

SC005204

Registered provider: Keys Child Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately owned home provides care for up to six children who can no longer live at home.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021.

This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.

The manager has been registered at the home since January 2017.

Inspection dates: 25 to 26 January 2022

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	outstanding
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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: 11 February 2020

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/02/2020	Full	Outstanding
10/05/2018	Full	Good
07/06/2017	Full	Good
19/01/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The manager has developed an excellent wrap-around service, which includes care, therapy and education. As a result, all children have made measurable progress from their starting points. Due to this, some children have been able to return to their families or move on to foster care. Other children are just starting or coming to the end of their time at this home. One social worker said, 'The progress that he has made is fantastic. We can now start to plan his future.'

When a child moves into or out of the home, a good transition is planned. An impact risk assessment shows that the home considers the child's history and behaviour and the needs of the existing children in the home. However, the manager has not considered the home's location area report as part of this process. As a result, she has not considered any identified potential risks and whether these would have any bearing on the suitability of the placement.

Generally, children's records are good and show the progress that they are making. However, the manager received a document from a social worker that identified a child's fears and worries, such as insects, swings and being held upside down. She has not used this information in the home's placement plan for the child. This does not ensure that staff know about these and are able to give consistent support to the child with these anxieties. In contrast to this, children are encouraged to reflect and record their views, wishes and feelings within the plans. This means that they are actively able to contribute to the quality of care that they receive.

Children's plans focus on the child's past trauma and anxieties and how they manifest in their negative behaviour. There is little information about the positive aspects of a child's behaviour, personality or abilities. This does not give a balanced view. Furthermore, this does not help children to have a positive view about themselves when reading their records.

Children have received education throughout the COVID-19 restrictions. When children come to the home without an identified school, the manager advocates strongly for the children. She works closely with a range of education professionals and has successfully challenged social workers to find the right provision for children. As a result, the children are doing well in school and have ambitions for their future. One child said that he wants to be a builder, and another child wants to be a brain surgeon.

Staff listen to children in key-working sessions, general conversations and house meetings. These are popular with children because they can put their ideas, wishes and suggestions forward. Children have asked to join local football teams, have themed bedrooms and one child wanted to do trampolining in a cave. All the children have seen their wishes come true. The children said that they feel included in their home, receive feedback and are always listened to.

Children's inclusion in the community is excellent. Activities follow the children's interests and develop their self-confidence. For example, children attend cadets, are part of local football teams, enjoy riding their bikes or scooters and have fun on walks, at the beach or at the funfair.

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

Relationships between children and staff are extremely strong. Social workers and children said this was the best thing about the home. A social worker's comments include: 'Safeguarding is top notch,' 'They go the extra mile,' and 'Staff are amazing.' Children echoed these comments.

The staff give the children's safety the highest priority, and they are well trained in safeguarding children. Staff receive additional training, information and support from psychologists that work with the children. Therefore, they are alert to signs of trauma and understand non-verbal behavioural cues/signals, as well as how this can manifest in other ways. As a result, children receive a quick response and support. One child said, 'This is the safest I've felt in a long time.' Another child said, 'I am happy and safe here.'

The manager and staff take decisive action when they have concerns about children. They share information with a wide range of professionals, including social workers and safeguarding officers. They work together effectively to understand the level of risk, reduce risk and put protective factors in place. Meticulous records are kept.

Staff manage situations extremely well when children struggle with their feelings. Staff work positively and confidently with the children to find the best possible way to help them manage their feelings safely and to moderate their behaviour. They work together calmly to find a solution. As a result, children are finding positive ways to manage their anxieties and frustrations, such as going for a walk, going on a bike ride or chilling out in their room. Children at the home are not currently presenting risks of missing from care. However, staff understand their roles and responsibilities in these areas.

The manager evaluates physical interventions and incidents in the home effectively. She uses graphs to plot children's incidents and progress. Some findings have shown that incidents tend to occur before family contact and at the beginning and end of school holidays. As a result, she has put extra support in around these times and that has reduced the number of incidents for the children. Further to this, debriefs for children and staff are seen as essential. This gives both parties the opportunity to discuss the incident and take learning from it.

Safe recruitment and health and safety practice at the home mean that only the most suitable staff work at the home and that it is a safe place to live. Children and staff regularly practise evacuating the building in case of a fire. Therefore, everyone knows how to respond in an emergency.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is suitably experienced and qualified. She is passionate about promoting children's interests, helping them overcome their anxieties, and helping them return to their families or move on to foster care or a forever home. The manager and deputy manager lead by example, creating an environment of positivity. All staff were extremely positive about their leadership and the support they receive.

An experienced, stable and committed staff team cares for the children. Most of the staff have a recognised childcare qualification. Other staff are at different stages of completing a similar award. Staff receive regular and effective supervision. Staff say this helps them to develop their practice and it is a good opportunity to discuss a range of developmental ideas.

Staff meetings are held monthly, and staff say they are an opportunity to reflect on the previous month and look forward to planning the next month. However, the manager does not routinely use new legislation, research or articles to continually develop the staff team and their knowledge.

The staff and the manager have established excellent working relationships with a range of agencies, schools, social workers, health professionals and leading child protection agencies. Feedback from stakeholders is positive, praising staff's commitment, children's progress and the effective communication with the manager and her team.

The manager effectively challenges local authorities and other services to provide children with the support that they need.

Monitoring is effective. Issues are identified through the manager's checks and external monitoring, giving the manager a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development. She is quick to address issues that arise and demonstrates eagerness and a capacity for continued development of the service.

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, 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 the premises used for the purposes of the home are located so that children are effectively safeguarded. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(c)) Specifically, the registered manager must ensure that the location risk assessment is considered when accepting new referrals to the home.	31 March 2022
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— demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on— research and developments in relation to the ways in which the needs of children are best met. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(g)(i))	31 March 2022

Recommendations

- The registered person should encourage an enthusiasm for positive behaviour. Specifically, the aspects of the child's good behaviour should be recorded within their plans. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 39, paragraph 8.13)
- The registered person should ensure that there is effective care planning. Specifically, that all information received from the placing authority is used to inform the children's plans. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 56, paragraph 11.2)

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: SC005204

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Keys Child Care Limited

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

Responsible individual: Mark Dickinson

Registered manager: Kimberley Feeley

Inspector

Pam Nuckley, Social Care Regulatory Inspector

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