

SC020608

Registered provider: Keys NHCC Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned by a large private company. It registered with Ofsted in 2001 to provide care for up to three children with emotional and social difficulties. The home does not currently have a registered manager.

There were two children living in the home at the time of this inspection. Both were spoken to.

Inspection dates: 31 July and 1 August 2024

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
---	-------------

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
---	---------------------------------

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 15 May 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
15/05/2023	Full	Good
27/09/2022	Full	Good
21/04/2021	Full	Good
08/10/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the last inspection, one child has recently moved out of the home and another child moved in. One child has lived at the home for two years.

Managers plan well for children moving into and out of the home. The views of children already living in the home are taken into account when considering a new child moving in. Children have opportunities to visit the home and to meet staff before they move in. This helps reduce any anxieties the child might have and has resulted in a successful transition for the child moving in.

One young person moving out into independent accommodation was well supported by staff. Staff ensured suitable accommodation was found that met the young person's needs. They also helped to secure their future education placement before they left. The young person was able to test out their independence skills before fully moving into their new accommodation. This gave them the confidence to live independently.

Children are happy living in the home and have developed trusting relationships with staff. Children are at ease around the staff. Staff understand the children's needs and instil clear routines and boundaries to help the children feel settled.

The home is welcoming. It is situated on a village green, and the children have opportunities to play with other children in the local area. The kitchen and utility room have recently been refurbished to a high standard and the garden is well maintained. Framed photos taken by the young person who recently moved on from the home are proudly displayed. Some areas of the home needed minor attention, which was addressed during the inspection.

Children are supported to engage with and maintain good attendance in education. When education placements have broken down, staff work hard to identify more suitable placements for children. When children experience difficulties at school, staff work with the school to support children's continued attendance.

Children enjoy a range of activities that enable them to try new experiences, have fun and increase their social confidence. Children participate in regular activities and clubs that they enjoy. They have opportunities to meet friends and invite them to the home. Staff have planned a range of activities for the children over the summer holidays, including sessions at a water sports park and camping.

Children do not have easy access to information about their rights in the home. Children are able to express their views about the home and their preferences through children's meetings, key-worker sessions and questionnaires. However, the children's guide lacks important information relating to the complaints process, routines and advocacy support.

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

Staff understand the risks to individual children. They are supported by comprehensive risk assessments and behaviour management plans that help them to keep children safe. Staff use praise and learning opportunities rather than consequences to help children to make the right choices that keep them and others safe.

The review of the suitability of the location of the home is well informed, with input from external agencies. This is actively considered in the placement of children.

Staff are clear about their responsibilities if a child goes missing. Staff follow agreed processes and work with partner agencies to help return the child home quickly. When children return from being missing, staff have discussions with them to ensure that they are aware of the dangers and to try to reduce the risk of them going missing again.

Staff have the skills and knowledge to de-escalate incidents when they occur. Children are supported to regulate their own feelings. Physical intervention is only used as a last resort. When one child was upset, staff were quick to defuse the situation and turned this into a positive outcome for the child. The manager maintains oversight of any physical interventions, however, this is not always done in a timely way.

Allegations made by children are taken seriously. Allegations involving staff are appropriately notified to the relevant professionals, investigated and acted on. This reinforces to children that they will be listened to and action will be taken to keep them safe.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

Since the last inspection, there has been changes in the leadership of the home. The previous manager has been promoted within the organisation and is now the responsible individual. They have been replaced by the former deputy manager. There has been a delay in the application for the new manager to be registered with Ofsted. However, this has not had an impact on the children because the new manager has worked at the home for several years and has a good understanding of the children's needs and the running of the home.

There is a vacancy for deputy manager, which has created additional pressure on the manager. Although this has not had a detrimental impact on the care of children, it has led to some delays in reviewing and updating children's records in a timely way.

Children are supported by a stable and skilled staff team. There is a low turnover of staff. All staff have the required qualification for their role or are in the process of achieving this. This has helped with the stability of the home during the changes in the leadership team and provided consistency of care for the children.

Staff have access to a wide range of training and there is a good uptake of this. New members of staff are given comprehensive induction training. This ensures that children

are supported by staff who have the knowledge and understanding to support their needs.

The manager is ambitious for children. They work effectively with stakeholders to ensure children progress and are kept safe. Feedback about the management of the home from both staff and stakeholders is positive.

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 registered provider must appoint a person to manage the children's home if— there is no registered manager in respect of the home; and the registered provider— is an organisation or a partnership; does not satisfy regulation 28; or is not, or does not intend to be, in day-to-day charge of the home. If the registered provider appoints a person to manage the home, the registered provider must, without delay, give HMCI notice of— the name of the person so appointed; and the date on which the appointment takes effect. (Regulation 27(1)(a)(b)(i)(ii)(iii)(2)(a)(b)) In particular, the registered provider must ensure that the appointed manager for the home is registered in a timely manner.	2 October 2024
The children's views, wishes and feelings standard is that children receive care from staff who— develop positive relationships with them; engage with them; and take their views, wishes and feelings into account in relation to matters affecting the children's care and welfare and their lives.	2 October 2024

In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that each child— has access to the home’s children’s guide, and the home’s complaints procedure, when the child’s placement in the home is agreed and throughout the child’s stay in the home; and keep the children’s guide and the home’s complaints procedure under review and seek children’s comments before revising either document; ensure that an explanation is given to each child as soon as reasonably practicable after the child’s arrival about— the children’s guide; how to make a complaint or representations in relation to the home or the care the child receives and how any such complaint or representations will be dealt with; and what advocacy support or services are available to the child, how the child may access that support or those services and any entitlement the child may have to independent advocacy provision. (Regulation 7(1)(a)(b)(c)(2)(b)(ii)(c)(d)(i)(ii)(iii)) In particular, the registered provider must ensure children have access to the home’s guide, which includes information relating to day-to-day routines, the care they can expect while living in the home, how to make a complaint, how they can access advocacy support and how to contact the Office of the Children’s Commissioner.	
The registered person must ensure that— within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")— has spoken to the user about the measure; and has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure.	2 October 2024

(Regulation 35 (3)(b)(i)(ii)(c))

In particular, the registered provider must ensure that the use of physical intervention is reviewed by the manager in a timely way.

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that children's records are appropriately detailed, accurate and kept up to date. This specifically relates to ensuring photos used on the missing person's forms are current, and oversight of children's meetings to ensure any actions are carried forward in a timely way. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.3)

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: 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: Post Vacant

Inspector

Louise Naylor, Social Care Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2024