

SC374268

Registered provider: Keys Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is operated by a private company. It is registered to provide care for up to three children who experience social and emotional difficulties.

The registered manager has been in post since April 2020. She has worked in various roles in the home over many years. She has a level 5 diploma in leadership and management for residential childcare.

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 March 2023

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	outstanding
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 14 July 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/07/2021	Full	Good
21/08/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good
05/09/2018	Full	Good
12/12/2017	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

There are two children currently living in the home. One child has lived in the home for nearly three years. The other child has lived in the home for several months. Since the last inspection, one child has moved out of the home.

Children benefit from living in a comfortable, spacious and well-maintained home. The home is warm, homely and has a family atmosphere. Each child's bedroom is personalised to their own tastes, which allows them to take a sense of pride in their home and promotes their well-being.

Children are positive about living in the home and say that the best thing about living here is how the staff look after them. One child described the staff as 'amazing'. It is a home where care for everyone is promoted. Staff and children celebrate and cherish their individual and shared successes. These positive relationships and experiences have resulted in children living here for some time and developing a sense of security and belonging. The children make excellent progress in important aspects of their lives.

Children have built strong relationships with the staff who care for them. Relationships between staff and children are warm, affectionate and loving. Staff are continually curious about, and reflect on, how they can help children grow in all areas of their development. This helps children to build trust and to feel safer and relaxed in their surroundings.

There is a positive ethos about the importance of education. As a result, children do well in education and have good attendance. The home advocates for children's education and works closely with educational establishments to ensure that the best possible outcomes are achieved academically for children. This support helps children to grow in confidence and self-esteem. It also provides them with a better opportunity to reach their full potential and increases their life chances.

Children's emotional health needs are expertly addressed. There are strong links with health professionals and specialist services. During this inspection, professionals told the inspector that the staff work collaboratively with them to meet the children's health needs.

Staff sensitively support and encourage children with their identity and have skilfully supported children with issues around their gender identity and sexuality. Staff seek specialised help when necessary and carry out research to meet the needs of the children they care for. Staff and children have an inclusive attitude and celebrate diversity. As a result, children have a greater tolerance to each other and there is no bullying in the home.

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

Staff educate children around risk. Children take part in key-work sessions with staff to address identified risks and raise their awareness about topics of concern. This direct work includes anti-bullying approaches and internet safety. This positive work enhances children's knowledge of risk and allows them to take the lead in their learning. Consequently, children are educated about the risks that they may face.

Staff physically intervene when children become unsettled and show behaviours which place themselves or others at risk of harm. Staff understand the reasons behind behaviour and provide good support to children afterwards. This helps children to move on from the incident. The manager provides close scrutiny of all incidents and measures of control to ensure that their use is fair and proportionate. There is good management oversight and prompt action is taken to address issues. This means that children are treated fairly and stay safe.

Staff are clear about their responsibilities to protect children. They understand the child protection policy and know how to report a safeguarding concern. The manager has an effective system for recording, reporting and monitoring safeguarding concerns. Liaison with professionals, such as the local authority designated officer and social workers, is effective. Information is shared swiftly with them to avoid delay and ensure that children are protected from harm. The manager takes guidance from these professionals, and they work together to ensure that children are safe. Safeguarding records are comprehensive. They detail the outcome of any concern as well as further actions staff need to be aware of.

Children share their worries and concerns with staff, due to the close and nurturing relationships that they have. Positive behaviour support plans are updated regularly to include any new information that can reduce risks. Risk assessments are carried out with the individual child in mind and reflect the child's own understanding of each risk. Staff follow the guidance in children's plans and assessments well. Consequently, children feel supported and are protected.

Children living at the home have complex needs and require constant care and supervision. Consequently, there has only been one incident of a child going missing from the home and no concerns regarding exploitation. When children go missing from care, staff follow the joint protocol effectively. Searches carried out by staff and persistent attempts to make contact show children that they are cared about. Proactive collaboration with parents, local authorities and police supports children to return home safely. Missing-from-care records are clear, which enables thorough monitoring of these incidents by the manager.

There has been one occasion when staff have administered the incorrect dose of medication to a child. This has not resulted in any health implications for the child. The manager investigated this thoroughly and has taken further action to improve procedures to prevent recurrence.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

A suitably qualified and experienced manager leads the staff team. The manager keeps the children at the heart of all she does. She is inspirational, passionate and ambitious for the children and ensures that this ethos spreads through the entire staff team. The manager has a good knowledge of the children's starting points and what they have accomplished since living at the home.

The manager maintains excellent oversight of the service. She uses exceptional auditing tools, which improves the quality of care. As a result, the manager has a good insight into the home's strengths and areas for development. The manager and staff have huge motivation and enthusiasm. They strive to provide positive outcomes for children and improve the operation of the home.

Leadership, management and staff cohesion are clear strengths and ensure the safety and welfare of children. Strategic reviews of all incidents in the home provide constant evaluation of staff practice and highlight children's changing needs. Staff supervision and focused team meetings are effective management tools that are used to identify areas for development and support effective staff practice. These processes ensure that staff provide good-quality care to children as set out in the home's statement of purpose.

The manager is well regarded, and she is nurturing towards the team. This means that staff work in an environment where they feel well supported. There is effective support and challenge, and the manager ensures that all actions are reviewed. This means that poor practice is addressed effectively and that good practice is promoted. The manager is ambitious for the children and is passionate about developing staff. One member of the team told the inspector, 'She's motivational, knowledgeable and supportive. She goes above and beyond for our children.'

Most staff hold the required level 3 diploma. A small number of staff are currently working to achieve this, and plans are in place to ensure that they complete this within the required time frame. Children make significant progress because staff training is focused on children's needs. For example, in addition to core mandatory training, all staff have completed extended training in child and adolescent mental health, transgender identity and self-injurious behaviours. They are currently receiving consultation from child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) around the needs of one child in their care.

Partnership working is a key strength of the home and supports the positive outcomes experienced by children. Staff work with children, social workers and a range of education and health agencies to plan and support children's current and future placements. The manager's persistence and excellent insight into the emotional and mental health needs of children has been crucial in influencing health assessments and exploring the need for more specialised services for children. A social worker said, 'The manager has been persistent in getting the child and adolescent mental health services involved. This took time, but she was so determined.' Another said, 'They have hung on in there to get them to where they

are today. The manager is the force behind it all. She goes above and beyond in everything she does.' These comments sum up the commitment and persistence of the manager and her focus on meeting the needs of the children in 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: SC374268

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: Dale Berry

Registered manager: Natalie Thompson

Inspector

Marianne Grandfield, Social Care Inspector

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