

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	03/11/2015
Unique reference number	SC374268
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	Nicola Simmonds
Registered manager	Christine Matthews-Harvey
Inspector	Julia Wright

Inspection date	03/11/2015
Previous inspection judgement	Sustained effectiveness
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	Outstanding

SC374268

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Young people make good progress in all areas of their development. They are cared for by a motivated and committed staff team who provide good quality care.
- Young people are well protected as robust safeguarding practice is in place.
- Partnership working is very strong and effective. Young people benefit as staff communicate well with other agencies and families.
- Education is prioritised and young people make progress.
- Young people develop positive relationships with staff. They know that staff care about them and value them.
- Young people's diverse needs are supported and promoted.
- Recruitment and retention of staff is good. Young people have consistent care.
- Young people enjoy a good quality of life. They participate in a variety of activities in the community.
- Young people are involved in their care planning and in the running of the home where possible.
- The registered manager is an experienced and knowledgeable manager who inspires a culture of achievement with young people and staff.
- There is one shortfall. This relates to the home requiring some refurbishment.

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
6: The quality and purpose of care standard In order to meet the quality and purpose of care standard, the registered provider must ensure that children receive care from staff who - (2)(c) ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to: – (i) meet the needs of each child.	04/01/2016

Full report

Information about this children's home

This home offers medium to long term care for a maximum of three young people who have emotional and behavioural difficulties. The home is operated by a large national provider of children's residential care.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
27/03/2015	CH - Interim	Sustained effectiveness
17/12/2014	CH - Full	Good
18/03/2014	CH - Interim	Satisfactory progress
06/06/2013	CH - Full	Adequate

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	good
Young people live in a nurturing and empowering environment. On young person said, 'It is good here. The staff help me and things are better'. Young people make progress in all aspects of their care and development since living at the home. They develop positive relationships with staff and learn to trust adults caring for them. This includes, feeling listened to and involved in decisions relating to their lives. All young people attend full time education. This is very positive progress for some who have missed long periods of education. Excellent communication between home and school means that young people are supported when they return home if difficulties have arisen during the day. Young people's educational progress is prioritised and learning opportunities maximised. Young people have a good quality day to day life. They are relaxed and comfortable in the company of staff. Their lives are enriched by a variety of activities in the community including pool, fishing, theme parks, sport and meals out. Activities are individualised and responsive to their likes and dislikes. Staff work with young people to maximise their opportunities and enhance the quality of their lives. Good memories are forged, and records kept so that young people can reflect on events in the future. Young people integrate into the community and learn valuable social skills. All young people enjoy good health and attend regular routine health appointments with their GP and dentist. In addition, any specialist health provision, such as those with child and adolescent mental health professionals are identified and staff support young people to attend, maximising good emotional and psychological health. Young people learn strategies to self-regulate their emotions and behaviour. For example, one young person is able to go to a quiet place to compose himself if he is upset or anxious thereby avoiding incidents. Consequently, there are fewer incidents and the atmosphere is calmer for all. A social worker commented, 'he has really grown in maturity since living there'. Given their ages and stage of development, young people learn appropriate self-care and independence tasks, such as looking after their rooms, laundry and cooking skills. They develop confidence and self-esteem as their skills grow. Where	

transition plans are in place, staff liaise with other agencies to effectively plan and prepare young people for changes ahead. Young people are better prepared for changes including semi-independent living in the future.

Where possible, young people's friends are welcomed to the home and staff support them to attend contact with family in the community. This helps young people to retain connections with important people in their lives and in enhancing their understanding of their identities.

