

SC005567

Registered provider: Keys Stepping Stones Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is run by a private organisation and is registered to care for up to three children who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

There were three children living at the home at the time of the inspection.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since the 15 October 2013.

Inspection dates: 29 and 30 January 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: 21 February 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/02/2024	Full	Good
08/03/2023	Full	Outstanding
19/01/2022	Full	Outstanding
05/02/2020	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children have developed strong bonds with the staff team, built on loving and nurturing relationships. These relationships are forged through consistent care from a stable team that children come to trust and rely on.

Children are encouraged to explore activities that they enjoy, which helps them build their identity. This is helping to build children's self-esteem and social development.

Children spend time with their family and loved ones. This helps them to maintain important relationships and build a strong support network.

Children's wishes and feelings are treated with respect. Staff actively work to gather their opinions on the home and the care that they receive. Children's requests are addressed, and measures put in place to ensure that children are kept informed about the action taken in response to their needs.

Children's academic needs are well understood, and staff promote the importance of attending daily. When children are not in school, they receive support to continue learning at home, to prevent significant gaps in their knowledge.

Children are aware of how to make complaints. These are taken seriously and are thoroughly investigated. Leaders and managers ensure that children receive a written response and understand the outcome of the investigation.

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

Staff understand their role and responsibilities in keeping children safe. They consistently follow the home's safeguarding policies and procedures, and help children learn about harmful behaviours. This ensures that children's current risks are effectively managed.

Incidents of children going missing are rare. When they do occur, staff respond promptly and take swift action to locate the children. Staff work with partner agencies to explore and implement preventative measures to reduce the risk of children going missing in the future.

Restraint practice is used only as a last resort and is reasonable and proportionate. After incidents, leaders and managers ensure that a reflection process for staff and children takes place. However, debriefs with children do not address how they felt about the hold.

The safeguarding culture in the home is generally good. Potential candidates involved in the recruitment process undergo thorough scrutiny, to ensure that they do not present a risk to children in the home. Detailed risk management plans provide staff with guidance

on keeping children safe. However, some plans are outdated and do not reflect the current level of risk for children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager has been in his role for several years, which has led to staff having confidence in his leadership. He has a good understanding of the children and their needs and maintains positive relationships with them.

Staff describe the manager as a strong source of support. Records show that formal practice-related supervision, which considers staff well-being, regularly takes place. This approach helps to maintain a good standard of care for children.

Staff are well prepared for their roles. They receive training to help them meet children's needs and have regular opportunities to attend team meetings, which provides an environment for group discussion about staff practice.

The manager has monitoring systems in place. Consequently, he maintains good oversight of the home and ensures that incidents are regularly reviewed. This helps to assess whether staff practice effectively meets the needs of children and promotes continuous improvement in their care and safety. However, handwritten records about children's care can sometimes be unclear.

Longstanding staff members play a key role in helping children feel secure and safe, as they are cared for by familiar people who they know and trust. This continuity strengthens children's sense of stability and emotional well-being.

Care planning for children moving in and out of the home is carefully considered. Risk assessments to evaluate the suitability of the home for new children are thorough and comprehensive.

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that children's handwritten records are clear and easy to read. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)
- The registered person should ensure that following a physical intervention, debriefs with the child take place which consider how they felt about the restraint. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 50, paragraph 9.60)
- The registered person should ensure that risk management plans are up to date and accurately reflect the level of risk for children. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)

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: SC005567

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Keys Stepping Stones Limited

Registered provider address: Maybrook House, Third Floor, Queensway, Halesowen, West Midlands B63 4AH

Responsible individual: Thomas Cappleman

Registered manager: Simon Bottomley

Inspector

Chibuzo Otache, Social Care inspector

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