

SC064500

Registered provider: Keys Child Care Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home provides care to for up to three children of either gender. Children living in this home may have a variety of complex needs.

A private provider runs this service. There is a manager who oversees the day-to-day running of the home. They have not yet applied for registration with Ofsted.

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

Inspection dates: 18 to 19 May 2021

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: 13 May 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: Good

Enforcement action since last inspection: None

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
13/05/2019	Full	Good
07/06/2018	Full	Good
29/08/2017	Full	Good
20/03/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children like living in this home. They receive a good level of care and support from the team around them. Children's needs are understood and met, however, the care plans in place to promote further progress are significantly out of date. These plans do not reflect the statutory meetings and assessments completed by children's local authorities, schools and health professionals. This can lead to disjointed working, inconsistency of care and reduced focus on what is important to children.

Children engage in education and have excellent attendance levels. They are achieving their targets and have good educational outcomes. One child has recently sat mock GCSE exams which will contribute to her overall grades. This child has also recently attended a college interview and secured a place for next year. The other children continue to engage well within both mainstream and specialist settings in preparation for exams in the future.

Staff provide children with opportunities for informal learning. They create a home environment which is conducive to learning. For example, one child built a rocket to earn a Brownie badge, another child enjoys helping to cook meals for other children and the adults in the home. Children are engaged by staff in their daily routines, meaning that they enjoy this informal learning and actively participate.

Children lead active and healthy lifestyles. They are offered a range of physical activities and visits to places of interest. Children engage in these and are also happy to try out new activities, sports and clubs. Furthermore, they are supported to attend to their emotional health through therapy and life-story-type work.

The inspector observed children to be very confident. They were forthcoming about their skills and abilities and shared details with the inspector about all the things they are good at. Children were observed to have aspirations and plans for the future as well as being firm and assured in their opinions and views.

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

Children are well matched to others living in the home. Impact risk assessments consider how children may present when living with others and the impact that this may have on those already living in the home. Appropriate steps are detailed to mitigate any potential risks. Because of this, children generally have positive relationships with each other.

Sanctions are used appropriately to discourage unsafe or negative behaviour being displayed by children. Sanctions viewed were restorative in nature and help children to understand their behaviour and potential consequences of their actions. For example, one child did not return home at the agreed time. This child was asked to write about why adults may have been worried and what could have happened

when adults were unaware of their whereabouts. This supports children to reflect on incidents and have a deeper understanding of the potential consequences of their actions. This approach helps children to reduce their own unsafe behaviours and builds valuable insight and skills for the future.

Behaviour management plans have not been updated for several months and do not accurately take account of all incidents or behaviours presented by children. This means that staff do not have clear, up-to-date guidance on how to manage these. This can lead to inconsistencies in behaviour management practice. Furthermore, this does not provide professionals the opportunity to review and agree all the current plans and strategies in place for their child.

Children have access to the internet and their own electronic devices. There are procedures in place to regularly check children's devices when concerns are raised. However, one child was able to bypass some of the internet safety controls and has shared this knowledge with others. At the time of the inspection, managers were unable to provide evidence of recent direct work with children on online safety, despite this being an area of identified concern. This means that children have not been regularly supported to understand how to keep themselves safe online.

Children have made allegations about staff. This follows a pattern of behaviour by one child. When allegations have been made, these have been investigated thoroughly and appropriately reported to the designated officer. Managers have sought appropriate advice and guidance from the officer and followed the necessary procedures. This increases children's safety and welfare in the home and demonstrates transparency.

Some serious incidents that have occurred in the home have not been notified to the regulator within an appropriate timescale. For example, one child had broken his foot. Although the outcome of this investigation is currently ongoing, this may have occurred during an incident of restraint. Failure to notify the regulator within a reasonable timescale prevents necessary external monitoring and review. This has the potential to jeopardise children's safety and well-being. A requirement has been made to address this.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

There have been changes to the management structure in the home. The long-standing registered manager moved to manage another home in the organisation. An interim manager was appointed who has now stepped down. Further changes within the organisation have meant that the responsible individual is currently overseeing the service. Managers have openly discussed these changes with children and transitions have occurred over time. Because of this, children have adapted well to the changes and have not been significantly affected.

Concerns raised around staff practice are investigated thoroughly. Whistle-blowing procedures are followed and outcomes are shared with all relevant professionals.

This ensures transparency and promotes children's safety. Furthermore, robust investigations and oversight by managers have informed improvements to practice.

One child was cared for in this home for over six years. He recently transitioned to supported living appropriate for his age. Managers created and followed a detailed and individualised plan with the local authority which supported him with this move. Staff transferred to his new home while he settled, to provide familiarity. This means that managers have ensured children have positive experiences of moving on from the home.

Staff are appraised yearly and they receive regular supervision. Supervisions are of good quality and staff can raise concerns and discuss worries with managers openly. Any issues raised by staff within supervision are acted upon, discussed in detail and addressed. This shows that managers listen to the views of staff and address issues to improve practice and the care provided to children.

External monitoring is robust. Independent visitors regularly seek the views of children and external professionals. They take time to comprehensively review and evaluate documents and feedback ,to promote improvement.

Due to COVID-19 and sickness and for personal reasons some staff have not been available to work in the home. Despite this, managers have ensured staffing levels in the home have remained good and children have been provided with consistency and continuity of care.

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, 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 protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child; help each child to understand how to keep safe. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)) Specifically, ensure plans to support children's behaviours are regularly updated. And support children to understand behaviours and associated risks, particularly those which relate to the internet.	6 July 2021
The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)) Specifically, ensure that children's care plans are regularly updated.	6 July 2021
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation; an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious;	6 July 2021

there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there;

a child protection enquiry involving a child —

is instigated; or

concludes (in which case, the notification must include the outcome of the child protection enquiry); or

there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious.
(Regulation 40 (4)(a)(b)(c)(d)(i)(ii)(e))

Specifically, that there is no reasonable delay in notifying Ofsted of any serious incidents relating to children.

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: SC064500

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Keys Child Care Ltd

Registered provider address: Keys Care Ltd, Maybrook House, Queensway,
Halesowen B63 4AH

Responsible individual: Sarah Haworth

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Natalie Bennett, Social Care Inspector

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