

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	26/08/2015
Unique reference number	SC370910
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	BetterCare Keys Limited
Registered person address	Laganwood House, 44 Newforge Lane, Belfast, BT9 5NW

Responsible individual	Kelly Looker
Registered manager	Zora Jankovic
Inspector	Jane Partridge

Inspection date	26/08/2015
Previous inspection judgement	Outstanding
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.	
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good

SC370910

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- The overall quality of care for young people is good, they have individualised packages of care that meet their needs.
- The home values and supports family contact. They establish and maintain good working relationships with the young person's family.
- Young people have access to a range of activities that meet and support their interests and talents.
- The wider professional team and the young people's families believe the home has significantly contributed to young people's progress and improved outcomes.
- The home has provided young people with much needed placement stability, which has enabled a wider assessment of need to be undertaken.
- The home works very well with the wider professional team to safeguard young people in their care.
- A consistent staff team enables young people to form positive, trusting relationships.
- The home has a committed staff group who feel positive about working there and the changes they make to children's lives.
- The home does not have a robust impact assessment that considers the needs of any potential new residents against the individual complex needs of those young people already in placement.
- The Statement of Purpose and the Children's Guide include factually incorrect information.
- Some staff have not received mandatory core training or training that enhances their knowledge and understanding of the specific experiences of young people in placement.

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

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 (England) Regulations 2015 and the *Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards*. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The registered person must keep the statement of purpose under review and where appropriate, revise it. (Regulation 16 (3) (a))	05/10/2015
7: The children's views, wishes and feelings standard In order to meet the children's views, wishes and feelings standard the registered person must: 2 (c) keep the children's guide under review and seek children's comments before revising the document.	16/11/2015
13: The leadership and management standard In order to meet the leadership and management standard the registered person must ensure that: 2 (c) staff have the skills to meet the needs of each child, in particular undertaking training to gain specific knowledge to meet the individual needs of young people in placement.	19/10/2015

Recommendations

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

- Ensure the home only accepts placements for children where they have fully considered the impact that the placement will have on the existing group of children. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 56, paragraph 11.4)

Full report

Information about this children's home

This children's home is owned by a private company. It is registered to offer care and accommodation for three young people with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties between the ages of 11 and 17 years.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/02/2015	CH - Interim	Sustained Effectiveness
05/11/2014	CH - Full	Outstanding
29/01/2014	CH - Interim	Satisfactory Progress
26/06/2013	CH - Full	Outstanding

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
All the young people have experienced a number of disrupted placements and placement moves prior to moving into the home. The home has afforded these young people time to settle, establish a set of routines and to engage positively in education, social relationships and activities. One social worker reported: 'It has been difficult to get a sense of the young person because of all the placement moves. Staff here have been able to stabilise her and assess her needs.' This settled time has afforded the professional team the opportunity to begin to assess the young people's holistic, short and long-term needs. From entering the home, young people make good progress. A robust placement plan identifies and creates individualised packages of care that meet their needs. Staff take time to get to know the young people. Regular key worker sessions, daily interaction and house meetings offer ample opportunity for young people's voices to be heard and for relationships between the staff and young people to be formed. The staff provide consistent boundaries that offer a safe, predictable environment for young people to live and participate in. For some young people engaging in school has been a very positive experience. Some young people have attained 100% attendance. Staff support them to progress and celebrate their achievements. For other young people, attending an educational establishment has been too traumatic, so an alternative educational provision is in place. The home works closely with the schools, tutors and local authorities to ensure young people receive the appropriate education support to maximise their learning and future opportunities. The team support young people with family contact. They have an open and inclusive relationship where they facilitate direct contact in line with the placement plan. This ensures family ties are sustained, strengthened and promotes the young person's wellbeing. Whilst young people chose not to speak with me, I did observe good interaction between them and the staff. Although a busy household, where young people were attending individual activities, health appointments or family contact, staff were attentive to their needs. Staff are knowledgeable and organised in their interactions with the young people and their execution of the tasks. Some young people display attention-seeking behaviour; however, staff remain caring and attuned to the young people whilst setting appropriate boundaries. This interaction and management offers a safe, caring environment where young people trust the	

staff to work in their best interests.

Young people access a range of activities that meet and support their talents and interests both inside and outside the home. All young people placed are becoming accomplished horse riders. Staff have sourced and secured specific activities for young people to engage in, such as volunteering at a city zoo and teaching younger children how to handle the animals. Young people are able to identify an activity of their choice and work towards this through the home's incentive scheme. These activities build young people's self-esteem, self-belief and offer opportunities to experience success.

