

SC366002

Registered provider: Keys ACE Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a private company and is registered to provide care for up to four children who may have social and emotional difficulties.

The manager in post was appointed in November 2021. She has submitted her application to Ofsted to become registered. She is currently undertaking the level 5 in leadership and management.

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.

We last visited this setting on 9 September 2020 to carry out an assurance visit. The report is published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection dates: 2 and 3 March 2022

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: 17 December 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: not applicable

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
17/12/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good
14/06/2018	Full	Good
07/02/2018	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
22/06/2017	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Staff ensure that care is tailored to the individual needs of the children. Routines help the children develop healthy day-to-day patterns of behaviour, which result in their relationships, schoolwork, diet, sleep patterns, continence and personal hygiene improving significantly. Staff are proud of the children's progress and praise their achievements. This builds the children's confidence and self-esteem.

The children are all attending mainstream schools. Staff work in close partnership with education staff, who acknowledge the dedication of the team. For example, they transport one child a significant distance each day. This has enabled him to continue his education at a school he was attending prior to moving into the home, and at which he is known well. As a result, all the children are making good educational progress.

Children are making good progress in developing age-appropriate life skills. This is because staff make these activities fun. As a result, children are involved in baking and cooking meals, washing their own clothes, using public transport and, where appropriate, going out in the local community independently. Successfully learning these new skills prepares them for adulthood.

Staff support the children to explore their identities and develop their interests. As a result, children are active members of community-based clubs such as Brownies and football. They support football teams and watch and attend matches. They listen to music and attend concerts by their favourite groups.

The registered manager continues to develop the home environment with the input of the children and staff. Overall, the home feels welcoming and homely, and the children's bedrooms are personalised. However, the large lounge is uninviting. It is sparse, with very little furniture for the size of the room, and the decoration is tired. This shortfall detracts from the children having a homely environment to live in and to enjoy.

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

The manager and staff promote the safety and well-being of the children. They have a good understanding of safeguarding policies and procedures through induction, training and supervisions. As a result, the children feel able to talk to staff if they have any worries. This enables the children to feel safe and to know that they are being listened to.

The management and staff team consistently reflect on their practice, and review and develop behaviour management strategies. Staff build positive relationships with the children that enable them to have challenging conversations about difficult topics. This enables staff to manage and defuse most incidents, and it supports the

children to make informed decisions in order to keep themselves safe. As a result, incidents, physical interventions and consequences are low, and there have been no missing-from-care incidents since September 2021.

The staff are sensitive in supporting the children to live together and develop their relationships with others. They have encouraged the children to discuss the impact that their behaviours can have on others in the home and in the wider community. Staff encourage appropriate friendships through schools and clubs. When appropriate, staff work closely with family members to help them maintain positive relationships with their children. In some cases, this results in a child spending more time with their family.

Recruitment practices are safe. This ensures that only suitable people work in the home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The responsible individual and the manager have a clear understanding of the strengths of the service and of the areas which require further development. The manager has implemented significant changes since coming into post in November 2021. She is making good use of development plans and internal quality assurance systems to monitor and improve staff practice and outcomes for the children. For example, she recognises the staff will benefit from, and has therefore planned training in, restorative justice. However, staff have not attended training in topics specific to the children's individual needs, such as autism spectrum disorder and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. This has the potential to have an impact on the staff's ability to care for the children in the home.

The manager is quick to respond to and address shortfalls in practice. For example, she has improved the structure of the children's day. This includes the children's use of electronic devices. This is now closely monitored to ensure it doesn't detract from their education or involvement in activities and hobbies. These timely responses ensure that good standards of care and practice are maintained, and that children's good progress remains the focus.

Staff receive good-quality supervisions and team meetings that focus on the teams and their personal development, and on the needs of the children. As a result, each staff member can reflect on their practice and develop their skill base.

The manager and staff work well in partnership with social workers and schools. All are extremely positive about the care the children are receiving, and of the progress they are making.

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 leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)) This specifically relates to the registered manager ensuring that all staff complete child-specific training.	30 April 2022

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the home is a nurturing and supportive environment that meet the needs of children and is homely. This specifically relates to the decoration and personalisation of the sitting room. ('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: SC366002

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: Mark Dickinson

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Dawn Bennett, Social Care Inspector

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