Some areas of the home require improvement. This includes repairs to a shower and young people having all the furniture they need in their bedrooms.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
Young people are kept safe by robust safeguarding practice. Staff are knowledgeable about their routines, care planning and risk assessments. Staff receive regular updated training about safeguarding practice and consequently, young people live in a safe and secure environment. There have been no incidents of young people missing from care since the last inspection. Where young people are absent without staff authority, they are supported to understand the risks and dangers posed and encouraged to make different choices to improve their safety. This includes receiving support through one to one sessions with their key workers, young people's meetings and staff having effective links with professionals. Placement plans and individual risk assessments identify risks associated with young people. They are protected as staff are familiar with and understand these and the strategies in place to manage risks including challenging behaviour. Young people know that staff talk to them, each other and other professionals to ensure that they are supported in a consistent way. For example, communication between home and school is robust. School and home keep each other informed about positives and challenges in the school day. Young people are supported as adults are informed about their progress, and can respond appropriately. Young people remain safe as staff identify triggers of behavioural escalation. Young people comment, 'We have boundaries we know about, and that is a good thing'. There has been a marked decrease in incidents and physical interventions since the last inspection. Young people learn to self-regulate their behaviour, promoting self-esteem and safety for all. Where physical intervention is used, records are completed promptly. Young people are spoken to after the event and	

their views are recorded. Young people progress as they are supported to understand why an intervention was necessary and how to avoid this in the future.

The home has a culture of promoting positive behaviour. Rewards and incentives are available for young people for various achievements. This reinforces a positive atmosphere in the home for the benefit of all.

Young people's safety is promoted through the appropriate vetting of staff. There are effective and safe recruitment practices in place meaning that young people are protected from adults who may wish to harm them. Young people are familiar with the local police community support officer who visits occasionally. This allows young people to enhance their understanding of citizenship and community safety and the role of the police.

Young people benefit from living in a home which has a safe and secure internal environment. Regular checks ensure that the equipment works well and poses no risks to young people. Fire drills are regularly completed and fire equipment serviced to ensure that it functions properly. All staff and young people are conversant with the fire drills and the need for evacuations from time to time to maintain vigilance and safety.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
The registered manager has been in post since 2012. She is an experienced manager and has a level 5 diploma in leadership and management. The registered manager has an exceptional commitment to promoting positive outcomes for young people and providing high quality care. She provides very strong leadership, and promotes an ethos of nurturing individual care for each young person at the home. The registered manager has forged excellent relationships with other professionals and they are clear about the support the home provides. Staff prepare detailed reports for reviews and monthly reports to Social Workers. A professional commented, 'The manager is very, very good. She is always on top of things, and she runs a real family home for the young people'. Another said, 'Nothing is too much trouble. We are always kept in the loop. Communication is excellent'. Young people say, 'She has made a big difference here'. As a result of this collaborative approach, there is coordinated support in place to meet young people's needs. The registered manager is constantly proactive in ensuring young people have the resources and help they need to improve their progress and overall development.	

For example, she liaises effectively with child and adolescent mental health services. This has ensured young people are helped and supported with emotional care and advice.

Young people's records are very well organised and maintained. The registered manager is thorough and ensures that systems are in place to address any gaps in records and that these are sought from relevant parties. Consequently, young people's needs are met as staff have all the relevant information they require. Young people's risk assessments and placement plans are regularly reviewed and audited by the registered manager ensuring changing patterns of behaviour, for example, are reflected in behavioural strategies.

Staff are well trained and supported. They receive regular and effective supervision which allows them to reflect on their skills and abilities and identifies training needs. The registered manager ensures that all staff receive core training and this is regularly refreshed. Additional training is in place reflecting the needs of current or future young people living at the home, including understanding gang culture, child sexual exploitation and areas relating to health and disability needs of young people. Consequently, young people are supported by knowledgeable staff who understand them.

The registered manager knows the strengths and areas of development of the service. Areas of development include improving physical areas of the home, improving recording and enhancing staff training. The home is well resourced and structured to provide stability and consistency for young people. Robust and effective systems are in place to monitor and audit written information and day to day practice. The registered manager identifies patterns and trends in the home through evaluating young people's progress. Discussion at staff meetings contributes towards realistic development plans and ensures staff involvement and commitment. Consultation with young people means that their voices are central and they play an important role in working with staff to develop their home further.

The home is operating in line with its statement of purpose. This allows young people, their families and professionals to have a good understanding of the care they receive. An associated young people's guide is accessible and provides young people with relevant and important information about the home and how to contact others if they need to.

There were no requirements or recommendations made at the last inspection.

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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