

SC020611

Registered provider: Keys NHCC Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a private company. It provides care for up to two children aged between eight and 17 years who may have experienced adverse childhood experiences that have led to associated trauma and complex behaviour.

The manager has been registered since July 2023 and is suitably qualified.

At the time of the inspection, two children were living in the home. Both children were spoken to during the inspection.

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 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: 14 December 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/12/2023	Full	Good
15/12/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good
01/11/2021	Full	Inadequate
18/09/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the last inspection, the same two children have lived in the home. Overall, both the children are making progress from their starting points in most areas of their lives. Social workers are extremely positive about the nurture and well-planned care that staff give to the children to keep them safe and support the progress they have made so far.

The registered manager and staff have a good understanding of the children's individual needs and the struggles they experience that can interrupt their progress. Staff have positive relationships with the children and provide individualised care. The clinical team helps staff to establish appropriate approaches to develop the children's emotional health, safety and well-being. Additionally, staff seek specialist help with partner agencies when necessary. This multi-team approach means that the children's needs are always promoted.

Staff carry out work with the children that is beneficial to them and enables them to reflect on and begin to understand their feelings and behaviours. Staff do this in a supportive and interactive way that is attuned to the children's needs. As a result, the children become increasingly able to express their views, make decisions about their actions and have a say about all aspects of their care.

The children enjoy a range of activities and hobbies that are captured through photographs and memory books that staff have created. For example, children care for a pet hamster, attend a local gym and go horse riding once a week. Over the summer, one child successfully completed three assessment riding lessons that enabled her to ride a horse on a beach, and both the children enjoyed a summer holiday to Wales.

Staff help the children to spend time and communicate with people who are important to them. This supports children to remain in contact with family members and friends. Children have relationships outside of the home, and they build, and are supported to maintain, friendships with others in the wider community.

Staff always promote education. Since moving into the home, one child had made excellent progress at school with their attendance and academic outcomes. However, after the summer holiday, this dipped when they struggled to attend. Staff were proactive and worked closely with education colleagues to support the child back sensitively and successfully into full-time education. The other child continues to struggle to engage with education. However, staff continue to work imaginatively with education and local authority colleagues to address this historic concern. Their perseverance is seeing gradual improvement and engagement.

The home is beautifully decorated and is homely and inviting. Children want to live there and call it their home. The children are happy with their bedrooms, which have been decorated and personalised. The registered manager and staff have also developed

spaces for children to socialise or have time on their own. For example, the second sitting room and conservatory have both recently been redecorated and refurbished.

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

The registered manager has created a strong safeguarding culture in the home. Staff are alert to potential safeguarding issues and report concerns immediately, allowing the registered manager to take effective action to keep the children safe. The staff and the registered manager are transparent and effective in sharing information with other professionals.

Staff work hard to balance the children taking age-appropriate risks with keeping them safe. There have been several incidents, but these have been well managed because the staff take time to understand the root causes. This is resulting in the children becoming increasingly settled. Staff educate children by working in partnership with external agencies and using a range of resources to discuss topics such as substance abuse, going missing from care, tattoos and piercings. Staff regularly involve the children in meetings, discussions and plans, so that children understand dangers and strategies to keep themselves safe. This approach enhances children's feelings of safety and security, and gives them the tools to make informed decisions in the future.

Staff have a good understanding of how to support the children when they go missing. They know the signs that the children might be planning to leave the home. They encourage the children to consider their options and understand the risks. When necessary, the registered manager has increased staffing numbers to ensure that there are sufficient staff to meet the immediate needs of both the children. The need for incidents to be reported to the police has reduced due to staff staying with children and encouraging their safe return to the home. One child has not gone missing since October.

Regular consultation with clinicians is used well and is effective in improving staff's understanding and developing practice. When appropriate, additional training with the clinical team is arranged. This allows staff to reflect on the reasons behind some behaviours that the children exhibit and supports them to provide a nurturing environment for the children. Staff become more knowledgeable, and the children become more able to manage their emotions and share their concerns with staff.

Staff know the children well and are flexible and adaptable with how they respond, always promoting the children's right to develop the skills they need to become independent young adults. For example, staff follow the principles of restorative practice. They manage inappropriate behaviour through natural consequences, which help the children to take responsibility and learn from their behaviour. Regular, open conversations help the children to feel listened to and give the staff the evidence and reassurance they need to talk to partner agencies and adjust practice, such as reintroducing unsupervised time with friends in the local community. The children respond well to being shown trust, but also understand the consequences if they make decisions that put them at risk.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is committed to supporting the children to achieve positive outcomes. She is child focused and knowledgeable about the needs of the children.

Staff speak highly of the registered manager and the support that she provides. Staff feel valued and are proud to be part of the team.

The registered manager is a strong advocate for the children. She works in partnership with other professionals and with parents to ensure that the children are reaching their full potential, are happy and are safe. She is confident in challenging other professionals when she believes that they are not acting in the children's interests or fulfilling their responsibilities to the children. For example, she recently questioned why she or a representative from the home was not invited to a professionals' meeting to review a child's behaviours and risks.

The home has a stable staff team. This provides continuity of care for the children and has helped them to build secure relationships with staff. Staff have frequent and good-quality supervision and annual appraisal meetings to formally review their progress. They also receive regular training that includes specialist courses based on the children's individual needs. This means that staff feel supported by the registered manager to develop their practice.

The registered manager ensures that team meetings are informative and child focused. Clinicians attend additional meetings to discuss the children, their development and therapeutic parenting practice. This enables staff to reflect on situations that have arisen and consider alternative approaches. This results in carefully planned conversations and key-work sessions with the children that are then reviewed by the team around the child.

The registered manager has a range of systems to oversee the quality of care. Oversight of staff practice is clear, and it is evident that this leads to challenge, discussion and shared learning. The registered manager understands the home's strengths and areas for development. No requirements or recommendations have been made following this inspection.

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: SC020611

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Keys NHCC Limited

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

Responsible individual: Tracey Evans

Registered manager: Natalie Evans

Inspectors

Dawn Bennett, Social Care Inspector
Mandy Wake, Social Care Inspector

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