

1260700

Registered provider: Brythan House Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

Clovelly House is a privately owned children's home. The home provides care for up to four children who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. There is a registered school on the same grounds. Children can receive education from this school if this is assessed as suitable to meet their needs.

The manager has been registered since the home opened in 2017.

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

We last visited this setting on 13 October 2020 to carry out an assurance visit. The report is published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection dates: 9 to 10 June 2021

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **inadequate**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **inadequate**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **inadequate**

There are serious and/or widespread failures that mean children and young people are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded and/or the care and experiences of children and young people are poor and they are not making progress.

Date of last inspection: 18 November 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: Declined in effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection:

At the interim inspection, which took place on 18 November 2019, two compliance notices were set. These compliance notices were set to address serious shortfalls in the protection of children (regulation 12) and in leadership and management (regulation 13). At the time of this inspection, serious child protection concerns were being investigated in consultation with appropriate safeguarding authorities.

A further monitoring visit was carried out on 17 December 2019 where it was deemed that leaders and managers had taken appropriate steps to address the concerns.

An assurance visit was carried out on 13 and 14 October 2020. No serious or widespread concerns were noted at this visit.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
18/11/2019	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
03/07/2019	Full	Good
22/11/2018	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
19/04/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

A significant shortfall in safeguarding practice at the home means that the judgment from this inspection is inadequate. Concerns raised about the conduct of staff are not responded to in a timely manner. This means that staff and/or children cannot be assured that their concerns are being taken seriously or that they will be safeguarded. Opportunities to address concerns early are overlooked. Processes designed to safeguard children and staff are not followed. Concerns about safeguarding practices and procedures have been identified at previous inspections.

The way that key information is managed in the home is poor, and there is a lack of management oversight and accountability. In the registered manager's absence, neither the responsible individual nor other staff could access important documents. There was real confusion about how information is stored and how to access it. These documents included complaint records. Consequently, a complaint made by a parent was not addressed adequately. The complainant remains unhappy. The responsible individual had not previously considered the need to access documents.

Some care planning and risk assessments are not up to date. This is confusing for staff and could lead to inappropriate or unsafe decisions being made in respect of the children's care.

Despite these shortfalls, children do make good progress in many aspects of their care. They have formed positive relationships with some staff members. The children have good routines and are encouraged to pursue their talents and interests. They are supported to become independent and develop age-appropriate self-care skills. Children have opportunities to see the people who are important to them.

Children are making progress with their education and they have aspirations for the future. There is a school on site which some of the children attend. One child is attending college and has completed a course enabling her to enrol in further education.

Children are in good health generally. Some children are taking medication to help with anxiety or sleep issues. Staff have worked with health professionals effectively to reduce levels of medication where appropriate. Medication is stored safely and securely. To ensure that it is administered correctly to each child, a recommendation has been made to ensure that medication boxes can be quickly identified.

There is a child's bedroom adjacent to the living area downstairs. To avoid disturbing her in the evenings, the other children do not have access to their lounge area after 8.30pm. This restricts the time they can have for shared leisure activities with the staff and each other.

The children do engage in good-quality direct work with staff, and this often contributes to their own care planning. However, there is little evidence of children's views shaping the development of the home more broadly.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: inadequate

There are serious shortfalls in the way that concerns about staff are responded to and managed. These shortfalls mean that children may be at risk of harm, and their welfare not prioritised or safeguarded.

Leaders and managers do not deal with concerns and complaints effectively. Allegations and complaints from children and parents have not been acted on. For example, a serious allegation made by a child was not taken seriously, nor was the child formally responded to. This lack of responsiveness undermines trust and makes children, and sometimes staff, feel unsafe. The child's concerns were not properly considered. There is a lack of capacity in senior leadership to demonstrate professional curiosity and take timely and effective steps to address concerns as they emerge. There was no communication with outside agencies, such as the designated officer, or with Ofsted. This undermines the ability of relevant authorities to investigate and take any necessary action in relation to safeguarding issues.

Some of the children's individual risk assessments are of poor quality. While the risks are identified in these documents, the information recorded does not always reflect the nature and the level of risk accurately. There is a lack of detail about the strategies to mitigate those risks. One child is identified as being at risk of self-harm, but the risk management plan is poor and does not support staff to respond dynamically. Staff have not received specific training about managing risks associated with the use of ligatures.

Risks in the community are not addressed. An example of this is a child who walks along a dangerous road into the local village. The risk management plan for this activity is not thorough enough.

Where there are helpful risk assessments, staff are not always signing and dating records, leaving it unclear about who has seen the information and when. This is confusing and could leave children at risk if all staff are not aware of this important information.

There are hazards in the home, including a faulty light fitting and light bulbs without shades. This could lead to children sustaining injuries.

Vetting procedures help to protect children from being cared for by unsuitable adults. However, the verification process could be more thorough. Currently, the verification of staff references process is poor.

