

Children's homes – Interim inspection

Inspection date	22/02/2017
Unique reference number	SC374268
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Bettercare Keys Ltd
Registered provider address	The Keys Group, Laganwood House, 44 Newforge Lane, Belfast BT9 5NW

Responsible individual	Nicola Simmonds
Registered manager	Post Vacant
Inspector	Julia Wright

Inspection date	22/02/2017
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 judges that it has sustained effectiveness.	
At the last inspection, one requirement was made regarding the physical environment in the home. This requirement is partially met. The exterior paintwork has been repainted and a sofa has been replaced. However, some areas still require attention to ensure that young people have a clean, comfortable and homely environment in which to live. These areas include the kitchen, which still has damaged units and looks unsightly. The majority of the walls need repainting throughout the house, as general wear and tear means that the decoration looks tired. The flooring needs replacing as it is stained in places. The utility room sink and work surfaces are also damaged. The interim manager has completed a refurbishment plan, and this is due to start this week. Young people are involved in choosing colours and contributing ideas to improve the overall look of the home to make it an inviting, comfortable place to live. Since the last inspection, there have been a number of changes at the home. The registered manager has left and an interim manager is now in post. New staff have been employed and are undertaking their induction. Two young people have left the home; one has gone home to their parent and the other young person has moved to another home within the company. One new young person has moved into the home. One young person continues to go to college and is supported by staff to attend regularly and complete assignments. This support is helping him to progress to his chosen career. The second young person is not yet in school as he has recently moved in, but staff are proactive in liaising with professionals to identify a suitable provision. Staff remain committed to helping young people develop positive memories about their time spent living at the home. Staff work with young people to choose activities and visits to places of interest. These include trips to the gym, cinema, walks, shopping and days out. One young person said, 'Staff have helped me settle in and keep me busy!' Staff continue to help young people develop age-appropriate self-care skills including cooking, budgeting and household management. Staff continue to incentivise and coax young people in their commitment to learning these skills.	

Physical intervention incidents are rare and there have been no incidents when physical intervention has been necessary since the last inspection. Staff are motivated and skilled in de-escalation techniques and this is helping young people to recognise and manage their feelings appropriately.

Partnership working remains good, with managers and staff liaising regularly with social workers, families, schools and other professionals. Not all information required by regulation is on the young people's files. Specifically, one file lacks a young person's pathway plan necessary to help staff understand his current and future needs as he moves towards adulthood. The new interim manager has implemented a new protocol to escalate matters when information is not provided.

Young people continue to participate in regular meetings with staff and their views are regularly sought in these meetings, through key work meetings and in daily dialogue. This ensures that young people feel involved in the home's organisation, and they know that adults take note of their views and opinions. However, complaints made by young people are not always fully recorded. Staff do not always ensure that young people's feedback about the resolution to complaints they make is noted. Consequently, young people do not know that their complaint was fully investigated or resolved to their satisfaction. In addition, the recording of young people's savings is not always up to date. This means that young people may be confused about the amount of money they have managed to save over previous months.

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/or behavioural difficulties. A large national provider of children's homes operates the service.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
03/08/2016	Full	Good
14/03/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
03/11/2015	Full	Good
27/03/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

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 within 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 person must ensure that (c) the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to— (i) meet the needs of each child. In particular, attention is needed in the kitchen area, young people's bathroom, decorating and flooring throughout the home.	28/04/2017
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, in particular a copy of the young person's pathway plan. (Regulation 36(1)(a))	31/03/2017

Recommendations

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

- Ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies on record keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording, with particular reference to the completion of complaints records. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)
- Ensure that all children's case records are kept up to date, in particular records of young people's savings. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.3)

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 that 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'.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It inspects services for children looked after and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates at: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2017