

1260700

Registered provider: Brythan House Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home provides care and accommodation for up to three children and young people up to the age of 18 years. The home accepts children and young people on a planned basis. The children and young people accommodated at the home may have previously experienced emotional and/or behavioural issues. There is a registered school on site that young people can attend. There is a registered manager who has been registered since the home opened in October 2017.

Inspection dates: 19 to 20 April 2018

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: not applicable, as this is the home's first inspection

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

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 registered person must compile in relation to the children's home a statement ("the statement of purpose") which covers the matters listed in Schedule 1. (Regulation 16(1)) This is with reference to the statement of purpose detailing the range of needs of the children for whom it is intended that the children's home is to provide care and accommodation.	24/05/2018
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The registered person may only-employ an individual to work at the home, if full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32(1)(2)(a)(3)(d)) This is specifically in relation to a staff member who started their induction without a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, and without a risk assessment setting out that there would be no unsupervised access to children or young people.	24/05/2018

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the service should take account of the following recommendations:

- Ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies on record keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)
- When a child returns to the home after being missing from care or away from the home without permission, the responsible local authority must provide an opportunity for children to have an independent return home interview. Homes should take account of information provided by such interviews when assessing risks and putting arrangements in place to protect each child. ('Guide to the children's homes

regulations including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.30)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

This home was registered in October 2017. There was a period of instability in January 2018 when young people's experiences were not consistently good. This period was short-lived and related to poor staff performance. The new and enthusiastic staff team has already made a positive difference to young people. Young people now receive excellent support from staff, particularly in relation to their emotional well-being and their safety.

Admission processes are positive. One young person illustrated this point by telling the inspector: 'When I first came, they (the staff) knew how to handle the situation. Help is specific to me.'

Staff have extensive knowledge about young people's needs. They consider how young people might be feeling and are 'one step ahead' with support. For example, when family issues are causing young people anxiety, they consider what they can do to minimise young people's stress and worry, and plan accordingly.

The home's own recently registered school provides education. Joint working between the school staff and home staff ensures that there is a well-rounded and consistent approach to young people. Staff work very well with education professionals to help to achieve the best outcomes for young people. When young people struggle to engage, education professionals report that staff do everything that they can to encourage young people, and staff give young people a consistent message about the importance of education.

The house is very pleasant and homely. It reflects the rural nature of the local area. Some areas in the garden are unfinished. For example, the steps to the left of the front door are crumbling and an outdoor pond requires attention. There are plans to make sure that these areas are improved in the near future.

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

Young people are safe, and their safety is always a priority.

Incidents of self-harming behaviour decrease as young people's confidence increases. Young people start to feel better about themselves due to the high-quality support that they receive from staff. One social worker talked about staff being kind and 'responsive to self-harm issues'. Staff help young people to manage their feelings and to get through difficult situations. Young people are helped to develop coping strategies and to talk about their emotional well-being so that they are less likely to engage in self-harming behaviour.

When young people go missing, there is a very effective and proactive response from staff. Clear strategies enable staff to act quickly if it does happen. Staff actively look for young people and work with relevant agencies to make sure that young people return safely as soon as possible. The registered manager does not routinely check to make sure that each child's local authority has organised a return home interview. This means that she cannot take into account any information gathered and use this to update risk assessments.

Staff practice has not been consistently good, culminating in a difficult period in January 2018. However, safeguarding procedures have been used effectively to protect young people's welfare. The new staff are very aware of their responsibilities in safeguarding young people. They were observed to be having lively, professional discussions about how young people should be helped with their safety issues. These discussions help to strengthen good safeguarding practice.

The staff recruitment procedure is usually adhered to. These checks ensure that young people are not exposed to staff who might be unsuitable. However, one new member of staff started their induction at the home without their Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check being received. The manager is clear that this member of staff did not have unsupervised access to young people, but this is not clearly recorded in the home's records. Additionally, a risk assessment was not undertaken to make sure that all aspects of young people's safety had been considered until the clear check was received.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home has had a difficult start. The registered manager has worked tirelessly to make sure that she has addressed the early difficulties, and she achieved this in a short space of time. Leadership in the home is strong.

Staffing difficulties caused a period of instability for young people. However, the newly established staff team is more capable and experienced. Staff have the capacity and enthusiasm needed to ensure that young people have good experiences and placement stability.

The registered manager knows the home extremely well. She is completely focused on the young people and has been fully involved in their care. She supports the staff very effectively as they become more familiar with the young people's needs. She leads the staff team with passion and drive. She is an excellent practitioner and models good practice. Staff know that her expectations are high. They share her enthusiasm to make a positive difference to young people's lives. The team is going from strength to strength.

The registered manager has learned lessons from the difficult period in January 2018. She is overseeing all practice herself, and plans to continue to do this until her team is more experienced and staff have settled into their roles.

The home's statement of purpose is very general. It does not specifically set out the

type of young people whom the home can accept. This makes it more difficult for parents and local authorities to understand how young people will be helped with their specific needs. Also, the statement of purpose does not accurately set out the staffing arrangements. This could present a confusing picture to other professionals, parents and Ofsted.

Some documentation is not clear. For example, incorrect dates were seen on recruitment records. The way in which a new member of staff's induction was managed was not fully described in their induction records, and a behavioural incident was not fully recorded, leaving the reader confused. A recommendation has been made to address this.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and 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 whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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

Inspector

Caroline Brailsford, social care regulatory inspector

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