

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC020602
Inspector	Pete Hylton
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	New Horizons (Child Care) Limited
Registered person address	The Keys Group, Laganwood House Newforge Lane BELFAST BT9 5NW
Responsible individual	Heather Ann Laffin
Registered manager	Anne Jessica Clent
Date of last inspection	15/12/2014

Inspection date	04/03/2015
Previous inspection	adequate
Enforcement action since last inspection	There has been no enforcement action since the last inspection.

This inspection

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

This home was last inspected in December 2014 and was judged to be adequate. Four requirements were made at this time. The Registered Manager has taken appropriate actions to meet the requirements.

The Registered Manager has ensured that the Statement of Purpose now better reflects the service given to young people in the home. This means that young people, their parents and carers and placing authorities are now clearer about the home's stated aims and services. The Registered Manager has also ensured that staff training has improved. Since the last inspection, staff have been trained in managing self-injurious and sexually harmful behaviours, first aid and refresher training in the home's chosen method of physical intervention. As a result, young people are now cared for by an appropriately trained staff team who are better skilled at meeting the varying needs of young people. This promotes young people's safety and well-being.

There have been improvements to the education of young people since the last inspection. At that time, a lack of educational routine and aspiration was prevalent in the home. The Registered Manager has now ensured that appropriate actions have been taken. Where young people continue to attend educational placements, they do so with success and regularity. As a result, young people make good progress in their academic studies. Where young people are without a school place, the staff team provide opportunities to engage in educational activities. This is further supplemented by the provision of in-house education by a qualified tutor. Where young people refuse to access these services, the staff team liaise with placing authorities to broker access to other provisions. This means that young people live in a home where their education is actively promoted and they are offered opportunities to further their academic progress.

An unsettled period has resulted in further damage being caused to the home. Since the last inspection, the Registered Manager has ensured that all identified repairs have taken place. As a result, the requirement made at that time has been appropriately met. Clear plans are in place to ensure that recently damaged areas of the home are swiftly repaired. As a result, there have been improvements in how the organisation takes remedial action where damage occurs. There are some areas of the home that could potentially pose a risk to young people; for example, a window is cracked and potentially could cause a hazard. A requirement has been made to ensure that all parts of the home are free from avoidable hazards.

Young people's files, on the whole, contain all required information. Not all young people's files contain a pathway plan. Risk assessment is clear and ensures that staff know how to manage any vulnerabilities that young people may experience. Excellent relationships with the local police underpin this practice. A local police officer commented that 'the staff team ensure that the police are fully aware of the risks to young people.' As a result, there is consistency with agencies working with young people. Regular communication with placing services ensures that where concerns arise, they are swiftly responded to and resolved.

The Registered Manager is experienced and has a good awareness of the home's strengths and weaknesses. The home provides a service for young people with complex emotional and behavioural needs. The staff team are skilled in managing challenging behaviours and work tirelessly to ensure that young people receive good care. Agency staff are used very rarely and the staff team cover any vacant shifts. This helps young people to form appropriate attachments with a stable staff team. There is a lack of male staff working in the home. A recommendation has been made to ensure that the staff team includes staff of both genders whenever possible.

As a result of this inspection, two recommendations and one requirement has been made.

Information about this children's home

This children's home provides care and accommodation for up to five young people of either gender who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The home is owned by a private company.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
15/12/2014	Full	adequate
19/03/2014	Interim	good progress
14/08/2013	Full	good
05/02/2013	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
23 (2001)	ensure that all parts of the home to which children have access are so far as reasonably practicable free from hazards to their health or safety. (Regulation 23 (a))	24/04/2015

Recommendations

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

- ensure that the home contributes to the development of each child's care plan, including the pathway plan for "eligible" care leavers and works collaboratively with the young person's social worker or personal adviser in implementing the plan (NMS 12.2)

- ensure that the staff group who are in day-to-day contact with children includes staff of both genders whenever possible. (NMS 17.10)

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.