

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 is registered to provide care for up to four children or young people who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

The registered manager has been in post since February 2020.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021.

Inspection dates: 22 to 23 March 2022

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: 15 May 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
15/05/2018	Full	Good
06/12/2017	Full	Good
02/02/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
22/08/2016	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

At the time of the inspection, four children are living in the home. All children are settled, thriving, and making significant progress from their starting points.

Staff promote and prioritise children's educational needs. Children attend school as soon as they move into the home, without delay. Children who previously did not go to school are now in full-time education and have a hundred percent attendance. Good communication between staff and teachers means that a joint approach to children's education is taken. Staff support children with their homework, and they focus on targets detailed in children's personal education plans. This means children are making meaningful progress where needed.

Staff have an excellent understanding of children's health needs, and they help children manage their health conditions in a sensitive and empathetic way. Staff explain to children how their health needs have an impact on them, and they ensure that they are well prepared. As a result, children are informed and have an improved quality of life. Staff encourage children to lead healthy lifestyles. For example, children and staff have fitness trackers and have step count challenges. This motivates children and staff to be more active.

Staff thoughtfully plan the direct work they complete with children. The work is meaningful, engaging and age appropriate. As a result, children receive support on key topics, which supports the progress they make.

Children benefit from positive relationships with the staff. Staff promote children's individuality and interests, including their religious and cultural needs. For example, staff help the children to celebrate festivals that are important to them, and they encourage children's participation in their chosen religion. Children take part in different hobbies and are encouraged to attend after-school activities that help them engage in the wider community outside of the home.

Staff are proud of the progress children make and strive for each child to have the best possible opportunities in life. Staff celebrate children's achievements at every opportunity.

Staff support and promote children's relationships with their family members and individuals who are important to them, including family pets. Staff understand the importance of children's relationships, and they maintain these relationships through phone calls, video calls and face-to-face meetings.

The home is welcoming, and staff enhance the homely feel. Children's rooms are personalised to their individual tastes, and each child's personality shines throughout the home.

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

Children are safe and feel safe living in the home. Staff know the children well and are quick to identify when children are upset or unhappy. This allows staff to help children before their emotions and feelings become unmanageable.

Staff follow clear risk assessments and behaviour management plans. These are detailed and provide staff with the guidance needed to provide consistent care. Risk assessments are in place to manage the impact of COVID-19 on the provision of care at the home. The registered manager has started to research the impact of COVID-19 on children's mental health and how this may have an impact on the children living in the home.

Staff are skilled at supporting children to manage their behaviour. This is effective, and there has been a consistent reduction in the use of physical restraints. Children who were previously restrained to keep them safe no longer need this level of support. Staff respond appropriately to children who are upset, and they help children to quickly move on from incidents. Children are reassured by the way staff respond and incidents often end with a hug or reassuring words from staff. Behaviour management strategies are effective. As a result, children's emotional health and well-being are improved.

Staff promote positive behaviour, and they praise children when they have been good. When necessary, appropriate sanctions are given for unwanted behaviour. One child told the inspector this was fair.

Children do not go missing from care. However, staff know how to respond, and they have relevant training should they need to respond to a child who goes missing from care.

Staff are skilled at supporting children who self-harm. Staff are nurturing in their response and are creative in helping children to explore different coping strategies that keep children safe.

The registered manager is alert to potential safeguarding matters. Allegations are managed well and promote children's safety. The registered manager liaises with the local authority designated officer when needed.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The registered manager is an excellent leader who has exceptional knowledge in therapeutic-led care. The progress children make is a testament to the registered manager's commitment to children's outcomes and her knowledge that she disseminates to the staff. As a result, her child-centred approach is mirrored by the staff, resulting in children receiving a high standard of consistent care.

The registered manager promotes a learning culture for staff that helps them feel confident and safe in their practice. This approach is supported by regular supervision and team meetings that staff fully engage in. Yearly appraisals are effective, and children feed their individual views into these. This means staff have a full awareness of their strengths and areas for development.

Children's views are regularly gathered. Children's meetings are effective in seeking children's views and are overseen by the registered manager. Children have a confidential letter box in which they can write to the responsible individual and registered manager. The children know who the responsible individual is and have an equally positive relationship with her.

The registered manager continually strives to improve the staff's knowledge of the legislation that underpins the care staff provide children. The registered manager tests their knowledge through discussions and quizzes enabling her to tailor learning and development where this is needed. She ensures that staff have relevant training to meet children's individual needs. When the inspector spoke to staff, it was evident that staff are knowledgeable about the children and their life experiences.

The registered manager's monitoring systems provide her with an understanding of the strengths and areas of development in the home. She has a strong focus on achieving outcomes for children, to ensure that they have the best opportunities now and in the future.

Social workers and education staff are extremely positive about the care children receive. Good relationships with professionals are established through regular feedback provided to them about the children. The registered manager advocates for children, and she contributes to children's care plans to ensure that decisions made about children's futures are in their best interest.

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

Lisa O'Donovan, Social Care Inspector

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