

1277552

Registered provider: Keys Specialist Residential Children's Services Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is registered to provide care for up to two children with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties as a result of past trauma and may have mild learning difficulties.

The home is led by a qualified registered manager who has been in post since September 2018.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021.

Inspection dates: 26 to 27 October 2021

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 good

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

Date of last inspection: 28 January 2020

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
28/01/2020	Full	Good
04/12/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children make good progress in most areas of their lives. This is because staff implement plans that are child centred and meet children's individual needs. Staff ensure that they escalate concerns with partner agencies if there are barriers to children making progress. This means that positive outcomes are achieved for children.

Children have trusted and positive relationships with staff. For example, one child said that they felt listened to by staff and said that this helped them to make positive progress in their chosen career. He stated, 'I would give them a five-star rating.' Another child spoke to staff when they had worries about people sending them abusive messages, and staff took immediate action. As a result, children feel valued and listened to.

Children are supported to achieve in their education. For example, one child is making very good progress and aspires to attend university when he is older. The registered manager has escalated concerns with another child's school to ensure that they receive the appropriate support in their education provision. As a result, children feel that they have adults in their lives who care about their future.

Children have an opportunity to engage in a wide range of activities. Staff ensure that they promote children's interests and explore activities that they can access within the wider community. As a result, children's interests are promoted, and they are able to develop their social skills.

Children's views are central in the running of the home. For example, children have contributed their ideas to the décor of the home and their bedrooms are personalised to their interests. One child has changed the décor in their bedroom a few times and staff have listened to their ideas. This ensures that children feel valued and are able to take ownership of what their home looks like.

Staff support and help children to have positive moves from the home. They listen to children's views, wishes, feelings, and advocate on their behalf. Staff work closely with children and the important people in their lives to ensure that they continue to make good progress even after they have left. This means that children are well prepared when they move on from the home.

Staff support children to have regular visits with their family and friends. For example, staff planned visits for one child whose family live far away. Staff ensure that risk assessments are in place when visits take place to ensure that children get the best out of this family time. This ensures that children maintain positive relationships with the people that are important to them.

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

Staff respond quickly to any emerging risks to children. When children threatened to harm themselves during incidents or have used social media inappropriately, staff have responded immediately by completing visual monitoring and updating risk assessments. As a result, children are kept safe and any risks are addressed appropriately.

Staff have a good understanding of the risks to children and how these should be managed. For example, staff ensure that they complete daily phone checks and log any concerns. Staff have a good understanding of the potential risks of being groomed and exploited on social media platforms and have implemented systems to monitor internet use. This ensures that children are kept safe when online.

Staff take appropriate action when children go missing. Staff follow the appropriate protocol, and a joined-up approach is taken to reduce risks. For example, following one child's missing incident, the care home coordinator from the police visited and a 'team around the child' meeting was held to help reduce some of the risks. This means that all professionals working with children are able to support them to continue to ensure that they are safe.

The registered manager and staff ensure that there is good communication with partner agencies when safeguarding concerns are raised. For example, staff inform the social worker, designated officer and other relevant agencies when allegations are made, or incidents occur in the home. This ensures that children's safety and welfare are regularly reviewed and scrutinised by other agencies.

Children are supported to understand behaviours that could be perceived as bullying. However, there are still incidents that the manager and staff describe as 'sibling rivalry', which could be perceived as bullying behaviours. This approach may result in children harming each other and causing a negative impact on their experiences in the home.

The manager does not consistently ensure that safe recruitment checks are completed for agency staff. Consequently, children could be exposed to staff who are unsuitable to work with children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is suitably qualified and experienced. She is a dedicated manager who knows the home well. She is very child focused and has worked at the home for several years, previously as deputy manager and subsequently as registered manager. This means that the home has had consistency from a leader who knows the children and staff well.

The home is suitably staffed to ensure that the needs of children are met. Most of the staff are qualified. While there have been changes in staff, these positions were

quickly filled by staff from other homes within the organisation. As a result, there was minimal impact from staff changes on children.

Professionals working with the home speak highly of managers and the good joint working arrangements in place. Consequently, children receive consistent care and support.

The registered manager ensures that staff receive regular supervision. This is reflective and practice related. The manager considers the developmental needs of staff and there are clear actions in place to support this. Training for staff is up to date and relevant to the needs of children. This ensures that suitably trained staff, who feel well supported, are working with children.

The registered manager ensures that allegations and complaints from children are appropriately investigated. Following investigations, the registered manager makes sure that children are supported; this has been especially important when staff return to the home. Managers complete restorative meetings before staff return to work and these are solution focused. As a result, children feel that their concerns are taken seriously and feel listened to.

Staff's recordings evidence the everyday lives of children and key-work sessions demonstrate the support that staff provide to the children. However, there are some minor errors in recording, which has led to information being misinterpreted. Children's progression files do not contain up-to-date risk assessments as they are kept in a separate file for staff to read and sign. This could lead to errors if staff do not read the most up-to-date risk assessments. It may also cause confusion for new staff members who do not know the process in the home.

The manager's monitoring and reviewing of practice is not consistent. For example, the manager does not consistently pick up on areas that staff could have done differently when she has oversight of physical interventions or allegations. The debriefs with children lack reflection and do not follow the home's debrief protocol. As a result, areas for development for staff are not consistently picked up on by the manager and children are not consistently supported to understand their behavior.

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, 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
<p>The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on—</p> <p>mutual respect and trust;</p> <p>an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and</p> <p>positive responses to other children and adults.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>encourage each child to take responsibility for the child's behaviour, in accordance with the child's age and understanding;</p> <p>communicate to each child expectations about the child's behaviour and ensure that the child understands those expectations in accordance with the child's age and understanding. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(iii)(v))</p> <p>In particular, when staff undertake debriefs with children, staff should ensure that this is a learning opportunity for children and that staff follow the home's protocol on completing debriefs.</p>	<p>15 December 2021</p>
<p>The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that—</p> <p>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and</p> <p>promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p>	<p>15 December 2021</p>

<p>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))</p> <p>In particular, the registered manager should ensure that there are consistent systems in place to monitor and review practice.</p>	
<p>The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children’s safety.</p> <p>The registered person may only—</p> <p>employ an individual to work at the children’s home; or</p> <p>if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home, if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3).</p> <p>The requirements are that—</p> <p>full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1) (2)(a)(b) (3)(d))</p> <p>In particular, the registered manager should ensure that agency staff checks are undertaken fully and ensure that they are suitable to work with children.</p>	<p>15 December 2021</p>

Recommendations

- The registered manager should ensure that children are supported to understand their behaviours and to develop positive relationships with their peers. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’ page 16, paragraph 3.12)
- The registered manager should ensure that when evaluating incidents, they consider what staff could have done differently to de-escalate the situation. In these circumstances, the manager should discuss this with the worker and support them to gain the skills to enable children to achieve their potential. (‘Guide to children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 52, paragraph 10.5)

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: 1277552

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Keys Specialist Residential Children's Services Ltd

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

Responsible individual: Dale Berry

Registered manager: Samantha Lloyd

Inspectors

Mazviita Makiyi, Social Care Inspector
Debbie Bond, Social Care Inspector

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