

SC419429

Registered provider: Keys Direct Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a private provider. It is registered to provide care for up to 4 children who may have social and emotional difficulties.

The manager is registered with Ofsted.

At the time of the inspection, there were 3 children living in the home. All children were spoken to during the inspection.

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 June 2026

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: 7 May 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
07/05/2025	Full	Requires improvement to be good
18/07/2024	Full	Good
29/02/2024	Full	Good
21/02/2023	Full	Good

Summary of findings

Since the last full inspection, the provider has identified some shortfalls. An assurance inspection in January 2026 found no widespread concerns. This inspection identified that they have made improvements in several areas of everyday care practice.

Since the last full inspection, 2 children have continued living in the home and one child has moved in. One child has come to live here. One older child is planning a move to supported living. The most recent child is yet to be fully settled, although progress is being made. There is progress with all children in terms of relationships with staff, engaging with activities and increasing independence skills.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children have several ways of making their views, wishes and feelings known. Staff take the time to listen to children. Decision boards provide children with an opportunity to make choices about important areas of their lives. Children know how to make a complaint, and these are responded to both promptly and thoroughly.

The home receives support from a therapist. As a result, staff are developing a trauma-informed awareness alongside the context of children's lived experiences. This allows staff to respond with empathy and clear communication, while also implementing clear boundaries and positive reinforcement. There is a focus on restorative approaches.

Staff are building positive relationships with children. Staff bring skills in helping children regulate their emotions, and incidents are reducing over time. This has created an atmosphere in the home where children actively seek time with the staff, and staff are responding with nurture and care.

The staff team is diverse. They offer different perspectives and experiences that children connect with. Staff have been proactive in exploring children's interests. They support children to access places and activities where they can express themselves. For instance, one of the children has been to a music concert, and another enjoys doing arts and crafts in the home.

The manager works in close collaboration with external professional agencies and families. Staff keep professionals continually updated regarding the children and their progress. Staff support children to see families when this is their choice and is part of their plan. Children are supported to access specialist help when needed. The manager has strongly advocated for the children to ensure that their wishes are heard and acted on when required.

Some children are struggling to engage with school. However, staff prioritise children's education and there are strong links with school staff. This collaboration means that

there is a strong focus on children returning to a better school routine. Staff undertake broader educational activities in the home in the interim.

When children are older and planning to move on, previous delays in the gaining of independence skills have improved. Older children now have several opportunities to develop independent-living skills, and there is a greater emphasis on developing existing skills and learning about healthy eating, cooking, self-care and independent travel.

The home is warm and welcoming. Staff have worked hard alongside children to make the home a nurturing and homely environment both inside and outside. There is lots of evidence of toys and other appropriate activities for children to enjoy. Staff clearly take pride in the home and help children to maintain a lovely environment for them to live in.

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

Staff have access to detailed and clear care plans and risk assessments. Assessments identify the risks and triggers and guide staff in what they must do to reduce these risks. Risk assessments are reviewed to accurately reflect current levels of risk. This means that, when possible, children can experience new challenges and develop new skills while remaining safe. Further records, such as daily mood charts, add to the overall monitoring of children's health and wellbeing.

Incidents have taken place; however, there has been a steady reduction over time. When they do happen, children seek support earlier or they respond more quickly to staff intervention. The overall impact is that the home environment is calmer and a place where the children feel safe.

Direct work through key-work sessions is planned according to the individual needs of children. These address a wide range of concerns such as online safety, sexual health and exploitation. Sessions are held soon after concerns are identified and demonstrate proactive measures to keep children safe. When needed, and with younger children, staff are creative and use visual aids, speech bubbles and child-friendly language to support children in identifying emotions, understanding events and expressing their views.

Children have formed strong relationships with staff. The bonds between children and staff reinforce the children's sense of feeling safe. Staff do not shy away from difficult conversations with children if their safety is jeopardised. Rather, staff take a proactive approach and explore any issues in an open and honest manner. This also allows children to feel safe and approach staff when they have their own worries.

There are clear policies and guidance for staff to follow when children are missing from home. Staff actively search for children, and they share information with the relevant agencies. This reflects the strong relationships with stakeholders and the nurturing model of care. A return interview is offered, and this is an opportunity for staff to understand why children go missing and to try to keep them safer.

Some children have had physical interventions. Records of interventions are written by the staff involved and are reviewed by the manager. Any learning or development opportunities are conveyed to the team through team meetings or specific workshops. Children's social workers are informed of incidents and any allegations in a timely manner.

There is a clear medication process in place. Staff receive detailed training and are observed administering medication before they can take the lead in this process. This has meant errors in medication have been reduced.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The current manager has introduced a culture of accountability and transparency. Monitoring systems identify areas for development, which are addressed through training and workshops. This supports continuous improvement in care practice. The manager demonstrates a strong understanding of the home's strengths and areas for development.

The manager's child-centred approach ensures they are advocating for children to receive the support and services they are entitled to. The manager has high standards and is a strong role model, demonstrating good practice and driving forward standards. The manager has created an environment characterised by warmth, inclusion and mutual support.

The home has invested considerable effort in developing therapeutic approaches, individualised care plans and staff development. Staff benefit from a wide range of training opportunities. Targeted training sessions are delivered by the manager to equip staff with the knowledge and understanding needed to support the complex needs of the current children. These provide opportunities for staff to reflect on children's needs and increase their ability to provide individualised care and support.

Staff highly regard the manager and the direct emotional and practical support they receive. Increased support for newer staff during their probation promotes the sharing of learning and skills between team members. Team meetings and supervision create an open forum for discussion and guidance. Staff say that managers nurture their career aspirations. As a result, staff feel valued.

A strength of the manager is working with external agencies. Feedback from professionals is overwhelmingly positive and commends their commitment to the children.

Leaders and managers ensure that safer recruitment processes are robust. This helps to ensure that only those adults who have been assessed as safe to work with children are employed 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: SC419429

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Keys Direct Care Limited

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

Responsible individual: Emma Hemmings

Registered manager: Terri Martin

Inspectors

Simon Hunter, Social Care Inspector
Jibin Vakanil, Social Care Inspector

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