Staff promote positive behaviour. There is minimal use of restraint as staff use de-escalation techniques to good effect based on their knowledge of the child. Where

there has been a restraint, it has been used appropriately to prevent a child from causing significant harm to themselves and/or others. Staff record restraint practice well.

There are no incidents of children going missing from the home. One child, who had gone missing numerous times from previous placements, has not gone missing for several months.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

The leadership and management of this home is weak. The registered manager has been away from work for some months. This has exposed problems in how the home is run, including the quality and accessibility of information held at the home and the quality of senior management oversight. For example, information about complaints was not accessible to anyone, including inspectors, during the inspection.

The home is currently being managed by the deputy manager, with oversight from the responsible individual. The deputy manager has willingly taken on more responsibilities. However, her role is not clearly defined, and she has not received clear direction from the responsible individual. This has led to uncertainty about the decisions the deputy manager can make within the home.

There is instability in the management team. Some staff have raised concerns, but they do not feel confident about using whistleblowing procedures to report them. The responsible individual has been aware of staff concerns for some time but did not robustly address their concerns until recently. Staff described feeling anxious and fearful. Unfortunately, some children are aware of the dynamics within the home and have expressed their concerns about the staff.

Allegations and complaints about staff are poorly managed. Opportunities to respond to people raising concerns and to take action at an early stage are not picked up on. Despite previous safeguarding concerns relating to a member of staff, senior managers are not open-minded to the possibility of further incidents. This creates anxiety for the person raising concerns. It also contributes to a culture in the home which is potentially unsafe and possibly coercive.

Leaders and managers do not provide the right supportive environment for staff. This impacts on the quality of care provided. Supervision for most staff takes place regularly, but it is not particularly effective as some staff have felt unable to raise their concerns in this forum. A deputy manager who left the home prior to the inspection made reference in his exit interview that he had not had adequate supervision.

Leaders and managers are ambitious for children and the responsible individual has vision in delivering a high-quality wrap-around provision. Children do make progress in many areas, but senior leaders do not have the requisite skills to manage risks to children. Senior leaders have not learned lessons from previous safeguarding incidents, despite training and upskilling the workforce.

Senior leaders have been ineffective in prioritising, challenging and making improvements. For example, safeguarding procedures have not been updated to ensure safe practice in relation to managing concerns raised about staff conduct.

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to meet 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
The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(d)) This specifically relates to the need for managers and staff to assess the environment and remove any items that pose a risk to children.	30 June 2021
The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies.	1 August 2021

that the effectiveness of the home's child protection policies is monitored regularly.
(Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(v)(vi)(vii)(e))

* The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that—

helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and

promotes their welfare

In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—

lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose;

ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child;

understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home;

demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on—

feedback on the experiences of children, including complaints received; and

use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1) (2)(a)(c)(f)(g)(ii)(h))

This specifically relates to the need for the provider to consider what additional training and support the responsible individual needs to improve their awareness and response to allegations and complaints about staff conduct.

That suitable systems are in place to monitor how the home is being run and the care provided.

That there is an appropriate system to record complaints. This must include responses and outcomes to complaints.

That the home's child protection policies are fit for purpose and clearly outline the process for managing allegations against staff, and whistleblowing.

1 August 2021

That children's risk assessments are accessible, give staff clear direction and strategies to mitigate risks, and that staff are trained to meet children's identified needs.	
Subject to paragraph (6) the registered person must establish a procedure for considering complaints made by or on behalf of children. The registered person must ensure that a record is made of any complaint, the action taken in response, and the outcome of any investigation. The registered person must ensure that no child is subject to any reprisal for making a complaint or representation. (Regulation 39 (1)(3)(4))	1 August 2021
A responsible individual must— have the capacity, experience and skills to supervise the management of the home, or the homes, in respect of which the responsible individual is nominated. (Regulation 26 (7)(b))	1 August 2021

* These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that children are able to access all shared areas of their home unless there are specific reasons why this would not meet a child's needs. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.10)
- The registered person should ensure that prescribed medicines are only administered to the individual for whom they are prescribed. Medicines must be administered in line with a medically approved protocol. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 35, paragraph 7.15)
- The registered person should ensure that all children's case records (regulation 36) must be kept up to date and stored securely whilst they remain in the home. Case records must be kept up to date and signed and dated by the author of each entry. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.3)
- The registered person should have systems in place so that all staff, including the manager, receive supervision of their practice from an appropriately qualified and experienced professional, which allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children assigned to their care. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people, using the 'Social care common inspection framework'. This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service, how it meets the core functions of the service as set out in legislation, 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'.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 1260700

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Brythan House Limited

Registered provider address: 2 Merus Court, Meridian Business Park, Leicester
LE19 1RJ

Responsible individual: Jennifer Collighan

Registered manager: Fiona Muddle

Inspectors

Laura Walker, Social Care Inspector
Joanne Vyas, Social Care Inspector

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