

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC370956
Inspector	Judith Longden
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	Peter Andre Gale
Date of last inspection	19/08/2014

Inspection date	21/01/2015
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 **declined in effectiveness**.

This home has declined in effectiveness as it has failed to address two of the six requirements raised at the previous inspection. These are in relation to the staffing of the home and the supervision of the Registered Manager. Two further requirements are made as a result of this inspection. These relate to the delay in forwarding notifications to Ofsted and the lack of detail in recording the effectiveness of consequences.

The home continues to use large numbers of temporary staff, either from an agency or staff deployed from other local homes. This means young people face constant changes in personnel, they do not always know who is in the home and there is little opportunity for them to form appropriate relationships with staff. Although recruitment is underway the home is not sufficiently staffed with permanent personnel who know the home and the needs of the young people.

At the last inspection a requirement was made to ensure all staff, including the Registered Manager, receive appropriate training and supervision. The Registered Manager has ensured all staff have received formal supervision. Additional training courses have been also been delivered and a number of staff have benefitted from annual appraisals of their performance. However, the Registered Manager has only received one formal supervision since the last inspection. This means he is not sufficiently supported and the requirement is not met.

There have been a number of significant events relating to the welfare of young people in the home. These have been notified to all agencies, including Ofsted. However, the providers' process for submission of these notification reports causes a delay in receipt by the regulator. This means any review and response is unnecessarily delayed and may impact on the safety and welfare of young people.

Young people sometimes display challenging behaviour but staff are able to manage this effectively and encourage more positive interactions. Staff are trained in intervention strategies and restraint is rarely used. Consequences are in place to reward positive behaviour and sanction negative behaviour. There is very little evaluation of the effectiveness of these which means it is not clear if young people learn the consequences of their actions.

The home has met the other four requirements made at the last inspection. The home has a protocol in place that details the work staff do in order to prevent young people from being absent or missing. This includes use of key work sessions, discussion in house meetings and a positive relationship with the local police. This has resulted in a reduction in the number of occasions when young people have been missing from the home. Action has been taken to improve the quality of risk assessments and incident records now provide clarity regarding the staff involved. The home maintains records of the agency staff used and this includes all the required recruitment information. This ensures the adults young people have contact with are safely recruited. The manager has improved the detail within the three monthly review reports. This includes feedback from young people and provides a more evaluative review of the care and welfare of young people in the home.

Since the last inspection, outcomes for young people have varied. Currently some young people are not attending full-time education but they are engaging in home tuition. They are achieving to a reasonable standard but as a social worker commented, 'they miss out on the social aspect of education.' Young people who do regularly attend college are making progress toward achieving their educational potential.

Some young people make progress in relation to their health issues. One young person has managed to stop smoking and incidents of self-harm have decreased. Staff and young people identify health concerns and address these through key work sessions and information and support from other agencies. This means young people are supported to reduce the risks associated with their health. However, some young people lack motivation and confidence at present, resulting in poor self-esteem and a lack of attention to their appearance. One young person said this was compounded by a lack of interest from some staff saying, 'I feel they have given up on us.'

Contact arrangements have improved and some young people are enjoying contact for the first time since moving here. Young people and their families work with staff to develop strategies to ensure young people are safe and this enables more frequent contact with their family and friends.

There is some monitoring of the progress and behaviours of young people and how the home has contributed to this progress. The manager has reviewed and updated the home's development plan to identify improvements and areas for development.

Staff and young people have been involved in this process which enables them to feel part of the future plans for the home. An independent visitor attends the home regularly, as required, to monitor the quality of care, welfare, safety and progress of young people. Shortfalls identified during these visits are addressed by the manager and this demonstrates a desire to improve the service for young people.

Information about this children's home

The home is privately owned and is registered to provide care for a maximum of four young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
19/08/2014	Full	adequate
05/03/2014	Full	good
09/01/2014	Full	inadequate
13/11/2013	Interim	inadequate 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
17B (2001)	ensure that within 24 hours of the use of any measure of control, restraint or discipline in a children's home, a written record is made in a volume kept for the purpose which shall include the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure (Regulation 17B(3)(f))	15/02/2015
25 (2001)	ensure that the employment of any persons on a temporary basis at the children's home will not prevent children from receiving such continuity of care as is reasonable to meet their needs (Regulation 25(2))	01/03/2015
27 (2001)	ensure that all persons employed by him receive appropriate training, supervision and appraisal. This is in relation to the supervision of the Registered Manager (Regulation 27(4)(a)) *	15/02/2015
30	ensure that if, in relation to a children's home, any	15/02/2015

(2001)	of the events listed in column 1 of the table in Schedule 5 takes place, the registered person shall without delay notify the persons indicated in respect of the event in column 2 of the table. (Regulation 30 (1))	
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*These requirements are subject to a compliance notice

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.