

SC370956

Registered provider: Keys Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is privately owned. It is registered to provide care for four children who have emotional, behavioural and social difficulties.

There is an experienced manager who is registered with Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 24 and 25 August 2022

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: 28 July 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
28/07/2021	Full	Good
29/01/2020	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
01/05/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good
04/09/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children are receiving an exceptional standard of care from an experienced and highly skilled team. Many children have lived at the home for a significant period because the staff carefully adapt their care practice to meet children's changing needs. Children are nurtured and cherished in a family environment, which has enabled them to thrive and exceed the expectations of what they can achieve. The life chances and opportunities for children have increased considerably due to the care provided.

The manager and staff go above and beyond their roles to ensure that children attend education and training. Children have been well supported with the transition from school to college. Their attendance is excellent. They are sitting exams and gaining awards, such as 'most improved student'. The older children have part-time jobs, which has helped them to grow in confidence and learn new skills. Children are very proud of their achievements.

Children are in good health and they lead very full and busy lives. They have established hobbies and interests, both inside and outside the home. Staff support children to develop their talents, which helps children to build their self-esteem. For example, one child has recently had a poem published and another child has taken part in a dance show. Children are encouraged to look after pets, cook and bake, which means they can manage age-appropriate responsibilities in rewarding ways.

The manager and staff have provided commendable support to help children rebuild relationships with their families. The manager and staff have also helped children to strengthen new relationships with family members who have become important to their sense of identity. Children regularly stay overnight with their families and staff ensure that they are safely transported to these visits. The progress that children have made in this area is outstanding.

Children are fully involved in their care plans. They attend important meetings, where their views and wishes are considered and acted upon, if possible. Children know their rights. They know how to make a complaint. These are low in number, but when received they are taken seriously and responded to thoroughly. Overall, children are happy with the way their complaints are dealt with.

Managers and staff have achieved some remarkable work with children moving on to independence. This has involved detailed assessments of each child's needs and highly individualised direct work and support. This has covered the emotional, social and practical elements of living independently. One child has now moved on and is settling into her new home well. The child's parent and professionals involved are confident that this progress can be attributed to the support provided by the manager and staff.

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

The manager and staff have an excellent understanding of the risks posed to and by children. They work tirelessly to ensure that children are kept safe. Team members think of creative ways to manage risks and vulnerabilities and they show great persistence and determination in the face of very complex situations. Where children need extra help to understand risks, they are offered unlimited empathy and time. This has helped children to make steady progress and increase their independence.

The team has been commended for their work in managing complex missing-from-care incidents for one child. The manager and staff have worked far beyond expectations to support the child and ensured that she returned home safely. The team worked skilfully with multiple external agencies, sharing intelligence and reviewing the level of risk, sometimes over extended periods of time. They also worked relentlessly to prevent new incidents, adapting their approaches where necessary. The police involved have shared the work undertaken with other police forces and cited it as worthy of dissemination.

Members of the staff team use their skills and relationships with children to manage behaviour. They are confident in this area of practice. There are very few incidents at the home and restraint is only used as a last resort. Any incidents of restraint are recorded clearly, and the manager provides a good standard of evaluation, identifying learning where necessary. This helps to maintain a calm and stable atmosphere.

Children are safe online. Staff carry out proportionate checks on children's phones, as any parent would. They also carry out direct work regarding online safety. The manager and staff have shown real persistence with children to help them stay safe when using social media and the internet. With one child, this has taken a significant period; however, the team has not given up on her. She is now able to have full use of her phone due to the progress she has made.

Leaders and managers have instigated new safeguarding practice meetings across their company to create consistency of practice within homes. Serious case reviews and research-based resources are used to develop skills and knowledge within the team. This includes professional boundaries and curiosity and managing allegations. Creative methods are used to upskill the staff team. These are having a very positive impact on practice. For example, staff are recognising their safeguarding responsibilities and there is increased professional curiosity.

The manager and staff show high levels of commitment to the protection of children. Thorough recruitment processes are in place to ensure that children are cared for by safe adults. There are good links with the local authority designated officer and other relevant external agencies. All safeguarding concerns are investigated thoroughly and there are clear outcomes. Children are well supported with safeguarding processes, even when they have moved on. This gives children the reassurance and guidance they need in their most vulnerable times.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The home is led by an experienced and highly skilled manager. He is passionate about providing high standards of care for children. His work in safeguarding has been shared within the company as examples of good practice. The manager and his deputy have created consistency and stability, which has steadily contributed to significant improvements over time. The managers have inspired the team to provide the exceptional care children are receiving. This has enabled children to flourish and achieve their goals. Children's lives have been transformed due to the care they receive in the home.

The manager has recruited a diverse staff team. Each person brings their own skills and experience, which have been integrated into a consistent approach. The staff enjoy their work and see their colleagues as a 'second family'. There is a thorough induction for new staff, and their progress is carefully reviewed. Any shortfalls in practice are met with a robust response and difficulties are worked through in a professional and accountable way. As a result, the quality of care for children is sustained over time.

Staff receive regular opportunities for further training and development. Training is relevant to the needs of the children. Team members benefit from regular supervision and appraisals, in which they feel able to discuss the impact of their work. This has helped to maintain a core of stable and cohesive staff who display exceptional energy and tenacity in their work, which helps children develop and grow.

The manager takes great care over decisions about children moving into the home. He has learned from previous experiences, in terms of the location of the home and balancing the needs of the children already living there. Children's transitions are well planned with the involved external agencies. As a result, children soon settle into the home and live there until they are ready to move on.

Managers have developed excellent relationships with internal and external colleagues, who have considerable confidence in the care provided to children. They cannot recommend the home highly enough. The manager is confident to challenge other professionals where there are shortfalls in plans for children. He regularly advocates for their needs. As a result, children are well protected from situations that may not be in their best interests.

The managers take pride in children's achievements, and always have time for them whatever the issue. Children who have moved on contact them regularly to share their news or ask for advice, even after long periods of time. This demonstrates the enduring nature of relationships and attachments that children develop while living at the home.

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: SC370956

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Keys Care Limited

Registered provider address: C/o Pinsent Masons Llp, The Soloist Building,
1 Lanyon Place, Belfast, Northern Ireland BT1 3LP

Responsible individual: Katie Harrison

Registered manager: Adam Tarrant

Inspector

Laura Walker, Social Care Inspector

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