

SC063997

Registered provider: Keys Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a large national provider. It is registered to provide care for up to three children who may have social and emotional difficulties.

The manager is registered with Ofsted and is suitably qualified and experienced. They were present throughout the inspection.

There are three children currently living in the home. They were given the opportunity to provide their views.

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 February 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	outstanding

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

Date of last inspection: 7 March 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
07/03/2023	Full	Outstanding
15/09/2021	Full	Good
12/06/2019	Full	Good
06/06/2017	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the last inspection, two children have moved out of the home. One of the children moved to a local foster care home, which enabled them to continue with their college course. The manager advocated strongly to ensure this child's views were heard about where they wanted to live when they left the home. Another child moved to one of the other provider's homes, where it was felt their needs would be better met.

Two new children have moved in, and the home is going through a transition process in supporting the children to settle in and engage with the routines and boundaries in place. The manager and staff have shown considerable resilience and dedication in supporting children through this difficult period. The manager is determined not to give up on children, despite the challenges being faced, and is reinforcing to children that staff will be there for them no matter what. The progress and experiences of children have been variable since the last inspection because of these changes in the group.

All the children have education in place, although attendance is currently sporadic, and as a result, this is impacting on their progress. The manager has worked with schools creatively to provide alternative education opportunities and amended timetables. One child is being supported to apply to local colleges to continue with their education. Children have opportunities to participate in activities in the home and community, and they have enjoyed a summer holiday.

Children are supported to have contact with people who are important to them and are helped to stay in touch with their families. Children have access to their mobile phones and social media, and this is carefully monitored. Children have been supported to understand how to stay safe online, and the manager has used additional resources to reduce some of the risks and dangers that children may be exposed to.

Children's health needs are being met, and when needed, additional support has been accessed from the clinical team. Staff have received training in the home's preferred model of care, and they provide a nurturing and consistent approach. As a result, children are building positive and trusting relationships with the adults in the home.

Children's plans are individualised and are regularly reviewed and updated. Staff are encouraged to read any updates, and they know the children well. The manager carefully considered the risks and needs of the new children moving into the home. They considered whether children's needs could be met and what the impact may be on children already living in the home and the team.

Children are given a voice in the home and are regularly consulted with in a variety of ways. They are informed of how to raise a complaint or concern.

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

There has been a recent increase in missing-from-home events, and for one child, this had not previously been a concern. On one occasion, a child left the home without staff being aware, and the manager has not addressed this with the staff to develop their understanding of risk management. Staff have been proactive in searching for children and working with other professionals to safely locate and return the children to the home. The manager is working as part of a multi-disciplinary team in the safety planning and risk management of these events.

Incidents have been well managed, and the manager provides good oversight and evaluation of incidents. Additional training has been accessed to help staff develop their skills and knowledge. There have been no incidents of bullying, and children have mostly positive relationships with each other. Room searches, when they have occurred, are managed sensitively and appropriately.

There were several incidents involving a child who had previously been very settled, and these placed the child and others at risk of harm. The decision was made that the home could no longer meet this child's increasingly complex needs. They were moved to a more specialist provision, and this transition was managed positively.

The manager has worked with external safeguarding professionals in managing allegations made against staff. On one occasion, staff did not report an allegation in line with safeguarding policies, and this led to a delay in informing the manager and external professionals. The regulator was not informed of a child protection enquiry being instigated following some concerns being raised that were external to the home.

Children's risk assessments are clear, detailed and regularly reviewed, although there have been some delays recently, particularly around the inclusion of missing from care events. Advice is sought from the clinical team, and this guidance helps to inform support and safety plans.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The manager provides strong and calm leadership for the team. They are child-centred and reflective, and this underpins the culture and ethos of the home. The manager has creatively used research to good effect to develop staff knowledge and to help children become more aware of issues that may impact on them. The manager has high expectations of the team and is highly ambitious for the staff and children.

The home is currently going through a transition due to changes in the children's group, and the manager is very reflective of the impact of this on the home. The

manager has shown great resilience and has provided excellent support for the team to develop relationships with the children and maintain boundaries and routines.

The manager regularly uses quality assurance systems to good effect and has a clear oversight of the home. The home's development plan is underpinned by research, and the manager has ambitious plans for further development and improvement. Despite some shortfalls found, leadership of the home is going from strength to strength, and the manager continues to be an excellent leader.

The manager is currently managing two homes and is being supported by deputy managers. They have regular meetings to ensure the manager can provide oversight to both homes and that they are kept aware of any issues and concerns. The manager has heavily invested in the staff to upskill them to undertake new roles and take on more responsibilities. Some staff have designated responsibilities, such as safeguarding champion and activities champion, and they receive additional training for these roles.

Staff are happy in their roles and feel well supported. They trust the manager and describe them as a good leader. The staff team is stable, and there have been minimal changes, which helps to maintain consistency. Staff have regular supervision sessions; however, these do not have children or safeguarding on the agenda and are more focused on upskilling staff. This is a missed opportunity for staff to reflect on their practice, the children and the safeguarding culture in the home.

All staff have completed mandatory training and have access to a range of additional training courses. The staff are trained in the preferred model of care by the clinical team and have received additional training relating to the specific needs of children in the home. This provides staff with additional knowledge and guidance on how best to support children with complex needs. Most of the staff have the required qualification for working with children.

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that any allegation of abuse is immediately reported to a senior manager. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 44, paragraph 9.17)
- The registered person should ensure that all staff receive supervision which allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 61, paragraph 13.2)
- The registered person should ensure that Ofsted are notified if one of the situations specified in regulation 40(a)-(d) 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: SC063997

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Keys Care Limited

Registered provider address: C/o Pinsent Masons Llp, The Soloist Building, 1 Lanyon Place, Belfast, Northern Ireland BT1 3LP

Responsible individual: Katie Harrison

Registered manager: Judith Waters

Inspector

Sarah Orriss, Social Care Inspector

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