The young people placed in the home can exhibit highly complex behaviours. When considering a new resident, the service's compatibility assessment does not include a robust impact assessment to consider the needs of those already in placement alongside the young person moving in. To ensure all young people placed have the best opportunities to flourish and reach their potential, careful matching is essential.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
Parents and professionals feel very positive about the safety and well-being of young people whilst they reside at the home. Family members visiting the home reported that the home feels safe and secure and that they have seen a positive change in their child for the first time. One parent reported that staff have assisted their child to gain self-control, where out of control behaviour was previously a frequent occurrence. The home operates a positive reinforcement behaviour management model where young people's positive behaviour is rewarded by working towards chosen activities. Staff provide a safe environment for young people and through positive relationships and consistent management they help young people to gain control and self-regulate. For some young people self-harming was a particular feature in their behaviour prior to living in the home. However, from the start of placement this behaviour quickly diminishes in severity and frequency or stops altogether. Young people are safer as harm is reduced and good mental health prevails. The organisation offers staff the opportunity to meet regularly with a therapist who helps them consider the meaning to the behaviours displayed by young people. This better understanding helps staff to effectively meet the presenting needs of young people and promotes their welfare.	

Most young people do not go missing from this home even when this was a feature of past behaviour. However, the home provides robust, effective, well-co-ordinated responses in accordance with policy and procedure should a young person go missing.

The home has forged good links with many local agencies and resources such as drug and alcohol services, child sexual exploitation services, police and health. They access these as appropriate to meet the needs of young people placed.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
The manager has worked for the organisation for the past six years. She became a senior care worker, then the deputy manager and finally becoming the Registered Manager for the home in June 2015. She is currently undertaking the appropriate management and leadership qualification for the post, expecting completion by April 2016. Since the last inspection, the home has experienced a period of instability where staff changes had a negative effect on the residents and all experienced a turbulent living environment. The manager has now rectified this. The retention of experienced staff and the recruitment of new staff has created a full permanent team, the manager also commissions a small number of consistent agency staff. This staff team know the young people and offer a dependable, reliable and stable home environment where young people are at the centre of the work. Staff coming into the service are subject to robust recruitment and vetting procedures to ensure that only suitable people are working with the young people in the home. Staff speak very highly about the leadership qualities of the manager, the changes within the home and the positive changes demonstrated in the young people's behaviour and achievements. One of the home's strengths is how well staff work as part of the professional team. All young people in placement are placed at a distance from their families. A close working relationship with local agencies, the wider professional team and family members is pivotal to meet the individual needs of young people. Social workers report that the staff are excellent communicators, keeping them regularly informed of young people's activities, incidents and progress. Parents reported that they are welcomed to the home for contact and that there is regular and frequent telephone contact with staff. The home has worked to source and commission an independent assessment of a young person when usual routes of	

assessment were not available. This collaborative and proactive working style ensures all views are considered and action taken to appropriately meet individual needs.

Some young people in placement have struggled to accept their heritage and culture, which has led to negative or denied aspects of their identity. Some staff have worked with young people to positively celebrate difference and improve their self-image. One social worker commented on seeing a lot of positive progress with how young people view themselves. There is a shortfall in the staff training, as some members of staff have not completed the core equality and diversity training. Additionally, staff do not all have training they need in order to manage specific behaviours and needs relevant to the young people currently placed.

The Statement of Purpose and children's guide includes factually incorrect information. This shortfall requires a revision and update of this documentation.

During the unsettled months, the physical environment of the home suffered some damage. Whilst some reparation work has been undertaken, ongoing work is required to bring the home up to a high standard and make it a more comfortable living environment for the young people.

What the inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

An **outstanding** children's home provides highly effective services that contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help and protection and care. Their progress exceeds expectations and is sustained over time.

A **good** children's home provides effective services that help, protect and care for children and young people and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

In a children's home that **requires improvement**, there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. The welfare of looked after children is safeguarded and promoted. Minimum requirements are in place, however, the children's home is not yet delivering good protection, help and care for children and young people.

A children's home that is **inadequate** is providing services where there are widespread or serious failures that create or leave children and young people being harmed or at risk of harm or result in children looked after not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people living in the children's home. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference adults make to the lives of children and young people. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with children, young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care given to children and young people. Wherever possible, they talked to children, 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.

This 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 Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the *Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards*.

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