

SC063883

Registered provider: Keys Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately run home provides care for up to two children aged between eight and 18 years. It specialises in providing long-term, therapeutic residential care for children with social and emotional difficulties. The manager registered with Ofsted on 17 November 2022.

Inspection dates: 29 and 30 November 2022

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: 25 January 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
25/01/2022	Full	Good
05/11/2019	Full	Good
13/02/2019	Full	Outstanding
26/07/2017	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children enjoy continuity of care from a dedicated and stable team of staff and, if needed, familiar agency staff. Children benefit from good routines and consistent approaches to their care. This has contributed to children's sense of safety and security.

The home is decorated and furnished in a way that is child-centred. Toys, books and games can be found in every room. Children's rooms feel calm and are personalised with their photos of those people who are important to them on display. However, some repairs to the home have taken too long to be resolved. For example, there are damaged tiles in the bathroom, and the garden path is uneven, which is creating a hazard. This detracts from the rest of the home, which is well presented and maintained.

Children are encouraged to take part in activities that are enjoyable and educational. One child has just had their first experience of Brownies. Another child was initially reluctant to participate in any organised activity. However, staff have been persistent in their attempts to motivate the child, who is now excited to be starting horse riding lessons.

Both children have been living at this home for less than six months. At times, they have struggled to live together. However, staff have taken time and effort to get to know the children better by spending individual time with them. Staff are creative and not afraid to try new ideas. Consequently, the children are learning to live in harmony with each other.

Staff approach children's health with sensitivity. They ensure that children have the things they need to minimise the impact of medical needs on their day-to-day lives. Staff work with specialist health professionals to ensure that children's health plans are right for them. Children's dignity is protected.

Education is valued by managers and staff. One child who was permanently excluded from school when they came to live at the home is now in full-time education. The child said that they enjoy going to school and have made friends. Another child who is not yet in full-time education has a timetable of learning activity to keep them engaged. Managers have advocated strongly for this child. As a result, this child now has an identified school.

Positive praise books are used to ensure children can see what has gone well for them each day. However, there is nothing in place that supports children to have positive memories. Children are not helped to remember their experiences in a way that is child-friendly and accessible. This is a missed opportunity to capture fully the enjoyable experiences the children have while living at the home.

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

Children have good relationships with staff who they trust. Staff talk to children to help them understand how to behave. Boundaries are established and maintained, even when children repeatedly test them. Staff are resilient and understand the children's risks and vulnerabilities. This helps to ensure that children are better protected.

Staff are learning how to read the children's behaviours and intervene quickly to avoid any escalation. When incidents do occur, these are carefully evaluated by staff, which informs practice. Staff adapt their responses to the children, and this has contributed to a reduction in incidents at the home.

Allegations are rare and are managed well when they do occur. When a child makes an allegation, staff take immediate steps to safeguard them. Staff are clear about the procedure they need to follow, and they do so. The manager has good communication with the local authority designated officer and makes referrals where appropriate. This helps to ensure that children receive a multi-agency response to any concerns raised.

Children's individual risks are well understood. Risk assessments for individual children are in place and are kept up to date. The quality of risk assessments has improved. This helps to ensure that staff know how to keep children safe.

The use of physical intervention with children is in line with the home's policies and is only used as a last resort. When physical intervention does occur, it is in line with the home's procedures. Restraints are well recorded, and the manager gives good oversight. This ensures restraint practice remains proportionate and safe.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is enthusiastic and creative. She has shown that she has great ambition for the home and the children in her care. She knows the strengths of the home and has identified areas she wishes to develop. The manager has now started to put these plans into place.

The staff team is stable, and staff are happy in their work. Many staff have worked at the home for a number of years. The manager knows the staff well. Staff told the inspector that the manager leads by example and has made a difference. There is clear evidence that staff hold the manager in high regard and feel well supported.

Staff receive good levels of supervision and training. Supervision sessions are regular and help staff to better understand the children and their needs. Practice issues are addressed as they arise and are discussed further in supervision sessions. This helps to ensure that staff have the skills they need to care for children.

When children's plans are not progressing, the manager takes strong action to address this with the local authority. For example, one child had not had a consistent

social worker. The manager was tenacious in how she escalated her concerns with the local authority to ensure that the matter was resolved. This helped to ensure that the child received the support they are entitled to.

Team meetings take place and are well attended. The manager utilises this time to refresh staff's knowledge. For example, staff have recently had a refresher on the physical intervention model of practice. Meetings are also used to reflect on the children and what they need. However, some of the language used to record the meetings is not child-centred. This does not help staff to consider the importance of language used to describe children.

Children's records are kept up to date and reflect their experiences living at the home. However, some records do not identify the author and are not dated. This means that the manager's ability to hold staff to account is reduced.

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 quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who—</p> <p>understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children;</p> <p>use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>ensure that staff—</p> <p>provide to children living in the home the physical necessities they need in order to live there comfortably. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(vii))</p> <p>In particular, the manager must ensure that repairs to the home are completed in a timely manner and that the garden path is made safe.</p>	28 February 2023
<p>The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which—</p> <p>are signed and dated by the author of each entry. (Regulation 36 (1)(c))</p>	28 February 2023

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that children's memories are captured in a way that will help them to have memories of their time living at the home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62 paragraph 14.5)

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: SC063883

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: Joanne Carter

Registered manager: Katie Hurrell

Inspector

Rachel Walker, Social Care Inspector

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