

2484180

Registered provider: Bryn Melyn Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is operated by a large private company. It provides care for up to four children who exhibit complex behaviours because of their childhood experiences. It registered with Ofsted in October 2018.

The manager started on 4 October 2021 and is in the process of submitting her application to register with Ofsted. The previous registered manager voluntarily cancelled his registration with Ofsted in September 2021 and is no longer working in the home.

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 October 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 widespread failures that mean children and young people are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded.

Date of last inspection: 30 June 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: Inadequate

Enforcement action since last inspection:

Two compliance notices under regulations 12 (the protection of children standard) and 13 (the leadership and management standard) were issued following the last full inspection. The compliance notices were deemed to have been met at the monitoring visit on 3 September 2021.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
30/06/2021	Full	Inadequate
06/03/2020	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
16/04/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

During this inspection, inspectors identified serious safeguarding failings resulting in children being placed at risk of harm. In response, Ofsted has issued a notice restricting accommodation at the home. In addition, compliance notices were issued under regulation 12 (the protection of children standard), regulation 13 (the leadership and management standard) and regulation 35 (behaviour management and records).

Leadership and management and safeguarding arrangements in the home are inadequate. Consequently, this has had a negative impact on the overall experiences and progress of children.

There were four children living in the home at the time of the inspection. However, one child was preparing to leave for another home as the placing authority had made the decision to move him. Professionals working with this child informed the inspector that they no longer felt the home could keep him safe. Furthermore, the home's management team had requested an alternative home for another child, following several bullying incidents in the home.

Leaders have failed to ensure that the home has a sufficient number of skilled and experienced staff to provide care for each child. One external professional told inspectors that they have heard staff telling children they will not be able to go out on activities as 'there are not enough staff'. Consequently, on one occasion, this led to a child to become distressed and frustrated, which led to her fracturing her hand.

Overall, staff and children develop positive relationships. The inspectors were able to observe children interacting with staff. For example, one staff member spent time brushing and preparing two children's hair as other staff were preparing a leaving party for one child. Another child spoke positively about the home and the support he receives from staff. However, staff's inconsistent approach to caring for children means that children do not always feel safe or comfortable living in the home environment.

Despite the shortfalls identified in this inspection, children do make some progress. For example, all children attend an education, employment or training provision. One child is making good progress at school and shared her positive experiences with the inspectors. Another child described how working in a restaurant has helped to improve her independence. As a result, children have settled well into the new school year.

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

Staff do not protect children from harm. Since the last inspection, there have been several significant incidents. During one incident, a staff member has physically and emotionally harmed one child. The child who had been harmed, informed the inspector that he did not 'feel safe living in the home' and that he was now 'leaving the home after four years'. The child's social worker informed the inspector that the local authority was moving the child to another home as they had concerns for his safety. The local authority is carrying out a child protection investigation in response to these incidents. Leaders are awaiting the outcome of the investigation before completing their own internal investigation.

Staff do not safeguard children from bullying in the home. For example, there have been four incidents where one child has physically harmed other children. Despite known risks, staff have failed to take sufficient action to protect children, resulting in children being harmed. One child who had been the victim of bullying informed the inspector that she did not feel safe in the home and wished to leave.

Safeguarding arrangements in the home are inadequate. Risk assessments do not always reflect children's known risks, are inaccurate and are not routinely updated. For example, there is no risk assessment in place for one child to evidence how she is protected from bullying in the home. Furthermore, her free-time plan is inaccurate and the strategies to keep her safe are not up to date. The same child's missing-from-home plan does not give staff clarity on what areas to search and who they are to contact to find the child should she go missing from the home. This means that strategies to manage risks to children are not available to staff, which could leave children at risk of harm.

Following an incident where a child had been assaulted by another child, the victim of the assault reported the assault to the police. However, this was not followed up by leaders in the home and they could not provide information to demonstrate the outcome of this complaint. In addition, the child stated to the inspector, 'I have made complaints, but staff have ignored me.' This lack of action left the child feeling afraid for her own safety.

Staff do not have the skills, experience or knowledge to manage children's behaviours. Due to staffing shortages, inexperienced staff have been required to lead shifts in the home. For example, one staff member leading a shift was working within a performance plan having had his probationary period extended. Also, there are two agency staff working on most shifts. Agency staff spoken to during the inspection were unable to explain how they would respond to support a child in distress. Also, they do not always provide the correct supervision to children in the home to prevent bullying and significant incidents from taking place. This lack of experience and supervision meant that staff were not able to de-escalate difficult or challenging behaviours or situations effectively. Consequently, this chaotic approach left children vulnerable and compromised their safety.

Staff do not always follow actions set out in children's behaviour support plans. During one incident, staff physically restrained a child and prevented them from leaving the home. However, the child's support plan identified that staff should follow the child and not to use physical restraint. These actions left the child at risk of physical harm.

