

1164089

Registered provider: Keys Child Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A large children's home provider runs this home. The home cares for up to four children with social and emotional difficulties.

A manager has been in post since September 2022 and has submitted their application to register with Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 November 2023

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: 26 April 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
26/04/2022	Full	Good
10/11/2021	Full	Good
05/02/2020	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
17/09/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

This inspection was brought forward following a whistle-blowing concern being reported to Ofsted. The concerns raised were explored and are included in the inspection judgements.

At the time of this inspection, three children were living at the home. Children experience well-planned and thoughtful moves. Since the last inspection, one child has moved in. One child moved to semi-independent living and one child moved to another home within the same organisation.

Staff understand how trauma may affect children's ability to trust adults. Staff show children that they care by prioritising their time to be with children. Children respond positively to staff's approach, and they seek staff out for security and reassurance. Children are helped to regain their confidence in adults.

Children experience a variety of meaningful activities. Children have been to theme parks, bowling, shopping and trampoline experiences, and they have memberships to a local gym. Staff also help children to learn boxing and kick boxing at home. Children are encouraged to plan their own activities each week. Staff help children to build their confidence and have positive memories.

Staff encourage children with their hobbies and interests. One child enjoys singing to staff and other children. Staff use encouragement and praise, which helps the child to build their confidence and become more creative with their performances. Staff understand the importance of children developing positive self-esteem and self-worth.

Children are making good progress. One child experienced high levels of anxiety in public places. Staff helped the child to overcome these feelings, and they have been to London on the underground and attended a large exhibition. One child is growing their own vegetables and learning how to prepare meals. Staff help children to learn new skills and independence.

Staff understand the importance of children learning. All children are in education and their attendance is good. One child had not been in school for six months, but is now enthusiastic to learn. Children are also awarded recognised qualifications for skills they learn from staff. Staff help children to have positive outcomes.

Relationships between children are closely monitored. When concerns are identified, staff help children to learn about positive relationships and how to interact appropriately. However, while staff appropriately managed a bullying incident, they failed to consider how close children's bedrooms were and if a shared space may contribute to bullying escalating further.

If children make a mistake, staff help them to learn how to make better choices by using consequences. However, consequences are not restorative in their nature. This means that children's opportunities to learn how their behaviour affects others are limited.

Children live in a large and modern home. However, the patio has broken slabs, there are cracks in the internal walls, and one room that children use was notably cold. While this has been recognised by managers and funding approved to make repairs, the loose slabs are trip hazards, and the cracked walls and lack of heat detract from a homely feel. The issue of the broken paving slabs in the garden was raised at the last inspection and is restated.

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

Children said that they feel safe living at the home. Staff understand the vulnerabilities that children face and how to support them. This is because children's plans are detailed. Children are involved in writing their own plans and this helps staff to provide consistent support in ways that children prefer.

When children have left the home without permission, staff have acted without delay to find them. Staff look for children in places that they think they may go, and they call and text children consistently. Staff work with other professionals. When children return, they are welcomed home and asked about their experience. The manager is persistent in requesting that return-home interviews are held.

Staff help children to understand the risks of being on social media and online chat groups. Staff talk to children about the risks of being groomed. They provide children with ways to manage difficult conversations online and the importance of confidentiality. One child has learned to give their phone to staff if they feel at risk. This is noted as significant progress.

Staff are experienced in supporting children who may self-harm. Staff take immediate action to protect children and make referrals to specialist services. This approach means that children experience continual support with their emotional and mental health.

Physical interventions are only used to keep children and staff safe. However, staff do not describe the measure used. In some incidents, staff have failed to recognise that a physical intervention has been used. The manager does not meet with children and staff after these incidents. This means that it is difficult to judge the proportionality of the intervention, for staff to consider alternative methods, and for children to discuss their experience.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is experienced and holds relevant qualifications to manage the home. They have applied to register with Ofsted. An experienced responsible individual and

area manager support the manager. Managers know the children well and have high ambitions for them. Staff said that they felt supported by the managers.

The manager has effective monitoring tools in place to review the quality of care provided. As a result of this oversight, there have been improvements to daily recordings and reporting.

The majority of staff are in their probation period following a large number of staff leaving. However, all staff have moved through safer recruitment processes, received a full induction, completed the organisation's mandatory training, and have prior experience working in health and social care. All staff receive regular supervision. Managers have carefully considered the impact of a new staff team on children's experiences and continue to monitor this.

Staff complete the organisation's mandatory training and are either qualified or working towards the relevant level 3 qualification, according to timescales. The manager has created a staff library where staff can loan books to enhance their knowledge. Staff said that they feel confident because of the training they have received.

Any concerns about staff practice or allegations against staff are investigated without delay. Investigations are thorough, and relevant professionals are notified. However, managers failed to evaluate the risk of one member of staff working in the home when historic concerns were raised. This oversight meant that managers had not fully considered the risks to children living at the home.

The manager has met one recommendation from the last inspection. One requirement has been restated.

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 protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm;</p> <p>that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm;</p> <p>that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(iii)(b)(d))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that risk assessments consider how shared space in the home may contribute to increased risks for children, ensure that any risks that staff may present to children are fully considered, remove broken patio slabs, repair cracks in walls, and ensure that there is adequate heating where children spend time.</p>	22 December 2023
<p>The registered person must ensure that—</p> <p>within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes—</p> <p>a description of the measure and its duration;</p> <p>the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure;</p>	15 December 2023

within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so (“the authorised person”)—

has spoken to the user about the measure; and

has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and

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 (3)(a)(iv)(vii) (b)(i)(iii)(c))

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that any consequences used to address poor behaviour should be restorative in nature, to help children to recognise the impact of their behaviour on themselves, other children, the staff caring for them, and the wider community. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 46, paragraph 9.38)

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: 1164089

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Keys Child Care Limited

Registered provider address: Keys Care Ltd, Second Floor, Maybrook House,
Queensway, Halesowen B63 4AH

Responsible individual: Zoe Tompkins

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Mandy Start, Social Care Inspector
Majella Russell, Social Care Inspector

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