

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	19/01/2016
Unique reference number	SC063883
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	Christine Bird
Registered manager	Mumtaz Sodha
Inspector	Debbie Foster

Inspection date	19/01/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Improved 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

SC063883

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Young people are kept safe and have significantly improved their attendance and attainment in education.
- Young people are listened to and respected.
- Young people greatly benefit from the emphasis on the promotion of their emotional health and wellbeing.
- Young people have clear boundaries and routines which they follow.
- Staff quickly build positive and strong relationships with young people.
- Staff believe in young people and are ambitious for them. This enables young people to have aspirations for their future.
- Staff develop good skills and knowledge through the manager's support, guidance and training opportunities.
- Clear and effective management is provided within a very supportive culture. This provides young people with a safe, nurturing and secure environment in which to live.

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):

- The registered person should actively seek independent scrutiny of the home and make best use of information from independent and internal monitoring to ensure continuous improvement. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 55, paragraph 10.24) In particular, review the petty cash and other allowances to ensure all reasonable expenditure can be facilitated. Taking into account the number of young people, their individual needs, and the location of the home to amenities they access.

Full report

Information about this children's home

This children's home is operated by a private company. It provides long-term care and accommodation for up to three young people who experience emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
16/01/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness
30/07/2014	Full	Good
20/11/2013	Interim	Satisfactory progress
14/05/2013	Full	Adequate

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	good
<p>Young people thrive as a result of the strong and trusting relationships established by staff. A young person said, 'The best thing about living here is the staff; they care about us. I get on with all of them.' Professionals also commented that this is a strength of the service. These trusting and positive links enable staff to provide the care and support that young people need.</p> <p>Young people from diverse cultures celebrate religious events and enjoy foods from their country of origin. A young person said, 'I get a weekly additional allowance and go to a specialist grocers to buy food that I had when I lived in Hungary. This is good.' As a result, young people's identity and cultural needs are embraced and supported.</p> <p>Young people frequently see and speak with their families. Staff work supportively to build and maintain relationships and networks with all families. Young people who live a long distance from their families use skype, this allows them to maintain face to face contact. This makes a big difference to them, being able to see their relative as well as speak to them. Regular communication helps young people maintain links with those people who are important to them and impacts positively on their outcomes.</p> <p>Staff place great importance on the health and wellbeing of young people and huge significance is given to supporting their emotional and psychological wellbeing. They work in partnership enabling young people to benefit from the strong links and use of psychological support services. Staff demonstrate a knowledge and understanding of young people's past experiences and how this impacts on how they behave and respond to situations. From the advice given by specialists, staff implement strategies to support and develop young people's emotional resilience. Young people attend all routine and specialist health appointments. They take part in key work sessions addressing the dangers and health risks from smoking and taking drugs. A young person said proudly, 'I do not take drugs now.' Consequently, young people's health and wellbeing has improved greatly from their starting points.</p> <p>Young people's education attendance has increased considerably from the time of their admission. A young person said, 'I did not go to school often before I came to live here. My attendance is now 86 per cent.' The independent reviewing officer corroborates the account confirming the young person is on track academically. Staff recognise the importance of learning. They give good support and encourage</p>	

young people's attendance. They communicate regularly with education tutors, attend parent evenings and meetings to strengthen the support young people receive to undertake their studies. This ensures young people make good educational progress.

Young people's independence skills are developed and built upon. Routine daily life in the home encourages and supports them to develop life skills. Young people said that they enjoy cooking meals and bake regularly. They undertake chores around the home, which includes cleaning their bedrooms, doing laundry and they also learn how to budget. Young people are proud of how capable they are in looking after themselves. This will be of great benefit to them as young adults.

