

1242216

Registered provider: Bettercare Keys Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home, operated by a private provider, is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to four young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Inspection dates: 31 July to 1 August 2017

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: 8 November 2016

Overall judgement at last inspection: Requires improvement

Enforcement action since last inspection

None

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because:

- Young people make good progress in this home, especially with regards to their behaviour, education and health.

- Young people like living in this home and get on well with the staff.
- The staff team has a good understanding of the needs of the young people and provides a consistent and individualised service. This ensures that each young person's health and well-being is promoted.
- Young people learn how to manage their own behaviour. This helps them to develop socially acceptable behaviour and, therefore, integrate well into society.
- Young people enjoy the activities on offer to them.
- Young people benefit from well-planned and positive contact with family and friends.
- Staff work in partnership with parents. Staff also work closely with external professionals to provide well-planned, consistent care that enables young people to thrive.

The children's home's areas for development:

- Medication only should be kept in the medication cupboard.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
08/11/2016	Full	Requires improvement

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

Recommendations

- Ensure that suitable arrangements to manage, administer and dispose of any medication are made. This specifically refers to ensuring that medication storage cupboards are for medication only. This prevents regular access to the cupboard and allows for more effective tracking if there is an error with medication. ('The guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 35, paragraph 7.15)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Young people make good progress, especially in respect of learning socially acceptable behaviour, improving their health, and in respect of their educational achievement. Young people enjoy living in this home and get on well with the staff. They generally get on well with each other, too. A parent said that this home is the best care home her child has lived in.

Staff are committed to the young people and know them well. They are passionate about providing young people with positive experiences and enabling them to make good progress. They clearly care about the young people and young people know this. Detailed and accurate care planning documents underpin the care provided. Young people fully contribute to these documents, demonstrating that they are consulted about their day-to-day and future care.

Staff work closely with parents to ensure the best outcomes for each young person. A parent said: 'They are very supportive and keep me updated. They are working with me rather than against me. Everyone is doing the best they can.' Young people benefit from staying in contact with their family and friends. Staff facilitate meetings with family as they understand how important these relationships are for young people. A parent said: 'They were brilliant at picking me up from the station when my car wasn't working.'

The physical and emotional health of young people is highly promoted. Young people are encouraged to eat a healthy diet and participate in exercise; for example, they enjoy going climbing and cycling. Young people who smoked when they arrived at the home no longer do so. They do not drink alcohol or take illegal substances. Young people attend all core and routine health appointments. They also have access to mental health services and a therapist from within the organisation. Staff safely manage medication. However, currently things other than medication are stored in the medication cupboard. This means that the cupboard is opened more than is necessary and it would be difficult to track who opened the cupboard in the case of a medication error.

Staff work closely with education professionals to ensure that young people attend and

achieve in their education. From their starting points, young people's attendance at school has greatly improved. One young person has attended a vocational course in addition to his academic studies. He has managed his behaviour well during this course, which was a big achievement for him.

Young people are currently enjoying the school holidays. They are looking forward to a summer camping holiday, although they are struggling to decide where or what they want to do. They are enjoying a range of activities such as relaxing in the home, playing in the pool, crazy golf, climbing, cycling and playing in the local woods. They are also holding a sunflower-growing competition.

Young people benefit from living in a warm and homely environment that is clean and well maintained. They have single, lockable bedrooms that provide a private space. One young person has a hamster that he looks after well. The inspector heard him saying that he must tidy up his room as the hamster had escaped overnight and made a mess! It is commendable for a teenager to be so proud of his room.

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

Staff help young people to stay safe in this home. They and their parents say that they are safe. Staff have a good understanding of child protection procedures and effectively implement them.

Young people learn how to behave positively and in a socially acceptable manner. Staff provide a consistent approach, which means that young people have a good understanding of the rules and boundaries in the home. Incidents of aggressive and destructive behaviour have reduced dramatically due to the approach taken by staff. For example, when a young person displayed dangerous behaviour in the car, staff members stopped him travelling in it until he could demonstrate safe and improved behaviour. In the interim, all his trips out were on public transport or in taxis with two staff members. Due to the consistent approach by staff members, the young person can now travel safely in the car.

The use of physical intervention has reduced over time. This shows that de-escalation techniques and the consistent use of clear rules and boundaries are having a positive impact on young people's behaviour. Staff have a good understanding of young people's triggers to poor behaviour. Staff know what to do to support the young people to move forward positively. Young people are starting to understand how to manage their own behaviour and will now take themselves away from a situation that is upsetting them.

Young people rarely go missing from this home. This is because they have secure and trusting relationships with staff. Staff follow good procedures if young people do go missing. This includes looking for them and calling the police as per each young person's protocol.

Prior to new staff commencing employment, appropriate safety checks are undertaken. This helps to ensure that, as far as can be ascertained, staff are safe and suitable to work with children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is experienced. She is currently completing her level 5 diploma in leadership and management for residential childcare. She provides effective and supportive leadership. She has a clear vision for developing the home and the staff team. She has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the home and has good plans to address identified shortfalls. Requirements and recommendations from the previous inspection have been satisfactorily addressed.

The staff team are passionate and committed to the young people. Although many staff are new to the home, they present as a strong team that is providing good, consistent care for young people. Staff have access to a good training programme and receive good support from the leadership team. Staff also say that they feel well supported by each other. Staff members who do not have a relevant qualification are enrolled onto, or are completing, this.

The views of young people are important to staff. Young people's comments recorded throughout their care plans show their involvement in their own care planning. In response to feedback from a young person regarding how consistently staff were implementing the house rules and boundaries, staff revisited this in a team meeting to improve practice.

Staff work in partnership with other professionals to ensure the best outcomes for young people. A solicitor provided the following feedback to the manager: 'I take this opportunity to express my admiration for you and your staff at the home – your dedication to the children in your care was as inspiring as it is reassuring.'

Managers respond to complaints from young people and neighbours swiftly and effectively to the satisfaction of the complainant.

Monitoring by external visitors provides good challenge and support for the home. The registered manager uses monitoring systems effectively. This ensures that staff provide a high-quality, individual service for young people to enable them to achieve and progress in all aspects of their lives.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people who it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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: 1242216

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Bettercare Keys Ltd

Registered provider address: The Keys Group, Laganwood House, Newforge Lane, Belfast BT9 5NW

Responsible individual: Nicola Simmonds

Registered manager: Holly Robertson

Inspector

Joanne Vyas, social care inspector

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