1260700

Registered provider: Brythan House Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and operated by a private provider. The home is registered to provide care for up to four children who have social and emotional difficulties. The provider also owns and operates a school which is located on the same site. The school was not part of this inspection.

The home is led by a registered manager.

Inspection dates: 20 and 21 September 2022

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.

Date of last inspection: 29 June 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: inadequate

Enforcement action since last inspection:

Two compliance notices were issued following a judgement of inadequate at a full inspection on 29 and 30 June 2022. These notices were issued under regulation 12, the protection of children standard, and regulation 13, the leadership and management standard. A restriction notice was also issued to prevent the provider admitting any more children. Subsequently, a monitoring visit was undertaken on 16 August 2022. The compliance notices were not met and restated. The restriction notice remained in place in response to the lack of progress.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
29/06/2022	Full	Inadequate
04/08/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good
09/06/2021	Full	Inadequate
18/11/2019	Interim	Declined in effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

This inspection considered any progress in meeting the actions as set out in the compliance notices issued following the full inspection. Overall, insufficient progress has been made in response to these notices. Additionally, further shortfalls were identified in the safeguarding of children and leadership and management. Ofsted has issued a suspension notice in response to the findings from this inspection. Subsequently, all the children were moved from the home by their placing local authorities. Ofsted is considering further action due to the ongoing failings and lack of improvement or change which has continued to leave children at risk of harm.

Complaints have been made to Ofsted over the operation of the home and concerns for the welfare of the children. Although Ofsted does not investigate complaints, several important concerns were considered as part of the inspection. Additionally, external agencies are currently investigating other aspects of the complaints.

Children have made some progress. They have developed mostly positive relationships with staff, despite the shortfalls. Staff are caring towards the children, and this has helped children to become settled in the home. Children are engaging in education or have secured full-time employment. Children have made progress from their starting points and educational attainment for some children has improved.

Children have opportunities to participate in a range of activities in the home and the local community. They are supported, by staff, to maintain friendships and contact with the people who are important to them. Some children went on a summer holiday this year, which was a positive experience.

Children's health needs are met. However, not all staff have received training in children's identified health conditions. This prevents staff from having the skills and knowledge in managing certain risks, which has the potential to be harmful to children. Where additional therapeutic support is required, it is not clear who is providing this or the frequency of appointments.

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

Staff resorted to using an inappropriate physical intervention technique to manage a child's behaviour during an incident. There has been poor management oversight of this incident and staff practice was not challenged by managers. Staff did not have a debrief, and this prevented opportunities for learning and development. There was no understanding as to why this intervention was used by staff to manage a child's behaviour.

A child raised a potential safeguarding concern during a debriefing meeting with staff. This was not acted on by staff or the manager. The manager failed to act, and only after prompting did a more junior member of staff respond to the concern. The inaction of the manager had the potential to allow harm to be caused to a child.

A child is at increased risk of being exploited. This has not been adequately managed or documented. The manager is not working cohesively within the wider multidisciplinary team in identifying and managing the risks to this child. Children are not confident that staff will support them in how to manage risky behaviour which may be harmful. Incidents of concern have increased, and children have become involved in worrying incidents with other children living at the home.

Children's safety plans that are designed to keep children safe have not been implemented or discussed with the children they relate to. This means the children cannot identify how they can access help if needed. Additionally, children have devised their own safety plans, which places the responsibility on children rather than staff for managing risks. This is not helpful to children. This limits and obscures the staff responsibility in identifying strategies to provide safe care.

One child was exposed to risk from another child. Substances were brought into the home and shared between children. One child was exposed to inappropriate material in the possession of another child. These concerning incidents were not responded to by managers, leaders, or staff. Furthermore, not all relevant professionals were informed. This prevents external agencies from having clear oversight of incidents and supporting safety planning for children. This places children at risk of ongoing harm.

Children's risk assessments are of poor quality. They do not contribute to keeping the children safe. Risk assessments are not regularly reviewed or updated. They do not provide staff with clear guidance on how to manage and reduce risks to children. Staff have not received all relevant training to develop their knowledge and understanding of the risks and needs of the children. This means that children are left at increased risk.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

The leadership and management of the home is poor. There is a lack of cohesive working between leaders and the manager. This has led to confusion in allocating and the completing of tasks. The manager has not implemented the necessary changes or made the required improvements following the inadequate judgement and in response to the compliance notices. Systems designed to support the manager with quality assurance and monitoring have not been implemented or embedded into practice. This continues to leave children at risk of harm.

The manager has recently resigned from their position. A senior manager who was in the position of acting responsible individual has also resigned. This means that the home will be left without suitably qualified persons to provide management support and oversight. This leaves the staff without leadership and direction and, consequently, children are left at increased risk.

Management oversight of the home, particularly in relation to incidents and risk management, is insufficient in keeping children safe from harm. Key documents have not been evaluated or scrutinised by managers. This prevents learning from incidents and improving practice, which could better support children’s outcomes. Not all known information is shared with relevant professionals. This prevents effective multi-agency working with external professional agencies in managing risk.

Important documents that underpin good safeguarding practice and management oversight are sometimes missing, or they are not easily accessible. They lack the required detail. For example, rotas do not clearly document which staff are working or when temporary staff will be working. This prevents clear management oversight of the adults working in the home. This results in confusion and a lack of direction for children and the staff concerned.

Staff do not receive regular or meaningful supervision. Supervisions, when they occur, are limited in content. This minimises opportunities to discuss the staff’s care practice and or to set targets for development. Staff do not have annual appraisals of their work. Staff have undertaken training to help develop their knowledge of children’s needs and behaviours. However, this has not been wholly effective in supporting staff to have a better understanding of risky behaviour and how to effectively manage this to keep children safe.

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 quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff— understand and apply the home's statement of purpose. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(i)) The responsible individual should ensure that staff are working in line with the statement of purpose in meeting children's needs.	2 November 2022
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; help each child to understand how to keep safe; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm;	2 November 2022

understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies; that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(v)(vii)(b)) This relates to the management of known risks for children, staff responses to risk and implementation of strategies to keep children safe. It also relates to management responses to safeguarding concerns.	
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; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(c)(f)(h)) This relates to ensuring that suitable systems are in place to monitor how the home is being run and the care provided.	2 November 2022

It also relates to ensuring that children’s risk assessments are accessible and give staff clear direction and strategies to mitigate risks. This also relates to staff training to meet the needs of the children.	
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)) In particular this relates to the responsible individual having the capacity, knowledge and experience to effect change in the home and compliance with Ofsted requirements.	2 November 2022
The registered person must ensure that all employees— undertake appropriate professional development; receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience; and have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (4)(a)(b)(c))	2 November 2022
The registered person must prepare and implement a policy ("the behaviour management policy") which sets out— how appropriate behaviour is to be promoted in the children’s home; The registered person must ensure that— within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes— a description of the measure and its duration; details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure; the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure;	2 November 2022

within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")— has spoken to the user about the measure; and has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (1)(a) (3)(a)(iv)(v)(vii)(b)(i)(ii)(c)) In particular, this relates to management oversight of behaviour management strategies, restraint records and staff completing these in full and signing the record. This also relates to staff being aware of the behaviour management policy in managing behaviour effectively.	

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: 12 Charnwood Road, Barwell, Hinckley, Leicestershire LE9 8FJ

Responsible individual: Jennifer Collighan

Registered manager: Amy Hollingsworth

Inspector

Sarah Orriss, Social Care Inspector

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