

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC066469
Inspector	Monica Hargreaves
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	Joanne Louise Simpson
Date of last inspection	24/07/2014

Inspection date	27/01/2015
Previous inspection	good
Enforcement action since last inspection	There has been no enforcement action since the last inspection.

This inspection

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

Overall young people continue to make steady progress in key areas of their lives. Some young people have benefitted from long-term settled placements and have been able to form positive nurturing relationships with staff. They attend school very regularly and consequently have been able to make very good progress in education. They have plans in place for college and future employment.

Other young people who have arrived at the home more recently, are not yet settled in education and struggle to attend regularly. Staff value the importance of education and they are keen for young people to achieve. They work hard to ensure that young people have a suitable education placement and they encourage young people to attend. However, the work they do is not always successful and some young people continue to be reluctant to engage. This has an impact on their ability to make progress. It also has an impact on their daily routines which are disrupted by the lack of focus.

Young people are supported to develop a healthy lifestyle. They are given healthy food and are encouraged to exercise. They are registered with primary health services and are encouraged to attend for routine checks. Most young people engage well with this and therefore their health is monitored. Young people also have access to psychological services when a need is identified. This ensures that there is oversight of their emotional well-being. Some young people do not smoke or use drugs. However staff are aware that other young people compromise their health by smoking and using illegal substances at times. Staff have been trained in drugs awareness and they work closely with substance misuse agencies to encourage young people to stop.

Staff work hard to ensure that young people are safe. They have a good

understanding of young people's vulnerabilities and develop clear risk assessment and management plans to support their care of young people. They work effectively with other agencies such as the police, local child sexual exploitation team and social workers to protect young people. Most young people do not go missing from the home. However, there are good arrangements in place to protect those young people who do. Staff work hard to engage with young people to lessen the likelihood that they will go missing. If this happens, they follow the young person's individual risk management plan and they liaise closely with the police and social workers to ensure the young person's safe return. They also arrange multi-agency planning meetings to discuss ongoing care and risk management plans. At this inspection, no young people were assessed as being at risk of sexual exploitation.

Staff help young people to learn to behave in a socially acceptable way. They manage challenging behaviour effectively and as a result, they rarely need to intervene physically with young people. There have been no restraints in the home for a year.

Admissions to the home are planned and well managed to ensure that young people are supported at a time of transition. Generally young people leave the home in a planned way. Where an emergency situation has made this impossible, staff have continued to work with agencies to ensure that young people are supported. Young people who have left keep in touch with the home. This indicates that they value the relationships that they had with staff.

In the temporary absence of the registered manager, the home has been managed by the deputy manager. She is suitably qualified and experienced and provides good leadership to the staff team. Staff report that they feel they are well supported in their work. Regular supervision contributes to the manager's monitoring of the quality of care and enables staff to discuss their work with young people and their own training needs. Staff training is regularly updated to ensure that they maintain their knowledge and skills.

The care and progress of young people is closely monitored by managers in the home and by the independent visitor. Reports of the monitoring activity are sent to Ofsted as required by the regulations. These confirm that there is regular consultation with young people. However, the manager's reports do not evidence how this consultation has been used to drive improvements. The manager takes action on any issue identified during inspections or through the independent monitoring process in order to improve the service that is given to young people.

Two recommendations made at the last inspection are met. There has been some redecoration to parts of the home and carpets have been cleaned. At this inspection, the home was found to be well maintained. The manager has ensured that pathway plans are in place for all 'eligible' young people. This helps young people to identify the support they need when they leave care and their future placement.

Two recommendations are made at this inspection. These relate to young people's education and an aspect of the manager's monitoring reports.

Information about this children's home

This service is a young people's home run by a company. It provides three medium to long-term placements for young people who have emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
24/07/2014	Full	good
31/01/2014	Interim	good progress
07/11/2013	Full	good
12/11/2012	Interim	satisfactory progress

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 young people are supported to attend school, college or alternative provision regularly (NMS 8.3)
- ensure that young people are regularly involved in contributing to monitoring the operation of the home. (NMS 21.1)

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.