

SC066115

Registered provider: Keys ACE Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The children's home is operated by a private organisation. The home provides care for up to four children who may have social and emotional difficulties.

The registered manager has been in post since February 2020.

Inspection dates: 18 and 19 January 2023

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
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The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: 22 March 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
22/03/2022	Full	Good
15/05/2018	Full	Good
06/12/2017	Full	Good
02/02/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children make exceptional progress in relation to their individual starting points across aspects of their welfare and their physical, social, emotional and behavioural development. They benefit from highly individualised, well-planned care that meets their needs effectively and contributes to sustained improvement in their lives. A social worker reported, 'I feel that the staff team are child focused and are in tune with [the child's] needs and respond to them accordingly. [My child] is observed to be content and happy on all visits.'

Staff aspire to make a real difference to the lives of children, and they invest in their relationships with them. The therapeutic model of playfulness, acceptance, curiosity and empathy is used to form healthy and secure attachments with children. Staff provide children with a caring, highly supportive and nurturing environment which enables children to feel safe and secure.

Staff work closely with therapists to meet the specific needs of the children and to understand the impact of their childhood trauma. Staff develop highly effective partnerships with therapists, schools, social workers and other professionals to ensure that children benefit from effective help and the best possible support. An independent reviewing officer reported, 'They understand [my child's] emotional needs and offer a therapeutic approach.'

Children have experienced significant disruption to their education, prior to them coming to the home. However, all children now attend full-time education and benefit from excellent school attendance. Children are extensively supported by staff and teachers to promote their learning and educational achievements. A headteacher reported, 'The manager and staff have supported school and [the child] through some difficult times and also celebrated her exceptional progress.'

The health needs of children are reliably met by staff. Staff support children to attend their routine health and medical appointments. They ensure that children have access to the specialist services they need to promote their emotional well-being. As a result, there is effective support to promote the children's positive health.

Children benefit from a diverse range of enjoyable activities. Consequently, they have developed their own interests, talents and hobbies. Children have enjoyed holidays, music festivals, theme parks, horse riding and boxing. A child said, 'We do loads of activities and fun things with staff...I love school, it's the best.'

Staff support children to have family time in accordance with the plans agreed with the placing authorities. As a result, children sustain their close relationships with the

people who are most important to them. A child said, 'Family time's the best. I get to see all my family, and that's really good.'

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

Children benefit from a physically safe, cosy, homely and comfortable living environment. The accommodation provided for children is well maintained and of a good standard and quality. Children's bedrooms are nicely decorated and reflect their needs and personalities. The home has a designated games area with a wide variety of arts and crafts materials, games, books and toys for children's use. There are plans to modernise the play area for the children's future use.

Children benefit from effective support, help and protection. Staff go to great lengths to keep children safe. Staff maintain highly effective partnerships with the police and other safeguarding agencies to promote the safety and well-being of children.

Children rarely go missing from the home, and staff educate them on how to keep themselves safe. On the isolated occasions when a child has been absent or gone missing from the home, staff have actively looked for them to ensure their quick and safe return.

Staff have an excellent awareness of the specific needs and vulnerabilities of children. The use of robust risk management plans enables staff to keep the children safe from harm.

Staff are vigilant and alert to the risk of unsafe behaviour. They are trained to help children who exhibit self-injurious behaviour and deal with incidents of self-harm sensitively. Staff explore children's underlying feelings and provide children with different coping strategies to keep them safe and minimise risks. Staff are attuned and responsive to the needs of children. They provide children with lots of hugs, reassurance and unconditional positive regard. As a result, children feel safe, valued and loved.

The frequency of the use of restraint has reduced significantly in relation to children's starting points. Staff are trained and skilled in behaviour management and use their skills to manage children's behaviours effectively. They use effective de-escalation strategies to prevent incidents and behaviours from escalating. As a result, children learn to self-regulate their feelings and behaviour safely.

Significant incidents are rare and there have not been any complaints since the last inspection. However, it was identified that the home had been contacted by the local authority designated officer following an anonymous allegation about the home. The allegation was investigated fully and found to be unfounded. However, the shortfall is that the provider did not notify Ofsted about this issue.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

Children benefit from a home that is managed efficiently and effectively. The manager demonstrates strong and effective leadership of the operations of the home. They are extremely knowledgeable and experienced in therapeutic parenting. Additionally, they are well qualified and have twenty-five years' experience of working with vulnerable children. The manager is an inspirational leader who relentlessly champions the needs of the children.

The manager promotes an excellent team spirit and is nurturing and supportive of staff's practice and learning. The manager leads staff by example and inspires them to work to the best of their abilities to achieve positive outcomes for children. One member of staff said, 'I have seen the change in young people's behaviour in many ways. They feel safe and loved. There is a lovely family feel to the home.'

Staff ensure that the children benefit from continuity of care, so they have consistency and stability in their lives. Team meetings are held regularly, and staff benefit from regular practice-related supervision. This enables staff to reflect on their practice and review their effectiveness in meeting the needs of children.

Staff have access to high-quality training and apply their knowledge and learning in practice. The manager supports staff's training and developmental needs. Most staff are suitably qualified, and those who are not qualified are being trained to obtain their qualifications. One member of staff said, 'I was supported in all aspects of the role, including training, building relationships and development.'

The performance of the home is scrutinised and monitored effectively. The manager consults with children, parents, social workers and other stakeholders and uses the learning obtained from feedback to review the standard and quality of children's care. The manager makes effective use of the home's monitoring activities to understand the strengths and weaknesses of the home. The manager tackles identified shortfalls to secure continuing improvement.

There were no requirements or recommendations made at the last inspection. Staff meet the aims and objectives, as outlined, in the home's statement of purpose effectively. They deliver an outstanding service for the children.

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 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; 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))	27/02/2023

Recommendation

- The registered person should consider the need for the children's playroom to be more modernised. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

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: SC066115

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Keys ACE Limited

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

Responsible individual: Natalie Yates

Registered manager: Jaime Meller

Inspector

Anthony Kyem, Social Care Inspector

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