

Children's homes - interim inspection

Inspection date	14/03/2016
Unique reference number	SC374268
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	Nicola Simmonds
Registered manager	Christine Matthews-Harvey
Inspector	Julia Wright

Inspection date	14/03/2016
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 sustained effectiveness. At the last inspection in November 2015, Ofsted judged the home to be good. One requirement was made concerning a shower area and young people having adequate furnishings in their rooms. This requirement has been addressed and those areas improved for the benefit of young people. All young people continue to make progress as a result of living at the home. One young person has left for a planned move to semi-independent living. Another said that they have been welcomed to the home, that staff are helpful and that there is always someone to talk to. Staff work well together to make and sustain positive relationships with young people in their care. Young people benefit as they learn to trust adults caring for them and invest in their lives at the home. All young people remain in education, and are encouraged to reach their potential as they continue to learn and progress. Young people have aspirations and positive plans for their future and staff support and encourage these, enabling young people to focus their skills and abilities on an achievable goal. Independence skills continue to be promoted for all young people, assisting their transition towards young adulthood. Young people develop in maturity and confidence, they learn to cook, take responsibility for their rooms, and complete other day to day chores with help from staff. They learn necessary skills to equip them for the rigours of adult life. Young people's safety remains top priority. The registered manager and staff tackle young people's unauthorised absences robustly. Young people who continue to absent themselves from the home are actively followed and close liaison with the police and other professionals promotes and reinforces their safety. The registered manager calls multi agency meetings where she is concerned about individual young people. This enables professionals to devise effective strategies to promote safety and ensures that the placement continues to effectively meet needs.	

Whilst the number of incidents in the home has increased since the last inspection, reflecting changing dynamics in the household, the number of physical interventions remains low. Staff know each young person well, and can identify triggers that may result in a heightening of behaviour. Staff divert and deescalate situations skilfully, resulting in a calm environment for all. An incentive scheme also helps young people understand the boundaries of the home, and encourages self-regulation and positive behaviour.

Partnership working between staff, professionals and young people at the home continues to be a considerable strength. Young people's views and opinions are incorporated into plans and risk assessments. They participate in meetings with staff and shape various aspects of the running of the home. Young people say that they are confident that staff listen and take account of their views. Young people are supported to enjoy activities in the home and in the community. An emphasis is placed on each young person having a good quality of life during their life at the home.

Close liaison with other professionals means that young people receive services and support when needed. Any deficits in provision are swiftly challenged by staff ensuring that young people receive all the help and support they need.

The registered manager has taken steps to improve the overall look of the home with the addition of new sofas and other furnishings. Some areas of the home need attention, specifically the exterior of the house which has damaged paintwork. In addition, a number of fence panels have blown down and these detract from the otherwise positive presentation of the home and garden.

The highly effective registered manager continues to lead a committed and motivated staff team. She effectively monitors the quality of care and positive outcomes experienced by young people and continues to develop the service for the benefit of young people in her care.

Information about this children's home

The 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
03/11/2015	CH - Full	Good
27/03/2015	CH - Interim	Sustained effectiveness
17/12/2014	CH - Full	Good
18/03/2014	CH - Interim	Satisfactory progress

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

Recommendations

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

- Ensure the home provides a clean environment for young people, in particular maintain the high standards of physical cleanliness and decoration throughout the home and in the garden, including the exterior paintwork at the back of the home, and replacement fence panels. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 14, paragraph 3.3)

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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