

SC026991

Registered provider: Keys Child Care Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and managed by a private provider. It provides care for up to four children who may have social and emotional difficulties.

At the time of the inspection, the home was providing care for four children.

The manager registered with Ofsted in January 2017.

Inspection dates: 24 and 25 June 2024

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

Date of last inspection: 23 May 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
23/05/2023	Full	Good
14/06/2022	Full	Good
17/03/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
22/05/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children receive a good standard of care from a dedicated staff team. This has supported children to make progress in many areas of their lives. Staff have strong relationships with children and know them well. Staff understand the challenges faced by children and offer sensitive and predictable support.

Children's education is promoted in the home and all four children consistently attend school. The home has good communication links with the schools, which ensures that any barriers to learning are quickly identified and addressed. The registered manager advocates for children when they have not been in appropriate education and is flexible and creative in identifying alternative strategies to support children's engagement.

Staff support children to meet their health and well-being needs. When children require additional emotional support, staff liaise with the in-house therapeutic advisers and make appropriate referrals to external agencies. This ensures that staff receive specific professional guidance to support children's needs consistently.

The registered manager and staff regularly seek the children's views and offer support and advocacy when required. As a result, children are confident that their voices are heard when decisions are being made about their future.

Children maintain relationships with family members and others who are important to them. Children receive nurture and support from staff when they face challenges with these relationships.

Social activities are promoted by staff, with children actively encouraged to engage with community clubs in line with their individual wishes and feelings. Children have attended judo, swimming lessons, running club and karate. Staff also take children on breaks to a caravan. This enhances children's experiences. One child said they enjoyed their holiday near the beach as this was the first time they had 'really walked on the sand'.

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

Children have individualised risk assessment plans in place which provide an analysis of current and previously experienced risk. The registered manager regularly reviews assessments to ensure that these are reflective of the child's current needs and provide clear and detailed strategies for staff to follow in the event of an incident.

Staff have a good understanding of safeguarding procedures and can de-escalate situations in most incidents. Children rarely need to be held and physical intervention is used only as a last resort for children's safety. When incidents have occurred, the registered manager has reviewed staff practice to identify any areas for development. When shortfalls have been identified in staff's practice, the registered manager has

responded effectively to promote children's safety and identify clear actions to develop staff's skills.

Consequences are used rarely in the home, with the registered manager promoting praise for positive behaviours and the use of restorative conversations when necessary. Children are directly consulted and have identified personalised and achievable incentives for positive behaviours. This approach ensures that children's achievements are celebrated. Encouragement is also offered to children by the staff team to reflect on any negative behaviour and identify alternative responses.

Children rarely go missing from the home. There are clear protocols in place should children be reported missing, which are individual to children's needs and reflect their varying levels of vulnerability.

The registered manager responds to all allegations effectively and acts in a timely manner to ensure that children are safe. All allegations made by children are thoroughly investigated and appropriate action taken. Children are kept up to date on any investigations, which assures them that their views are valued and listened to. The registered manager informs all relevant professionals of any allegations made. However, on one occasion, although a detailed and thorough investigation was completed, the registered manager did not inform Ofsted of an allegation made by a child against a member of staff.

The home is a safe and homely environment for children. The registered manager escalates any maintenance required. Although fire evacuation drills do take place regularly, these have not consistently been held within a reasonable time frame when children move in or when new staff start working in the home. This leaves both staff and children vulnerable in the event of a fire when they are not fully aware of the evacuation procedure.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The home is led by a dedicated and inspirational registered manager who has high ambitions for children in the home. The registered manager leads by example and models excellent practice for staff.

Children's views are regularly sought by the registered manager by ensuring that she dedicates regular one-to-one time to each child. This enables her to be aware of any emerging needs or areas for support. The registered manager continually develops direct-work sessions and has enhanced their effectiveness by creating 'key letters' for children. These offer a child-centred reflection of sessions, that are engaging, individual and personal for children.

The registered manager and staff work hard to develop positive relationships with children's families and friends. The registered manager has shown innovative practice which promotes inclusivity, by creating a parents' guide to the home. This is provided to those people who are important to children and gives a detailed insight into the home

that is broadly accessible to all. One child's parent said they 'could not ask for any more' and that their child is 'treated like family'.

The registered manager has developed a culture in the home which emphasises the importance of good-quality relationships between staff and children. This provides children with confidence to identify trusted adults in the home. Staff are overwhelmingly positive about their experiences of working in the home and of the support that they receive from the registered manager.

The registered manager's oversight of the home is thorough and she understands the importance of evaluative and detailed quality assurance. Through the development of monitoring tools, the registered manager has been able to identify triggers and trends for children's behaviour and to develop effective strategies to reduce any risks.

Staff receive high-quality supervision sessions from either the registered manager or a team leader. The registered manager also provides group supervision and single-subject supervision sessions. These ensure that any areas of concern are identified in a timely manner and approaches by staff are consistent. Staff are actively supported to develop their practice and attend training sessions to develop their skills.

There is a blend of experience in the staff team, with new workers and staff who have worked in the home for several years. A clear induction and training programme are provided for new and inexperienced staff, who say they are well supported by both the registered manager and senior members of staff. The registered manager values staff's views, which are frequently sought. Team meetings are regular and offer staff clear insight into research-based theory and how this can be incorporated into practice.

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person 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 must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
After consultation with the fire and rescue authority, the registered person must— ensure, by means of fire drills and practices at suitable intervals, that persons working at the home and, so far as reasonably practicable, children are aware of the procedure to be followed in case of fire. (Regulation 25 (1)(d)) Specifically, the registered person must ensure that fire drills take place as soon as practical when children move in and when new staff members are inducted into the home.	25 August 2024

Recommendation

- Regulation 40 requires the registered person to notify Ofsted and other relevant persons if one of the situations specified in regulation 40(4)(a)-(e) occurs. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 63, paragraph 14.10)

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: SC026991

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Keys Child Care Ltd

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

Responsible individual: Thomas Cappleman

Registered manager: Wendy Birtwistle

Inspector

Carrie Mayes, Social Care Inspector

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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

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