

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 who experience social and emotional difficulties because of past trauma and who may have mild learning difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in July 2023 and is suitably qualified.

At the time of the inspection, two children were living in the home. Both children have lived in the home for several years.

Inspection dates: 8 and 9 October 2024

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **outstanding**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **outstanding**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **outstanding**

The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: 1 August 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
01/08/2023	Full	Good
18/10/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
26/10/2021	Full	Good
28/01/2020	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Both children living in the home were present during the inspection and spoke with the inspectors.

Children receive high-quality care that makes them feel valued and secure. Both children are flourishing and are making significant and sustained progress in all areas of their lives.

The children's bedrooms and the living areas of the home reflect children's individuality, achievements and special interests. Children's photos, toys, certificates and artwork reflecting their hobbies, passions and achievements are on display in the home. The decor, maintenance and organisation of the home suggest that those who live there are important, valued and respected.

The quality of the relationships between the staff and children is exceptional. Staff speak about the children with warmth and enthusiasm. Staff provide a culture of respect, nurture and safety. They demonstrate unwavering commitment to the children. Staff are continually curious about, and reflect on, how they can help children grow in all areas of their development. Children are also incredibly positive about the care that they receive.

Staff support and motivate children to learn. Both children have excellent attendance at school. Staff are ambitious for children and have offered them extensive support to ensure that their educational needs are met. The staff work effectively with education providers and promote children's engagement with school. Staff know how well education providers meet children's needs and act if they are concerned that they do not. For example, the manager challenged the local authority when one child's education, health and care plan was not accurate. As a result, the plan was amended, which has helped the child to have additional support to make further progress with their education. This results in children finding the best educational support for their needs to help them to achieve now and in the future.

Managers and staff make every effort and dedicate an immeasurable amount of time to attain the opinions of the children. Staff carry out high-quality reflective and purposeful work to ensure that each child's voice is heard. Staff sensitively help children to be open and talk about their wishes, feelings and concerns. These opportunities provide valuable life experiences for children to learn how to communicate and listen effectively. Children's views are promoted, and they say they are listened to by the staff who care for them.

The staff spend a lot of time helping children to make memories and have shared experiences that they can cherish and keep forever. When children do well, their achievements are celebrated. This is evident in the home through a vast range of photos, certificates and memory books. This provides children with a valuable record of

their time living in the home which they can take with them when they move on. The staff have also been hugely creative in providing a wide range of activities, holidays and projects.

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

Keeping children safe is seen as supreme importance. The manager has highly effective systems for recording, reporting and monitoring safeguarding concerns. Communication with all professionals is highly effective. The manager shares information with them swiftly to avoid delay and ensure that children are protected from harm. The manager takes guidance from these professionals, and they work together to ensure that children are safe.

Children are safe and said to the inspectors that they feel safe. The strength and consistency of the safe relationships that children have with the staff ensure that children feel secure. Staff are clear about their responsibilities and know how to respond to safeguarding concerns. Comprehensive training, regular supervision and team meetings provide staff with the knowledge and skills they need to inform their practice and safely care for children.

The positive relationships between the staff and the children are a significant protective factor in helping to keep the children safe. As a result, incidents of physical intervention are rare. Staff physically intervene when children become unsettled and show behaviours that place themselves or others at risk of harm. Staff understand the reasons behind the children's behaviour and provide good support to children afterwards. This helps children to move on from the incident. The recording is effective and clear, and reflection and debriefs take place to help the staff to reflect on their practice and explore the triggers for the incidents, including how they could respond differently in the future. The manager provides robust oversight of all incidents to ensure that staff's response is fair and proportionate. Effective management oversight and prompt action to address issues mean that children are treated fairly and stay safe.

Each child has a wealth of documentation about their needs, challenges and potential risks. Staff create comprehensive risk assessments together with the children, who help to determine which strategies staff can use to keep them safe. Staff keep plans under review so that they evolve as the children's needs change. This awareness is embedded in the staff's day-to-day work, which reduces and minimises the risks effectively for children.

