

2721832

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 privately owned and provides care for up to five children who may have learning difficulties and may experience social and emotional difficulties.

This is the children's home's first inspection. Three children were living at the home at the time of the inspection.

The manager registered in May 2023 when the home first registered.

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 November 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: Not previously inspected.

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: not applicable

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Staff create a nurturing environment for the children. This helps the children develop positive relationships with staff and assists in boosting the children's self-esteem. Social workers and family members highlighted that the children have made positive progress since living in the home.

Staff talk with children about the complaints procedure and access to advocacy and support. However, one child was unsure how to make a complaint. Staff will need to revisit this to ensure that all children understand.

The staff work hard to help the children have positive care routines and have their health needs met. On two occasions, one child did not receive their prescribed medication in a timely manner. This had no apparent impact on the child, but the managers acknowledged that the administration and oversight of medication require strengthening to prevent reoccurrence.

Children are offered the opportunity to access therapeutic support. The staff work with a therapist, which helps them understand the children's individual emotional needs. One social worker said, '[Name of child] is more aware of their emotions because of the support offered by staff.'

Children enjoy attending education and are making positive progress. Staff and the manager work with the children to reduce any worries about starting their new schools. One child was provided with photos of their new school, which helped reduce any anxieties. The manager escalates concerns with the local authority to help children access appropriate education provisions.

Professionals said staff positively welcome children into the home and ensure that the children's needs are paramount during introductions. Children were given photos of the home and staff. This helped alleviate some of their worries.

Children are supported to embrace their individuality and cultural needs. Staff support and encourage children to enjoy individual activities in line with their hobbies and interests. Staff also assist children in attending the church.

One child left the home at short notice. This meant that the child was unable to have a positive ending. This was deemed essential to ensure their safety and well-being.

Staff understand how seeing family is important to the children and have helped children spend time with their families. One parent said that staff's support at family time means it feels 'relaxed and natural'.

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

Staff know the children well and understand their individual needs and associated risks. Children have individual risk assessments and plans, but the information in the risk assessments is not always clear. This does not impact on the safeguarding support offered to the children.

Some children spend time away from the home due to 'pulls' in the local community. Staff ensure they maintain contact with the children and undertake welfare visits in line with the children's risk assessments and plans. Staff are aware of associated risks in the community and work with children to help them understand the risks. This helps children build relationships with staff and understand how to keep themselves safe.

When children go missing from the home, staff actively look for children in accordance with the missing-from-home procedure. Staff ensure appropriate parties are informed, and when children are found, staff ensure children have follow-up discussions. This helps staff understand why the children are going missing.

Staff attend meetings, work collaboratively with professionals and share information. The registered manager is proactive in working with the local authority to ensure that all required safeguarding meetings are held in a timely manner.

Staff use de-escalation techniques to support children during emotionally challenging times. This approach has resulted in a reduction in the number of incidents that escalate. The use of positive rewards and incentives helps the children build their confidence and self-esteem. Staff's use of consequences is appropriate and restorative, and children are given opportunities to share their views.

Staff use holds proportionately and only when necessary to prevent children from harming others. All incidents are recorded, and staff and children are offered the opportunity to share their views and reflect on incidents. This helps children repair their relationships with staff and understand staff's actions.

Staff understand their role when faced with safeguarding concerns, and they support children to feel listened to. Investigations into allegations about staff are managed appropriately, and information is shared with the local authority and the designated officer in a timely manner.

During the inspection, staff did not have immediate access to some fire extinguishers that were locked away. They were also not aware that a child had been smoking in the home. This meant that staff were not aware of potential fire hazards, which limited their ability to take actions to reduce risks.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager understands the children's needs and is proactive in ensuring that children's care plans progress. The manager works collaboratively with the local authority and advocates on the children's behalf. The registered manager has raised shortfalls in children's education plans, escalated any concerns and chased outstanding assessments and meetings.

Staff said they feel supported and have positive working relationships with the registered manager. The children were also observed to have positive relationships with the registered manager, who is clearly visible in the home.

Staff have suitable induction support plans that assist them in understanding the home's policies and procedures. The manager ensures that staff have regular team meetings and reflective, formal supervision. Staff also have additional learning opportunities to address any required areas of development in practice.

Staff have the required mandatory training, and the registered manager is aware of the need for some staff to have first-aid training and additional specialist training related to medication and communication with children.

The manager has good oversight of the home and ensures notifications are sent to the regulator in a timely manner.

Auditing systems are in place, which include external monitoring. These systems need further embedding to ensure the accurate recording of events, such as missing-from-home incidents and the use of consequences. Shortfalls were seen in the recording of information about some significant events, assessments and plans. Some of this information was updated during the inspection, and management oversight was shared but not evidenced on the home's system.

The registered manager's oversight was not evident in the children's risk assessments and plans. This means it is not clear whether specific actions that are used to promote children's safety are reviewed in a timely manner.

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
After consultation with the fire and rescue authority the registered person must— take adequate precautions against the risk of fire, including the provision of suitable fire equipment in the children's home. (Regulation 25 (1)(a)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that fire equipment is always accessible and take appropriate actions to reduce the risks associated with children smoking in the home.	29 December 2023
The registered person must make arrangements for the handling, recording, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of medicines received into the children's home. In particular the registered person must ensure that— a record is kept of the administration of medicine to each child. (Regulation 23 (1) (2)(c))	29 December 2023
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1) (2)(c)(h)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that staff have all the required training in a timely manner and ensure that recordings of children's plans, assessments, debriefs and significant events are clear with updated information and evidence of management oversight in a timely manner.	29 December 2023

Recommendation

- The registered provider should ensure that the complaints procedure is revisited with children to ensure they have a clear understanding of the complaints procedure ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 23, paragraph 4.13)

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: 2721832

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Keys Child Care Limited

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

Responsible individual: Joanne Carter

Registered manager: Amy Roberts

Inspectors

Gina Lightfoot, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
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