

Children's homes - interim inspection

Inspection date	15/03/2016
Unique reference number	SC370949
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	Angela McKnight
Registered manager	Michelle Bingham
Inspector	Ashley Hinson

Inspection date	15/03/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Good
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection This home was judged Good at the full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has Declined in effectiveness. The home has made limited progress in relation to the issues identified at the last inspection. There remain issues with the quality of records held on file about the young people. Some key documents contain inaccuracies that appear to have arisen out of a practice of cutting and pasting. This includes information about other children in young people's health plans and contradictory information regarding missing incidents. As a result, some records are not fit for purpose. They do not offer clarity for staff who rely on them for guidance. Internal quality assurance processes have not picked up these issues. One young person has moved on from the home since the last inspection. The interim manager described this as a planned move, with the young person making the transition to a semi-independent placement. One young person has moved into the home since the last inspection. The manager completed an impact risk assessment prior to the decision to accept the young person. The young person has settled well and is beginning to access educational support. She has regular key work sessions with staff. One young person has a history of going missing. Since arriving at the home she has had few missing or absent incidents. She has a missing from care risk assessment; this is not clear enough. It does not consider risks associated with the nearby road. For example, there is no reference to what staff should do if the young person goes missing whilst it is dark outside. This is an unlit road with no path and a speed limit of 40 miles per hour. The separate road risk assessment recognises that the road poses a significant risk, particularly in relation to young people leaving the site. However, this needs to be stronger and clearer to effectively mitigate the identified risks. For example, there is reference to the gate between the drive and the road. This is ambiguous but could imply that staff should keep the gate on the driveway closed. Irrespective of the intent, this is not happening. The interim manager confirmed that the staff do not close the gate in practice and nor are they expected to do so. In addition, there is no record of staff discussing the identified risks with the young people. This means staff have limited knowledge of young people's understanding of the risks. Current practice does not	

protect the young people as far as reasonably practicable from identified and predictable risks.

There have been very few incidents where physical intervention has been necessary. The staff support young people to manage their behaviour through building relationships. There have been incidents of self-harm. One young person's self-harm risk assessment was not on file. A version was found on the computer system but this was a confused chronology of incidents rather than a clear and considered assessment of risk and identification of the measures to control the risks. In addition, there was no clear overview on file of the psychological support currently in place or previously offered to the young person. Consequently, the records do not sufficiently contribute to managing the risks associated with self-harm.

There have been two complaints since the last inspection. The supporting records requirement improve. They do not consistently capture the actions that managers take in response. For example, in one incident a young person had withdrawn a complaint but there is no detail of any action taken to discuss the incident with the staff involved. This does not ensure that managers have a good overview of and reflection on incidents.

A notification that should have been promptly submitted to Ofsted was not sent for over three weeks. An independent monitoring visit identified the issue and managers subsequently submitted the notification. The delay in notifying serious incidents impacts on Ofsted's ability to effectively monitor the service.

Manager's internal monitoring has failed to pick up some of the issues identified in this inspection. The report lacks evaluation. For example, the report refers to supervisions not occurring, without any context, evaluation or action to address this. In addition, the report does not include the views of parents, staff or professionals. As such, their views do not inform the review of the care.

Two of the young people continue to attend education. Attendance is good. The newest resident is receiving tutoring in the home whilst her social worker identifies a school placement. She was engaging well with the tutor during the inspection.

External professionals speak positively about the service. Managers link with specialist substance misuse services. They have also established links with agencies who undertake return interviews when young people go missing. Associated professionals say that the staff are welcoming and, as a result, have facilitated their involvement with the young people.

Information about this children's home

This children's home is owned by a large private organisation and provides long-term placements on behalf of local authorities. The home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to three young people who may have emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10/12/2015	Full	Good
29/01/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
13/08/2014	Full	Good
24/10/2013	Interim	Satisfactory progress

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
12: The protection of children standard In order to meet the protection of children standard the registered provider must: (2) (a) (i) ensure that staff assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child. This is with particular regard to assessing the risks associated with going missing and self-harm.	11/04/2016
12: The protection of children standard In order to meet the protection of children standard the registered provider must: (2) (a) (ii) ensure that staff help each child to understand how to keep safe. This is with particular regard to ensuring young people are aware of the risks associated with the location of the home.	11/04/2016
12: The protection of children standard In order to meet the protection of children standard the registered provider must: (2) (b) ensure that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. This is with particular regard to ensuring that the risks associated with the road are adequately assessed and responded to and are reflected in associated risk assessments.	11/04/2016
The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child are kept up to date and are signed and dated by the author of each entry. This is with	11/04/2016

particular regard to ensuring the information recorded is accurate and of a sufficient quality. (Regulation 36 (1) (a) (b) (c))	
The registered person must ensure that a record is made of any complaint, the action taken in response, and the outcome of any investigation. This is with particular regard to fully following up any complaint made by a young person. (Regulation 39 (3))	11/04/2016

Recommendations

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

- Ensure that all serious events are notified, within 24 hours, to the appropriate people. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 63 paragraph 14.13)
- Ensure that reviews to monitor the quality of care are evaluative, include actions to address shortfalls and include the views of key people involved in the young people's care, including but not limited to parents and professionals. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 64 paragraph 15.2)

What the inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspection 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

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 focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

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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