Young people enjoy the weekly leisure and social activities that they take part in. One young person said, 'I have started horse riding and roller blading, I enjoy them a lot,' and another said, 'I love going to the cinema and going shopping.' However, the service is based in a rural setting so accessing facilities and activities costs more, as this requires additional travel. Young people feel the limited funds allocated for activities limits their choices and also prevents them from being able to purchase any snacks or drinks. The provider has not increased the allocated allowance for several years. This impacts on young people's extension of positive social experiences.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
<p>Staff have exceptionally good insight into the risks and vulnerabilities of each young person. Alongside this, they have a good understanding of the safeguards and strategies used to protect and keep them safe. Young people with a history of going missing and/or at risk of child sexual exploitation have become significantly safer. This is as a result of the detailed safety work staff have undertaken with them since their admission. Young people have a clear understanding of the dangers that they can be in when going missing.</p> <p>Staff promote positive behaviour, reinforced through praise and reward. They ensure young people have clear routines, which support their wellbeing, safety and security. Staff adopt a calm, low key approach with young people and speak to them respectfully. Young people respond positively. A young person said, 'Staff are fair, they listen to us and respect us, we respect them. If we don't follow the rules there are consequences given but these are fair and it does not happen very often.' Physical intervention and sanctions are rare occurrences, which are appropriate and proportionate to young people's behaviour. Young people's behaviour is generally very good. They respond to positive reinforcement and</p>	

staff's application of safe and secure boundaries. This supports them to manage their emotional responses in a more appropriate and acceptable way.

Young people said, 'There is no bullying in the home.' They are confident that staff will intervene straight away if needed. They are clear on how to make a complaint and make full use of the complaints procedure. Complaints are investigated promptly with immediate action taken to address any arising concerns. Young people are satisfied with the outcome. This confirms that young people's views are listened to and taken seriously.

Staff undertake fire, health and safety checks and audits routinely. The home is clean, well-maintained, furnished and equipped to a good standard throughout. It provides young people with a safe and secure environment in which to live. A young person said, 'We have a nice home to live in and I love my bedroom. My bedroom is not very big but it is cosy.'

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
<p>The registered manager has been in post since 2013 and holds a Level 4 qualification in management. She has over 19 years' experience working with children and young people in residential services.</p> <p>Young people benefit immensely from being cared for within a nurturing environment where they feel valued and respected. The ethos and culture of the home disseminates from the manager. Staff build trusting relationships with young people where they instil belief in them that they can make positive changes in their lives. This promotes their self-confidence and enables young people to have ambition to achieve.</p> <p>Young people are looked after by staff with a wealth of experience and skills. The majority hold the level three Diploma or equivalent in caring for children and young people. Their development is further enhanced with good training opportunities to update and refresh their knowledge of child protection, first aid, behaviour management and food hygiene. In addition, staff receive more specialist training relating to the specific needs of young people. These include, child sexual exploitation, foetal alcohol syndrome disorder and drugs awareness. This provides staff with an abundance of knowledge and skills to undertake their work with young people.</p> <p>Staff have excellent support from managers and colleagues which enables them to look after young people cohesively. This is achieved by the high levels of support</p>	

that they receive through formal and informal supervisions, weekly staff meetings and daily handovers and discussions. A staff member said, 'We have great support from the manager and work well together as a team. We have first-rate communication with each other, young people and professionals.' As a result, young people continually receive good and consistent care.

Staff place great importance on working collaboratively with professionals. All comment that there are excellent relationships working in full partnership to support young people in the very best way possible. Staff advocate strongly for young people. Professionals said, 'We speak with staff every day, They attend all meetings and respond to emails,' and 'Staff communication is excellent. They are good at meeting the needs of young people with very complex needs and attachment disorders. They are always fully prepared for meetings and reports provided are honest and insightful. I am very impressed with the manager and staff.' This cohesive approach ensures young people receive consistent and good care from all those caring and supporting them.

Monitoring of the service is thorough. The manager tracks the progress of young people to ensure that their goals are achieved and maps trends, patterns of care to identify areas for improvement. These include matters which relate to the health, safety and wellbeing of young people and requirements of the Children's Homes Regulations. Areas found to need improvement are promptly addressed. This ensures that the quality of care is maintained to a very good standard.

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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