

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 maintained by a small provider. It is registered to provide care for up to four children with social and emotional needs. There is an on-site school which children from the home attend.

The manager has recently registered with Ofsted and is suitably qualified and experienced. A new responsible individual has recently been appointed and is in the process of submitting their application.

This inspection only looked at the residential provision and not the school.

Inspection dates: 29 and 30 June 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 and the care and experiences of children and young people are poor and they are not making progress.

Date of last inspection: 4 August 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/08/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good
09/06/2021	Full	Inadequate
18/11/2019	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
03/07/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

Children's progress and experiences are affected by shortfalls in how they are safeguarded and by how the home is managed and run. Three children have had their time at the home ended abruptly as staff have been unable to keep them safe or meet their needs. Two other children moved into an alternative home, which is not registered with Ofsted, when they reached 16 years old.

The process of matching what the home can provide with the needs of the children coming to live at the home has not always been successful. There has been a lack of due diligence in ensuring that staff can meet children's needs. This has led to instability in the home, with several children arriving and leaving in a short period of time. For some children, their welcome and arrival into the home has been positive. They have settled quickly into routines and are provided with nurturing care. This has led to children feeling safer and has reduced their anxieties, although these children have only been at the home for a short period of time.

Children's education is a priority for the home and one child was able to return to a previous school so that they could sit their GCSE examinations. This was positive for the child and meant that they had the opportunity to take recognised qualifications, despite the school being a considerable distance from the home. Staff recognised the importance and benefits for the child in completing their education in an environment in which they were comfortable. Another child attends the school on site and has excellent attendance.

Children's health needs are met and there is additional support available from the on-site therapist who works with the team and the child in looking at ways of supporting emotional health. Children have opportunities to spend time in the community, with friends or undertaking activities. This helps children to develop friendship groups and new hobbies and interests. Children are supported to remain in touch with people who are important to them.

One child who has been at the home for a long time is settled and making good progress. They have excellent attendance at school. The child said that they feel safe and happy and have positive and trusting relationships with the staff team. These relationships have helped to reduce anxieties and have promoted improved confidence and self-esteem.

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

Recruitment practice needs to be strengthened as not all pre-employment checks, designed to prevent unsuitable people from working at the home, are carried out on staff. There are gaps and discrepancies in recruitment records and management

monitoring systems have been ineffective in identifying these. This has the potential to place children at risk of harm.

Children who are known to be at risk have come to live at this home. However, the management of these risks has been inadequate. In some cases, children's known risks are not documented in the form of a risk assessment and plan for staff to follow. Risks have included those related to child sexual exploitation and going missing from care. Where there are risk assessments, these often lack detail and are inconsistent, incomplete and not always individual to the child. There is a failure to provide staff with clear guidance on how to keep children safe.

Safeguarding records fail to provide an accurate account of safeguarding incidents. Reports do not capture the views of children. They lack management oversight and fail to outline partnership work with safeguarding agencies. This restricts professionals and the regulator from having a clear understanding of the seriousness of safeguarding incidents and whether the staff are following safeguarding procedures.

Behaviour management is not effective. Staff lack clear strategies to support children when they are in crisis. Strategies are not child-focused and include strategies such as ignoring children when they are struggling to manage their emotions. This behaviour is recorded as 'attention seeking'. This is stigmatising language, and these strategies fail to support children who are in crisis. Police have been called to manage some incidents when staff have been unable to de-escalate situations appropriately.

The manager has not had clear oversight of incident reports, including reports regarding the restraint of children. Incident reports are lacking in respect of crucial details, such as outcomes and whether other professionals have been informed. Staff do not sign reports and the manager does not provide reflection and evaluation of incidents. This practice impairs the manager's capacity to identify potential poor practice or emerging patterns and trends. Staff and children do not have regular discussions or debriefs following incidents. This limits the opportunities for staff to reflect and learn. It also limits opportunities for children to raise any concerns, or reflect on better ways for staff to help them when they are in crisis.