Staff engage in conversations with children about risk exceptionally well. Children take part in online courses and conversations where safety is discussed to address identified risks and raise their awareness about topics of concern. This direct work includes topics such as racism, bullying and online safety. This positive work enhances children's knowledge of risk and allows them to take the lead in their learning.

There is a huge focus of positive reinforcement for children around their behaviours. The manager and staff have been creative in their thinking and are constantly exploring new

ways to sustain high-quality care for children. When children receive consequences, these are restorative in nature and in line with the home's ethos. On one occasion, a child was required to pay financial reparation towards a household item they had damaged. However, it is not clear how much money the child had to pay towards this. As a result, it is not clear if this consequence was necessary and proportionate.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The manager is a confident, ambitious and inspirational leader. He leads by example, providing highly effective guidance to the team. An equally conscientious and influential deputy manager supports him. Together, they have formed a formidable management team that is ambitious and has high expectations and aspirations for the home, the children and the staff. This leadership inspires staff to provide exceptional care. Managers have created an open and inclusive culture that places children at the centre of practice.

Managers have excellent relationships with the children. They go above and beyond to spend time with children and are avid advocates for them when needed. They have exceptional knowledge of the children's starting points and what they have accomplished since living in the home. Managers listen and respond to children's views on the home's development and their own goals and progress. They place the children at the front and centre of the home. They strive to provide outstanding outcomes for children and improve the operation of the home. This ethos is shared by a highly motivated and enthusiastic staff team.

The children are cared for by an exceptionally experienced, child-centred and caring staff team. The staff have expertise and are dedicated to the children they care for. There is an established team of staff. This ensures that consistency and continuity of care are maintained.

Leadership, management and staff cohesion are clear strengths of the home and ensure the safety and welfare of children. Strategic reviews of incidents at the home provide constant evaluation of staff practice and highlight children's changing needs. Reflective supervision and focused team meetings are highly effective management tools and address areas for development to ensure effective staff practice. These processes ensure that staff provide care that consistently exceeds good for children.

Managers and staff have extremely effective working relationships with external agencies and schools, to ensure the best possible care, experiences and futures for children. Social workers speak highly of the quality of care provided and the standards of communication maintained by staff. One social worker said, 'The staff within the home have created a lovely environment for the children, they are fierce advocates and so passionate about the work they do to get the desired outcomes for the children.'

Staff are provided with an extensive range of training that informs their practice and meets children's individual and diverse needs. Additionally, the home has sourced further training that focuses on theory-based practice. Staff have also received upskilling

sessions covering topics such as recording and reporting, contextual safeguarding and reflective supervision. The manager takes responsibility for his own learning and development, including keeping up to date with new initiatives and research specific to the children's individual needs. He is creative in his thinking and is constantly looking for new and creative ways to support staff, to sustain the highest quality of care for children. This strengthens understanding of the children's needs and how to support children.

Staff are extremely happy to work in this home and feel supported. The managers are well regarded and are nurturing towards the team. They go above and beyond to support staff inside and outside of the work environment. Additionally, there is a huge focus on recognising the amazing work the staff do through 'employee of the month' awards, vouchers and positive tokens. This means that staff work in an environment where they feel well supported and valued. One staff member said:

'I feel valued for what I do, pushed to achieve the best that I can and know that if I have not done something right then they will challenge this in a professional but caring way. They take great pride in the home and are wholeheartedly invested in our children. They are great role models for us all.'

The remarkable strong leadership of the home and the quality of care create an environment in which staff are proud to work and children are proud to live.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that they have effective oversight to deem that consequences given are necessary and proportionate. ('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: 1277552

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Keys Specialist Residential Children's Services Ltd

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

Responsible individual: Gemma Moore

Registered manager: Ryan Dubois

Inspectors

Marianne Grandfield, Social Care Inspector
Tonia Dubidat, Social Care Inspector

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