

SC430587

Registered provider: Keys Direct Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a private organisation and provides care for up to four children who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

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

The manager registered with Ofsted in October 2023.

Inspection dates: 4 and 5 November 2025

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 **outstanding**

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

Date of last inspection: 31 July 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
31/07/2024	Full	Good
11/10/2023	Full	Good
29/11/2022	Full	Good
26/10/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children have made positive progress from their starting points. Staff have worked hard to create an environment that helps children settle and benefit from positive emotional warmth. As a result, children have a strong sense of connection and belonging to the home, including those who have moved on, even in cases where these circumstances have been difficult.

Child-centred decision-making has allowed children to have a positive experience moving on from the home. As a result, several children continue to stay in touch with staff and view the home as an important part of their life. One child who recently moved on from the home said, 'Staff were really supportive when I lived in the home. They helped me with my move, and this made me feel much better; they couldn't have done their jobs any better.' This child's social worker said, 'I absolutely attribute how well [name of child] is now doing to the support, dedication, kindness and advocacy that staff were able to provide them.'

Staff provide positive support to children regarding their education. One child has continued attending the same school since moving to the home, which has promoted consistency and helped maintain important relationships with key adults in their life. Another child has recently started face-to-face tutoring following a request from them to switch from online tutoring. The management team has strongly advocated for this child regarding the identification of a permanent school for them.

Children have developed positive relationships with staff, and there is a stable team of staff who support them. Staff recognise their positions as important role models for children, and diversity across the team enables children to benefit from a range of different perspectives. Children seek support from preferred staff in accordance with their wishes.

Staff take pride in engaging children in various social activities, including holidays. Staff create memory books for children to help sustain their memories of their time living in the home and to document shared experiences related to these activities. Photos of children and staff around the home further support this approach, fostering a homely and familial environment.

Children maintain important connections with their birth families, and staff take an active role in supporting family time. Staff understand the importance of children's families continuing to be appropriately involved in their lives. One family member said, 'Staff are always very supportive of [name of child]. They communicate with us and school, and this helps us to know what is going on.'

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

Children are kept safe. Staff demonstrate a good understanding of each child's individual needs, which helps them adapt their approach accordingly. When concerns arise, staff respond appropriately and with confidence. They work well with other agencies to ensure that all children's needs are met and their welfare is promoted.

Staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities and use their intuition to prompt conversations with children about topics that may be affecting their lives. This helps children improve their understanding of difficulties that may be affecting them and, as a result, make better-informed choices.

Children are encouraged to take risks appropriate to their age and level of understanding, and safety plans are used as required. The management team is attuned to the importance of children having opportunities to put the help and support they receive into practice. This promotes a better understanding about the effectiveness of staff interventions and any specific areas of extra support that children may benefit from.

Children's risk assessments have been regularly updated, and appropriate services and support have been identified when children have needed additional help. The management team understands the importance of not overwhelming children with too many 'helping professionals'. Therefore, approaches to supporting children often focus on using skills and knowledge in the staff team. This enhances relationships between staff and children.

Staff encourage children to develop their independence and self-care skills, and children's care plans reflect regular conversations with staff to provide support and advice. Staff proactively carry out a range of targeted work to help children in other areas of their lives, such as mental health, relationships, consent and personal hygiene.

Staff encourage children to reflect and learn from difficult incidents. Staff use natural consequences to help children link their actions with decisions they may have made in the past. For example, one child caused some physical damage to the home and later willingly engaged in some tiling with a staff member, which created an informal opportunity for them to improve the physical appearance of the home.

There is an embedded culture of child-friendly recording, which provides children a transparent account of how staff support them. This enhances the direct work that staff carry out with children by providing first-person narratives about these conversations for them. Children access these conversations in their records, which provides opportunities for them to look back and consider the advice and support they have received.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The management team has created a culture that places children at the forefront of practice. For example, children's progress and experiences of living in the home form

significant parts of staff supervision and team meetings. This deliberate focus creates the foundations for staff to build positive relationships with children and is pivotal to staff maintaining important connections with children when they move on from the home. This post-transition support is particularly well developed.

The management team has an excellent understanding about what is required for children to make progress and advocates for children effectively. Managers use their knowledge and experience to ensure that children's rights and wishes are valued and heard by external professionals.

Managers have raised complaints to placing authorities on behalf of children, and when these issues have not been addressed proactively, they have escalated them to more senior professionals. The members of the management team act with confidence and put children's best interests at the centre of everything they do.

When children are not positively engaging with support provided, managers consistently demonstrate their willingness to consider whether remaining in the home is a barrier for their progress. Children have been included in these conversations in a careful and sensitive manner, reflecting an open and honest approach that is valued by children, staff and external professionals. A social worker said, 'Staff act professionally and with kindness, even in the most difficult of circumstances.'

The management team has a strong desire to learn from placement successes and breakdowns. When children have moved on from the home in a manner that was not part of their immediate care plan, the manager has produced comprehensive evaluative reports to consider each child's individual circumstances, the progress they have made and any areas for future development. Managers are motivated to include any findings and feedback in their future approaches to caring for children.

Staff morale is high, and they are unanimous in their praise of the management team and its positive impact. Proactive recruitment has resulted in a fully staffed workforce, therefore reducing previous reliance on agency staff, which was an area for improvement identified at the last inspection.

All new staff are fully vetted and benefit from a comprehensive induction. Staff continue to undertake relevant training. They receive regular professional supervision and yearly appraisals.

Staff benefit from a consultant therapist who provides direct guidance and expertise to help them reflect on their roles with children and adapt their approaches and strategies to best meet their needs.

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: SC430587

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: David Bartlett

Registered manager: Gareth Jolly

Inspector

Ashley Edwards, Social Care Regulatory Inspector

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