

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC005204
Inspector	Michelle Bacon
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Keys Childcare Ltd
Registered person address	Laganwood House 44 New Forge Lane Belfast BT9 5NW
Responsible individual	Heather Ann Laffin
Registered manager	Tracey Jane Fayers
Date of last inspection	30/10/2014

Inspection date	03/03/2015
Previous inspection	outstanding
Enforcement action since last inspection	There has been no enforcement action since the last inspection.

This inspection

This home was judged outstanding at the last full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has **sustained effectiveness**.

Since the last full inspection children and young people continue to make progress in many areas of their lives. For example, they continue to experience placement stability, and enjoy a range of activities that promotes their self-esteem and confidence. There is effective partnership working with parents, placing authorities, education, and the in-house psychology team, to ensure children and young people receive the support they need to improve outcomes.

One young person is currently preparing for their move to foster placement. They said they are very excited about this; 'My new foster home is better than this home only because they have a dog!' He also said 'I am looking forward to my candle ceremony when I leave.' The candle ceremony involves everyone who has known the young person during their time at the home, coming together to share memories about them from the day they moved in. This brings closure to the placement and enables the young person to move on positively.

Most children and young people remain settled and contented. However, there has been an increase in the number of incidents relating to one young person. They feel they have outgrown the home and want to move. They have been requesting a move since the last inspection. Consequently, they are frustrated because they feel no-one is listening to them. A new placement has been identified, but there has been a delay in telling them about this because the placing authority wants to be sure this is the right placement.

Children and young people continue to have excellent attendance in school. One young person is making such good progress that a placement at mainstream school has been identified. They are also having extra tuition in maths to help improve their grades. Children and young people also engage in extra-curricular activities. For

example, some of them recently took part in a charity rugby match, which the local rugby team also attended. This ensures that children and young people view their education as an important aspect of their lives.

Since the last inspection there have been a number of physical interventions. While the records demonstrate that these have been to prevent injury to the child and young person or others they do not consistently show that some of the holds have been for the minimum period. For example, on at least three occasions the records show that a young person was held for thirty minutes. Although relationships between children, young people and staff are mostly positive, some staff have struggled to implement positive behaviour management strategies, and at times have required police assistance. Consequently, young people are at risk of being criminalised.

Good behaviour is promoted through positive reinforcement. However, records of sanctions do not demonstrate that these are always fair and reasonable. For example, the main sanction used is the loss of televisions in bedrooms. One young person lost their television the following day after refusing to turn their bedroom light off at bedtime. On a number of occasions another young person lost their television for a week at a time. During this inspection it was identified that of the ten sanctions imposed seven of these have been implemented by the same member of staff. This means that the review of any incidents of challenging behaviour is not robust enough, to identify trends or patterns, to enable staff to reflect and learn to inform future practice.

The home is well maintained and decorated. However, one of the bedrooms upstairs is currently used as a staff sleeping in room but cannot be locked because there is a fire escape in the room; this requires access at all times. Consequently, children and young people can gain access to this room and at times use the fire escape as a means of leaving the home unauthorised. One young person recently went into the room and took items including a lighter from a staff member's handbag because it was not securely locked away. They set fire to some paper and as a result had to be restrained. The fire risk assessment has not been fully reviewed in light of this incident; to ensure the welfare of children and young people is fully promoted.

At the last inspection two recommendations were made to improve practice. Any investigations into allegations or suspicions of harm are handled fairly, quickly, and consistently in a way that provides effective protection for the child and at the same time supports the person who is subject of the allegation. The manager has established good links with the local authority designated officer (LADO) and refers all concerns to them. This ensures that children and young people are fully safeguarded. A recommendation to ensure that entries in records are legible, clearly expressed, non-stigmatising and distinguish as far as possible between fact, opinion and third party information is not fully met. For example, some handwritten records are hard to read, and staff use phrases, such as 'blocked' a young person from leaving a room; or refer to a young person 'doing battle' with a member of staff.

This is not helpful to children or young people accessing their records at a later date and does not give a clearly understandable account of the intervention or incident.

Information about this children's home

This service, operated by a private organisation, provides integrated packages of care, therapy and education for a maximum of six children with reactive attachment difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
30/10/2014	Full	outstanding
13/03/2014	Interim	good progress
07/11/2013	Full	outstanding
07/01/2013	Interim	good progress

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

Statutory Requirements

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person/s meets the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Reg.	Requirement	Due date
17A (2001)	ensure where a measure of restraint is used on a child accommodated in the children's home, the measure of restraint must be proportionate.(Regulation 17A(2)(a))	06/04/2015

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the service should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure sanctions and rewards for behaviour are clear, reasonable and fair and are understood by all staff and children(NMS 3.8)
- ensure the home regularly reviews incidents of challenging behaviour, examines trends or issues emerging from this, to enable staff to reflect

and learn to inform future practice(NMS 3.21)

- ensure the home's approach to care minimises the need for police involvement to deal with challenging behaviour and avoids criminalising children unnecessarily(NMS 3.22)
- ensure the home provides a comfortable and homely environment and is well maintained and decorated. Avoidable hazards are removed as is consistent with a domestic setting. Fire risk assessments are reviewed and updated(NMS 10.3)
- ensure entries in records are legible, clearly expressed, non-stigmatising and distinguish as far as possible between fact, opinion and third party information. (NMS 22.4)

What inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspections we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service and to consider how well it complies with the relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the framework of inspection for children's homes.