

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC063997
Inspector	Philip Cass
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	BetterCare Keys Limited
Registered person address	Laganwood House 44 Newforge Lane Belfast BT9 5NW
Responsible individual	Heather Ann Laffin
Registered manager	Amanda Jayne Williams
Date of last inspection	16/07/2014

Inspection date	15/01/2015
Previous inspection	adequate
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

This inspection

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

The home continues to ensure that young people are safe and adequately cared for. Safeguarding procedures are well understood by staff and minimise the risk of abuse. Young people say that the home is 'ok'. They say that staff are supportive and helpful. Young people admitted recently compare the home favourably to previous placements Social workers report that they 'couldn't have asked for more' from the home.

Young people continue to make some progress towards the objectives of their care plans. Following the last inspection, the home enjoyed a period of stability. The home became a calmer and more nurturing environment. However this improvement was not sustained. The well-being and achievement of some young people continues to be limited by risk taking behaviour, anti-social behaviour, and placement breakdown.

One recommendation was made at the previous inspection. This has been addressed. Staff no longer carry out restraint unless they are trained appropriately. This reduces the risk of injury.

Leaders and managers routinely monitor the quality of care and professional practice in the home. Managers understand how the home needs to improve in order to deliver a consistently good standard of care. The independent visitor states that the manager is committed to making the home better. Although the home's development plan is not currently a useful tool because it is out of date, steps have been taken that are likely to generate stronger outcomes for young people. For example, staff have been provided with additional training. In addition, performance management systems are now used more robustly. However, these efforts have not

yet generated meaningful improvements.

Managers have also made efforts to strengthen the staff team by recruiting experienced staff with a proven track record in residential care. These efforts were not immediately successful but are ongoing. The home continues to rely heavily on agency staff to ensure sufficient staffing numbers. Some staff continue to be unable to consistently enforce boundaries. In recent weeks recruitment efforts have been more effective. While this has not yet generated obvious improvements, managers are optimistic that they now employ sufficiently skilled and experienced staff.

Young people continue to make some educational progress. Managers have made stronger efforts to support school attendance and achievement. They have developed relationships with a number of specialist education providers. This means that a wider range of options are available to young people who do not cope in mainstream education settings. However, attendance remains sporadic for many young people. Most still do not have access to full time programmes of education. This limits their ability to gain qualifications and achieve strong outcomes.

Information about this children's home

This privately owned children's home provides accommodation for three young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties. The provider organisation operates nationally, providing a range of care services for children and young people.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
16/07/2014	Full	adequate
04/06/2014	Full	inadequate
27/02/2014	Interim	inadequate progress
07/08/2013	Full	good

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

Recommendations

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

- ensure that the registered person has a written development plan for the future of the home (NMS 15.2)

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.