Episodes of going missing have been well managed, and staff actively look for children when they go missing and involve relevant professionals. However, the recording of missing incidents fails to make a note of where children were located and whether they returned to the home of their own volition. The manager has not had oversight of reports and has not provided a review of action taken, or needed, in response to missing episodes. This does not protect children or provide them with opportunities to discuss why they have gone missing from the home.

Staff lack the necessary training to keep children safe. Some staff do not have safeguarding, behaviour management and child sexual exploitation training. This means that staff do not always have the skills and knowledge to protect children and promote their welfare.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

Leaders and managers do not have a good grasp of the legislation governing children's homes. Specifically, there is a failure to implement regulations across a number of areas. Managers have not provided Ofsted with essential information, nor updated Ofsted as required. This specifically relates to safeguarding notifications, internal quality assurance reports and having an up-to-date statement of purpose. This prevents the regulator from having a clear oversight of the operation of the home. These failures demonstrate ineffective leadership and management.

Leaders and managers do not ensure that they have adequate oversight of the operation of the home. Internal and external quality assurance and monitoring are ineffective. These systems fail to identify failures or provide plans to promote improvement. Shortfalls in risk management and care planning mean that staff are not supported to deliver consistent, safe care to children.

The home currently does not have a full staff team. Managers and staff are undertaking additional shifts. This is having a direct impact on the manager's capacity to carry out management tasks and monitor the home effectively. Staff rotas are inaccurate or missing. This does not enable a clear understanding of shift management.

Not all staff receive supervision or annual appraisals in line with the home's own policy. This means that managers do not know if staff are competent, and whether staff have the essential skills and knowledge to provide effective care.

Staff undertake a range of training. However, leaders and managers do not have a clear overview of staff training records, making it more difficult for managers to understand what training staff need. Not all staff have completed mandatory training, such as safeguarding, prior to working with children. Consequently, the safety and welfare of children could potentially be compromised.

Records and children's case files are of poor quality. There is a failure to record full information about incidents, and there are omissions in basic information. There is a lack of oversight, and quality assurance, from leaders and managers. Poor recording makes it difficult to track incidents and assess the quality of care provided. Leaders and managers were unable to locate and retrieve records relating to the home, and managers had difficulty knowing if the information provided was the most up to date. This prevented the regulator from obtaining accurate oversight of the operation of the home.

Four requirements from the last full inspection on 4 August 2021 have not been met and will be reset.

In addition, two compliance notices under Regulation 12 and Regulation 13 have been issued. A restriction notice has been served which will prevent the provider from admitting any more children to the home while improvements are made.

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)) This relates to staff working in line with the statement of purpose in meeting children's needs.	15 August 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;	15 August 2022

understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; and 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)(b)) This relates to the management of known risks for children, staff responses to risk and implementation of safe strategies of support.	
*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. 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.	15 August 2022

The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that children are admitted to the home only if their needs are within the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home's statement of purpose. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)) In particular, this relates to effective assessing of children's needs prior to placement at the home to ensure that their needs can be met. It also relates to children having unexpected and unplanned endings to their time at the home.	15 August 2022
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 children's home; if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). The requirements are that— 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)) In particular, this relates to any recruitment of staff, including agency staff, follows safer recruitment guidelines.	15 August 2022
The registered person must ensure that all employees— undertake appropriate continuing professional development; receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience; and	15 August 2022

have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (4)(a)(b)(c))	
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; and 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, 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.	15 August 2022

The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(b))	15 August 2022
The registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children (“a quality of care review”) at least once every 6 months. After completing a quality of care review, the registered person must produce a written report about the quality of care review and the actions which the registered person intends to take as a result of the quality of care review (“the quality of care review report”). The registered person must— supply to HMCI a copy of the quality of care review report within 28 days of the date on which the quality of care review is completed. (Regulation 45 (1) (3) (4)(a))	15 August 2022

* These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

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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