

SC372602

Registered provider: Keys Child Care 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 provider. It offers care for up to three children who may experience social or emotional difficulties.

At the time of this inspection, two children were living at the home. One of the children has been living at the home for over a year.

The post for a registered manager has been vacant since 21 June 2025. The manager currently overseeing the home has applied to register with Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 October 2025

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 February 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
17/02/2025	Full	Good
13/02/2024	Full	Good
07/03/2023	Full	Good
27/10/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

During the inspection, the inspector spent time with both children. Since the last inspection, two children have successfully moved on from the home in a planned and supported way.

There have been significant changes in the home since the last inspection, including a change in the manager and staff team. Despite these changes, both children have settled in and are now receiving consistent, nurturing care. Relationships between children and staff are positive and trusting. One child was able to name several adults they feel comfortable speaking to if they have any worries, demonstrating that they feel safe and emotionally secure in the home.

The home environment has significantly improved since the last inspection. It is warm, welcoming and well maintained. Children's bedrooms are personalised to reflect their individual preferences, promoting a sense of ownership and belonging. A bedroom alarm had been in place for one child. However, the manager reviewed its use with the child's social worker, and it was removed during the inspection. One child has their own lounge space and is being supported to furnish it in a retro style. This creative involvement promotes children's independence and helps them feel valued and at home.

Both children attend school full time and are making good progress in line with their individual education plans. Staff maintain regular communication with education providers to support children's attendance, engagement and achievements.

The manager and staff are strong advocates for the children. Children are encouraged to attend their reviews and to share their views about their care and future plans. The manager is actively supporting one child in accessing an independent advocate to help them express their wishes and feelings around their plans for moving on from the home.

Staff celebrate children's milestones and birthdays with meaningful activities, helping them build positive memories and feel valued. Children enjoy a range of activities and holidays. However, some activities could be more structured and creative to reduce the amount of screen time children have on their devices and further encourage engagement and participation.

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

The manager has strong oversight of safeguarding practice. Risks are identified and addressed promptly, ensuring that children are protected from harm and not stigmatised. For example, staff received training on how to support children with a diagnosis of Tourette syndrome. This improved staff's understanding of the child's needs and supported a proportionate and informed response to negative language.

Staff carry out frequent direct work with children that addresses presenting behaviours and covers important topics, such as emotional regulation, racism education, and online safety. These sessions help children understand risks and develop strategies to keep themselves safe.

Staff use their positive relationships with children to de-escalate situations effectively, helping children feel secure and supported. Since the last inspection, there have been very few incidents in the home, and restraint has not been used. This reflects the manager's strong oversight and the team's proactive and nurturing approach to supporting children's emotional well-being and managing distress. All incidents are reviewed, leading to reflective practice and targeted interventions that reduce risk and promote learning for children and staff.

Most staff demonstrate confidence in applying the home's therapeutic model and physical intervention techniques when necessary; however, this is not yet consistent across the team. Leaders and managers are exploring ways to strengthen staff's skills in these areas through scenario-based learning. These developments support a cohesive approach to care and promote children's safety and emotional well-being.

Children's voices are heard and acted on when they raise concerns or make allegations. They are believed and supported, which helps them feel safe and secure in the home. This approach reinforces trust between children and staff and ensures that safeguarding practice is responsive and child centred.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Recent changes in leadership and staffing have had a positive impact on the home. Staff feel supported and valued, and morale has improved. The manager is visible, approachable and child focused, creating a stable and nurturing environment. Staff appreciate that the manager spends time with children, which was not happening previously. This has strengthened relationships and improved the quality of the care children receive.

The manager demonstrates effective oversight and a clear understanding of the home's strengths and areas for development. She is introducing structure, routines and accountability, along with staff training and specialist input to meet children's needs.

Staff receive a detailed induction and benefit from ongoing specialist input. This ensures that staff will have the skills and knowledge to meet children's complex needs and deliver consistent, high-quality care. The manager's approach reflects a commitment to improvement and a focus on creating a stable, nurturing environment where children's needs are prioritised.

Regular supervision sessions and team meetings are now being embedded, enabling staff to raise issues and safeguarding concerns confidently. Records of these sessions are maintained. However, they lack detail and reflective analysis to demonstrate the impact of discussions on practice.

Partnership working is strong. Professionals and families describe the manager and staff as protective, supportive and effective in meeting children's needs. The manager challenges external agencies when necessary and advocates strongly for children, ensuring that their voices are heard and their rights upheld.

The manager has clear plans to build on recent improvements and further enhance the quality of care. This includes strengthening positive recognition systems and embedding the therapeutic model consistently across the team.

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that all staff, particularly newer team members or those finding it challenging, fully understand and consistently apply the home's therapeutic model to promote a cohesive and effective care environment that supports children's emotional well-being. In addition, practical refreshers on physical intervention techniques and scenario-based learning should be provided to build staff's confidence and ensure safe, consistent practice. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.11)
- The registered person should ensure that children are provided with structured activities to reduce their screen time and encourage better engagement. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 31, paragraph 6.5)
- The registered person should ensure that records of staff supervision sessions include details of reflective conversations that enable staff to consider the needs of the children, the care being provided, and how their own feelings and behaviour may be affected by the behaviour of the children they care for. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 39, paragraph 8.15)

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: SC372602

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Keys Child Care Ltd

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

Responsible individual: Mark Ducker

Registered manager: Victoria Fry

Inspector

Karen Hallam, Social Care Inspector

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