

SC020608

Registered provider: Keys NHCC Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A large private company owns this children's home. It registered in August 2001 and provides care for up to three children who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in October 2024 and is suitably qualified for the role.

At the time of the inspection, two children were living at the home. Both were present and spoken with.

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 September 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: 31 July 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
31/07/2024	Full	Good
15/05/2023	Full	Good
27/09/2022	Full	Good
21/04/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Two children live in this home. One child has lived in the home for three years and the other child for over one year. No children have moved in or out of the home since the last inspection. This stability and nurture ensure that children make good progress.

Children are cared for by staff who understand their needs well. Both children are active and enjoy being outdoors. Staff are proactive and motivated to support the children's interests, helping to build their confidence and have fun. For example, both children enjoyed camping trips and going out on their bikes over the summer. One professional said, 'It's so nice seeing the children just being children and having fun. That's one of the highlights.'

Staff actively promote the importance of children's education. Children have good attendance and thrive at school. Staff work with educational professionals to get the best out of the children and support continuity between school and home. For example, to help one child's reading, staff regularly read stories with them at night and share strategies with school to help manage one child's anxieties. One child was proud to receive a pupil of the year trophy for their attitude to learning. This helps to prepare children for the best start in life.

Staff understand the importance of family relationships and work hard to ensure these are positive experiences for children. Staff help to establish consistent and regular family time with the people who are important to the children. The children look forward to family time, helping them to feel loved.

Children's health needs are prioritised by staff. Children are registered with local services and attend specialist appointments. Staff have worked with professionals to support one child's medical conditions and try different strategies to help them. However, staff have not administered one child's medicine in line with medical guidance. While this has not resulted in any harm, it could reduce the effectiveness of the medicine given.

Staff provide children with a homely environment which the children can be proud of. Both children have had input into the decoration of their personal space. For example, staff have put in place wallpaper depicting the night sky on the ceiling in one child's bedroom, in line with the children's wishes. As a result, children feel cared for, and it provides a sense of belonging.

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

Children have strong and trusting relationships with staff. Staff are consistent in implementing clear routines and boundaries that help children to understand what is expected of them. This helps children to feel safe and secure in the home.

Children are cared for by staff who have a good understanding of their needs. Staff show patience and understanding when children are distressed. This has helped children to reflect and manage their emotions better. For example, one child requested and received support from a therapist to help support them further. This shows children are developing self-awareness and skills that will help to keep them safe.

When incidents happen, staff manage them well. Physical interventions, when used, are mostly low level and effective in helping children to regulate their emotions. This supportive approach has meant that serious incidents with children have reduced in their intensity over time.

Staff make use of incentives to encourage children's positive engagement. While these have been helpful in helping children to understand expectations, they have not been individualised to include meaningful goals that are specific to each child. In addition, the use of an alarm on one child's bedroom door has not been regularly reviewed to ensure that it is still required.

Children's allegations and concerns are taken seriously. Leaders take appropriate action to ensure that children are effectively safeguarded. Staff work cooperatively with appropriate professionals. Children are informed of the outcome of any investigation and provided with the opportunity to repair relationships with staff. This provides children with the assurance that they can trust staff to act on their concerns and that they will be listened to.

Incidents of children going missing are rare. Overall, when children go missing, staff know what to do and take appropriate action to ensure children's prompt and safe return. However, there are shortfalls in relation to the information and training available to staff when dealing with incidents. On one occasion, staff did not follow the required missing procedures. While the child did not come to harm and there has been reflective learning, these shortfalls have the potential to leave children vulnerable.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Leaders have high aspirations for the children to do well and have positive experiences. In addition, they have high expectations of staff. The manager has a good understanding of the home's strengths and weaknesses and is keen to ensure that the children continue to make good progress.

There is a stable and well-qualified staff team in the home. Staff say they feel well supported and enjoy their work. They have access to a wide range of training, including support from their in-house therapist. Staff receive regular supervision sessions where they can discuss any learning and development needs. When staff have not met the expected standards of care, there are opportunities to reflect and learn from it. This ensures that children are cared for by staff who have the skills and knowledge to meet their needs.

The registered manager ensures that children's views and wishes are actively sought. This allows children to have an input into the running of the home, including the weekly menus, activities and the decoration of the home. The registered manager provides oversight to ensure reasonable requests are taken forward. This ensures that children feel listened to, and their voices are valued and heard.

The registered manager works well with children's professional networks. Professionals speak highly of the manager and staff team. In particular, the positive relationships the children have with staff, the progress that children have made and the collaborative working. One professional said, '[Name of Child] has a brilliant relationship with the manager. If he has any worries he can speak to him. It's a beautiful relationship. [Name of Child] feels like he belongs.'

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 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 staff— assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(v)) In particular, the registered manager must ensure that all staff clearly understand their roles and responsibilities when children go missing and take the necessary action to keep children safe. Information available to staff in support of children's safe return should be easily accessible to staff and kept up to date.	31 October 2025

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that medicines must be administered in line with a medically approved protocol. This specifically relates to staff not following recommended guidance for one particular medicine to be administered under the tongue. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 35, paragraph 7.15)
- The registered person should ensure that all incidents of control, discipline and restraint are subject to systems of regular scrutiny. This specifically relates to ensuring the use of incentives are personalised to the individual child and the use of door alarms are routinely reviewed to ensure they are still necessary. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.36)

Information about this inspection

The inspector has 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: SC020608

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Keys NHCC Ltd

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

Responsible individual: Karla Dovey

Registered manager: Paul Teece

Inspector

Louise Naylor, Social Care Inspector

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