfare. Staff receive an annual appraisal to assess their ability to undertake their role. New staff go through a thorough induction and probation process.

The manager and staff are committed to working together with parents, placing authorities, specialist health advisers and schools. These positive and effective working relationships make sure that children consistently receive a high level of care. They also ensure that there is a wraparound approach to supporting children's progress in line with their individual targets and goals.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Recommendations

- Where a specific type of restraint is used but not detailed in a child's EHC plan or deprivation of liberty order, it must be recorded in accordance with regulation 35(3). As the EHC plan is designed to be a long-term plan, any specified restraints should be kept under review to ensure their relevancy. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 47, paragraph 9.45 and 9.61)
- The registered person should ensure that they make suitable arrangements to manage, administer and dispose of any medication, including accurate auditing of medication. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 35, paragraph 7.15)

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: 2692117

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: Kate Stredder

Inspectors

Katie Tomlinson, Social Care Inspector
Vicky Byron, Social Care Inspector

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