

SC024808

Registered provider: Keys Education 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 is registered to provide care for up to four children aged between seven and 18 years who have had adverse childhood experiences that have led to associated trauma and presenting complex behaviours.

The home has recently appointed a new manager who is yet to register with Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 29 and 30 November 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	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: 15 September 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
15/09/2021	Full	Good
29/10/2019	Full	Good
27/02/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
22/05/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

At the time of the inspection, three children were living at the home. Staff have formed positive relationships with the children. As a result, they are all happy, settled and progressing well.

Staff ensure that children have positive moves to and from the home, even when these moves are at short notice. Staff take care to make sure that children have all the information they need about their move. As a result, children feel valued and respected.

Staff help children to understand the importance of education. Where possible, children remain in their original school, even if this means staff taking them on a lengthy journey each day. On the whole, children continue to progress and are aspirational about their futures.

Staff have worked hard to help children to overcome their anxieties in social situations. Children are encouraged to explore and understand their cultural heritage and what it means for them. Children's growing confidence now means that they are attending music clubs, cadets and making new friends.

Staff involve children in day-to-day decisions. For example, during the recent redecoration of the home, children helped to choose colours and joined in with the painting. However, some finishing touches are still needed, such as more window coverings to provide children with privacy.

Staff have helped children to create lifelong memories. During the summer, one child was taken to London, where they stayed overnight and visited many of the sights. Another child went to the coast, where they stayed overnight and enjoyed the coast and countryside.

Staff work hard to support all children and to minimise the impact of children's behaviours on others. However, despite these efforts, children told the inspector that there has been an unsettled period due to a previous child's behaviours and that this had some impact on them.

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

Staff know the children well and have developed plans which inform them how to keep children safe. However, on occasions, these plans do not have sufficient detail to help staff to fully understand the proactive and reactive strategies they need to use and when. For example, it is not clear if it is appropriate to remove a child's shoes to prevent harm to staff from kicking or what time frame to wait before acting when collecting a child from school who may be at risk of going missing. This lack of clarity could result in inconsistent care.

When concerns are raised by children or staff, managers take these seriously and act promptly to share concerns with relevant professionals. Managers carry out thorough investigations and, where necessary, take further action. Managers also consult with other professionals and advocate for placing authorities to carry out their own fact finding to make sure that children are being kept safe at the home. As a result, children feel listened to and valued.

On occasions, children have said unkind words to each other. Staff have reported these concerns. However, records do not clearly show what action staff have taken to try and prevent children being unkind to each other. This has the potential to further escalate to bullying.

Staff help children to understand how to keep themselves safe through key-work sessions and other learning opportunities. These sessions help children to learn strategies to keep themselves safe and to understand the risks from their behaviours and online activity. As a result, for most children, there is a continued decrease in incidents, physical intervention is only used when necessary, and they rarely go missing from home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The change in management at the home has not had an impact on the continuity of care for children. In many ways, the change has been positive, and managers have focused much more on the individual needs of children living at the home. Managers are passionate and committed to the care of children and want the best possible outcomes for them.

Managers are not afraid to challenge others and advocate well for children. When children are struggling, managers have consulted with other professionals to find new ways of working. However, when the home can no longer meet the needs of children, managers are not afraid to make the difficult decision to end placements.

Staff are positive about the home and the new manager. They say that they appreciate the support and opportunities afforded to them, for example support to develop their skills in their roles through a variety of training and regular reflective supervision. As a result, the skills staff possess mean that children are progressing.

Managers use their monitoring systems well and have good systems which help them to identify areas for improvement. Managers consult with children about changes to the home so that they are part of the decision-making. This helps children to feel valued and respected and that it is their home.

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the home provides children with all necessities. This specifically relates to window coverings which afford privacy to children. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 14, paragraph 3.3)
- The registered person should ensure that staff can identify children who may be at risk and support children in strategies to manage and reduce any risks. In particular, behaviour plans and risk assessments should contain all the information staff need to understand the risks posed and the action to take, including when children may go missing from school. In addition, the registered person should ensure that there is guidance for staff about the action they can and cannot take when managing behaviours. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 43, paragraph 9.10)
- The registered person should ensure that staff understand what they must do to prevent bullying of children by other children. Staff should be able to recognise and address different types of abuse, such as bullying in day-to-day relationships in the home. The registered person must ensure that staff have the skills required to intervene, protect, and address bullying behaviours effectively. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 39, paragraph 8.16)

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: SC024808

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Keys Education Limited

Registered provider address: Maybrook House, Second Floor, Queensway,
Halesowen, Worcestershire B63 4AH

Responsible individual: Gemma Moore

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Debbie Bond, Social Care Inspector

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