

SC386522

Registered provider: Keys Education Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

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

The manager registered with Ofsted in May 2023 and is working towards the appropriate qualification.

At the time of this inspection, three children were living at the home.

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 March 2024

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **requires improvement to be good**

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

Date of last inspection: 13 December 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
13/12/2022	Full	Good
20/04/2021	Full	Good
22/10/2019	Full	Good
08/10/2018	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are settled in the home and have trusting relationships with staff. They are making good progress in education and with their physical and emotional health.

Children's health needs are well met. Staff support children to attend appointments and to get the right medication or intervention for their needs. The manager advocated well for one child where the staff team struggled to support their escalating mental health needs. This led to the child moving to an alternative provision that could meet their specific needs.

Children who leave the home are prepared well for independence and they continue to have positive, supportive relationships with staff. This helps children to feel that they are important to the adults who provided their care and reduces feelings of loss and anxiety as they progress to the next stage in their life.

The manager advocated for one child and proactively involved other agencies to escalate her concerns about the child's move from the home. The placing authority for the child did not secure a home for the child, which meant that they were registered as homeless and lived in temporary accommodation until a suitable property was found. Unfortunately, the manager was unable to reach a more positive outcome for the child.

Children are encouraged to express themselves through their love of music and by engaging in different activities and experiences, such as ice skating and scouts. Their successes and milestones are celebrated in personalised journey files. Children shared how they have been supported to plan their own holidays and to try new things. As a result, children feel they have been listened to and have grown in confidence.

Children are supported to maintain and develop relationships that are important to them. Staff are sensitive to children's circumstances and maintain good communication with family members and friends to ensure that children are happy and safe. One child is supported to have regular sleepovers with their sisters at the home and family members are often invited to events celebrated at the home.

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

The risks to children are well understood by staff. The manager carefully considers the impact for children when looking at potential placements.

There is effective partnership work with children's school, placing authority and with other agencies to ensure that risks are well managed and that children's needs are met.

Children said that they feel safe and that staff help them to understand risks. Appropriate referrals have been made for specialist support for children as well as input from therapeutic support staff. Staff support children to think about how to keep themselves safe through targeted work around appropriate behaviours.

Children are settled in the home. There has been no need for staff to use any physical restraint to keep children safe for a considerable length of time. Children have not always been consulted on their views following an incident and not all staff involved have received a debrief. This means that important information about staff practice has not been considered as part of the manager's oversight to identify any areas of improvement and learning.

Children do not go missing from the home. This demonstrates the quality of the relationships that children have with the staff who care for them. There are clear and consistent boundaries in place for children that support predictable care. Staff know the children in their care well, which means that they can anticipate any potential impact of children's behaviours and respond quickly to prevent escalation.

Children's rights are promoted well. They know how to make complaints and feel that their concerns are listened to and acted on. Children have access to independent advocates should they want to.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The manager is developing in the role. She has a good understanding of the children's needs and advocates for them effectively through her relationships with professionals. The manager has access to the company's specialist team for support around several areas, including behaviour management, substance misuse and exploitation. The team's therapist feels that the manager is proactive in supporting therapeutic, trauma-informed care in the team.

The manager has oversight of the home through reflecting on incidents and using a monthly audit tool, but this is not robust. The manager does not review staff recordings of discussions with children, and these are inconsistent and at times of poor quality. The manager is aware of this shortfall but has not raised it with staff, which means that no additional training or monitoring have been put in place to support improvement.

Records of staff supervision and team meetings do not show staff input or use of reflection to consider the impact of practice on outcomes for children. Notes of meetings do not indicate what actions have been identified, who is responsible or what has been completed, which means that progress is not monitored. Appraisals include feedback from children, parents and colleagues to provide a well-rounded view.

All staff have completed mandatory training. Specific training in areas such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and substance misuse has not been identified,

which means that staff do not have the skills and knowledge needed to meet the needs of the children in their care. This was not identified when a child with specific needs was being considered for placement at the home, which meant that the assessment was not robust.

The manager encourages staff to consider how research can be applied to their practice. This has led to some thoughtful work on the importance of physical touch and family time for children. However, the research used is not referenced or applied to an identified risk or need for children and the impact is not monitored. This means that there is no clear link between research and improved outcomes for children.

Recruitment practices carried out by the manager are safe. There are some staff vacancies in the home that, to date, have not had a negative effect on the care provided to children or on how supported staff feel.

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, The 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 relates to ensuring that staff receive training in areas that are specific to the children's needs, such as training in attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and substance misuse.	31 March 2024
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— use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(h)) This relates specifically to ensuring that monitoring systems are in place to pick up on any staff practice issues. Any issues must be dealt with and recorded appropriately, in a	31 March 2024

timely way. Any actions to improve practice, such as additional training or support, must be identified.	
The registered person must prepare and implement a policy ("the behaviour management policy") which sets out— how appropriate behaviour is to be promoted in the children's home; and the measures of control, discipline and restraint which may be used in relation to children in the home. The registered person must ensure that— within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (1)(a)(b) (3)(c)) This relates specifically to ensuring that children are given the opportunity to express their feelings about their experience of the restraint as soon as is practicable, taking the age of the child and the circumstances of the restraint into account.	15 March 2024

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that they lead a team of staff who provide high-quality care for all children living in the home. They should ensure that staff have opportunities to reflect on their practice during supervision sessions and team meetings to provide a culture of learning. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 52, paragraph 10.4)
- The registered person should ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. Staff should record information about individual children in a non-stigmatising way that distinguishes between fact, opinion and third-party information. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. Staff should be clear about the objectives of discussions with children, ensure that children's voices are captured, that recordings are accurate and that any further actions are identified. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

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: SC386522

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Keys Education Limited

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

Responsible individual: Susan Davies

Registered manager: Kerry Hughes

Inspector

Andrea Foreman, Social Care Inspector

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