

SC362094

Registered provider: Keys Nhcc Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned by a large private company. It registered with Ofsted in 2007 to provide care for up to two children with emotional and social difficulties. The home does not currently have a registered manager. However, an application has been received by Ofsted from the acting manager within the required time frame.

There were two children living in the home at the time of the inspection, and both were spoken to.

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 August 2024

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: 11 October 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/10/2023	Full	Outstanding
04/01/2023	Full	Outstanding
09/11/2021	Full	Outstanding
29/01/2020	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children receive a high standard of care. Staff speak highly of the children and will go out of their way to ensure that they receive the support they need to achieve in all aspects of their lives. As a result, the children, who have lived in the home for four years and 18 months respectively, have made sustained progress while living in the home.

Children have built secure and trusting relationships with staff who understand them and their care needs. Staff provide a nurturing environment in which children can grow and flourish. There is laughter in the home, and children are happy and settled. The staff work well together to provide consistency in the care they provide. Routines and boundaries are understood by all, which helps children to feel safe and supported.

Children's life chances are enhanced by living in the home. For example, one child has gone from being repeatedly excluded from school to now having close to 100% attendance. They have gone on to take their exams and secure a job interview. Another child was due to be assessed so that they could get additional support in education. The process took too long, so the home researched and obtained equipment to help make learning easier for the child. These actions helped to build the child's confidence in learning.

Children are given opportunities and encouraged to succeed. While living at the home, one child has moved up the ranks in their chosen hobby. They won an internal competition and are now going on to represent their club. Another child was able to earn extra money to buy computer parts and build themselves a fully working computer as well as their own desk. Staff are immensely proud of the children's achievements and display certificates of their successes in the home, helping to build the children's self-esteem. Incentives that are specific to the children help them achieve their goals and improve confidence in their abilities.

Staff advocate for the children effectively, for example by challenging health professionals when information recorded about a child's health has been incorrect. This ensures that children do not go on to receive treatment or labels that are inappropriate for them.

Children are supported to maintain good health. Staff ensure that children receive and attend routine checkups and health appointments. Healthy food options are readily available, and staff encourage children to be active.

Children make positive memories. They are given opportunities to try new experiences and participate in regular activities they enjoy. The children have hobbies

and interests that they pursue and are making progress in. Over the summer, the children enjoyed a holiday away together. Staff collate these memories during the children's time in the home. This includes a professionally bound recipe book, personalised with the child's favourite meals, which they can take with them when they move on from the home.

Children are supported to spend time with those who are important to them. The children have been able to maintain positive relationships with their family, and as a result, they have been able to increase the time spent with them.

The home is warm and welcoming. The internal environment is nicely furnished and displays photos of the children during their time there. However, there were some aspects of the garden and driveway that needed attention.

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

Staff have a good understanding of the risks posed to and from children. Risk management plans provide staff with strategies to help minimise known risks. New and emerging risks are responded to in a timely way. This helps to keep children safe while simultaneously enabling them to fully live their lives.

The home provides a calm and happy environment in which there have been no serious incidents such as children going missing from home or physical interventions. Children get on well with, and are supportive of, each other. Staff have a good understanding of the children and are skilled in managing situations that may result in an escalation of behaviour. Staff are knowledgeable about the procedures they need to follow should a child go missing from home or if physical intervention is required.

When incidents do occur, they are thoroughly investigated and discussed with children. Information is shared with relevant professionals, when appropriate, to ensure that action is taken to keep children safe.

Staff support children to develop confidence so that they can keep themselves safe. Staff discuss incidents and situations that may make the children vulnerable. This helps to equip children with the skills to stay safe and manage difficult situations.

The manager takes their safeguarding responsibilities seriously. For example, the manager researched strategies to gain a better understanding of online safety. They shared this with the staff team to help improve its knowledge in recognising and understanding the associated risks.

Risks relating to the home environment are understood by staff. The assessment of the suitability of the location of the home is well informed, with input from external agencies. This provides staff with information to help keep children who live at the home safe.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

Since the last inspection, there have been changes in the leadership arrangements for the home. The previous manager has been promoted within the organisation and is now the responsible individual. They have been replaced by the former deputy manager. An application for the new manager has been submitted to Ofsted within the required time frame.

Children are supported by a stable and skilled staff team. There is a low turnover of staff. The new manager has worked at the home for several years and has a good understanding of the children's needs and the running of the home. The use of agency staff is minimal. Staff prefer to cover shifts between themselves as they understand that it is less unsettling for the children. This has helped with the stability of the home during changes in leadership and has provided consistency of care for the children.

The staff, including the manager, have either the required qualification for their role or are in the process of obtaining this. There is good uptake of staff training. When there are specific training needs in relation to the children, these are sourced to ensure that staff have the right skills and understanding to support the children.

The manager has high ambitions for the children, and this is reflected throughout the staff team. Children are flourishing at the home and making progress. They are supported to succeed in their ambitions, and their achievements are celebrated.

Staff are well supported and speak highly of the manager. They are given opportunities to learn and develop. Staff enjoy coming to work and are committed to ensuring that children are happy and have access to opportunities and experiences that promote their well-being.

Leaders and managers understand the importance of quality assurance in the delivery of care. The manager periodically undertakes shifts to maintain an understanding of the care that children receive at the home. Children's records are kept up to date, and their views are sought. Action is promptly taken when shortfalls are identified.

The manager works effectively with other professionals to secure the best outcomes for children. Feedback from professionals is very positive. One health professional commented positively on the challenge the home gave to them to ensure the child's best interests were considered when making decisions about them.

Staff stay in touch with children who have left the home. This has helped the children feel cared for and enabled them to settle in their new homes.

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

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that the children's home is a nurturing and supportive environment that is homely and meets the needs of their children. This specifically relates to ensuring that the external environment is maintained to a high standard, with the removal of garden waste and potential trip hazards from uneven paving. ('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: SC362094

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Keys Nhcc Ltd

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

Responsible individual: Rachael Strange

Registered manager: post vacant

Inspector

Louise Naylor, Social Care Inspector

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