Inspectors found serious shortfalls in how staff record and report how they manage children's behaviour. For example, staff do not always accurately record details of when they have had to physically intervene to hold children. Staff do not record the measures that they have used to prevent physical interventions. Furthermore, leaders do not assess or review the effectiveness of the measures used by staff. These shortfalls leave children vulnerable and compromise their safety.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

Leaders' and managers' oversight and monitoring of staff practice is inadequate. For example, there was no record of a support plan that had been put in place for a member of staff, following a practice concern being identified. Several members of staff had not had a recent supervision while other staff had not received a supervision since they began working in the home. Staff members involved in significant incidents with children have not received a debrief or been spoken to following the incident. The lack of supervisions and debriefs for staff are a missed opportunity to support and develop staff's practice. This inadequate leadership has an impact on the safety of children and the provision of care.

Leaders do not always consult with children's social workers when assessing children's risks. For example, following a staffing crisis, leaders put in place a risk assessment to manage the home with reduced staffing numbers. However, no consultation with the children's social workers took place and they informed the inspector that they were unaware of the changes. During some significant incidents, staff failed to follow the risk assessment in relation to reduced staffing. Consequently, children were not protected from harm.

Leaders do not effectively assess staff knowledge to ensure that they have the skills to keep children safe. For example, staff have not completed bullying or online safety training, which is specific to the needs of the children. This means that staff are not provided with the skills to safeguard children at risk of bullying and when using the internet.

An independent person has carried out external monitoring of the home every month. While these are completed within timeframes, they do not fully focus on the improvements required in the home. As a result, the external monitoring systems do not improve the quality of care for children.

An up-to-date copy of the home's statement of purpose has not been submitted to Ofsted. This means that the regulator is not provided with accurate information about the home.

At the last monitoring visit, the home received four requirements and two recommendations. Managers have failed to demonstrate that they have met three of these requirements and one recommendation.

Senior managers in the organisation have recently become more involved in the day-to-day running of the home. They have successfully appointed a new manager and responsible individual. During the inspection, the new management team demonstrated that some action has been taken to safeguard children. For example, a new complaints process was implemented and a development plan recorded. Furthermore, immediate safety plans were put in place to promote the safety of children. However, it is too early to determine the impact of this.

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
In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff— seek to involve each child's placing authority effectively in the child's care, in accordance with the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 5 (a)) In particular, leaders and managers should consult with children's social workers when assessing children's risks or reducing their allocated staffing.	14 November 2021
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; and 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— understand and apply the home's statement of purpose; and ensure that staff— understand and apply the home's statement of purpose; protect and promote each child's welfare; treat each child with dignity and respect; and provide personalised care that meets each child's needs, as recorded in the child's relevant plans, taking account of the child's background. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv))	14 November 2021

In particular, ensure that staff take into account children's previous background experiences when planning and/or providing care for children. Furthermore, it relates to staff treating children with respect and taking action to protect and promote their welfare.	
The children's views, wishes and feelings standard is that children receive care from staff who— develop positive relationships with them; engage with them; and take their views, wishes and feelings into account in relation to matters affecting the children's care and welfare and their lives. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that each child— is enabled to provide feedback to, and raise issues with, a relevant person about the support and services that the child receives; and has access to the home's children's guide, and the home's complaints procedure, when the child's placement in the home is agreed and throughout the child's stay in the home; and keep the children's guide and the home's complaints procedure under review and seek children's comments before revising either document. (Regulation 7 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(b)(i)(ii)(c)) In particular, managers should ensure that children have access to the home's children's guide and that staff listen to and act on concerns raised by children.	14 November 2021
The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on— mutual respect and trust; an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and positive responses to other children and adults.	14 November 2021

In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— understand how children’s previous experiences and present emotions can be communicated through behaviour and have the competence and skills to interpret these and develop positive relationships with children; are provided with supervision and support to enable them to understand and manage their own feelings and responses to the behaviour and emotions of children, and to help children to do the same; de-escalate confrontations with or between children, or potentially violent behaviour by children; and have the skills to recognise incidents or indications of bullying and how to deal with them; and that each child is encouraged to build and maintain positive relationships with others. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(ix)(x)(xi)(xiii)(b)) In particular, ensure that staff understand and have the knowledge to be able to identify both the signs and impact of bullying in the home.	
*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;	14 November 2021

manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other; 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. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)) In particular, ensure that staff understand children's risk assessments and implement the correct strategies to keep children safe. This includes when identifying and addressing the risks in relation to physical aggression and bullying. This also refers to staff's understanding and implementation of the home's child protection procedures and the action to take when a child is harmed by an adult in a position of trust.	
*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 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)(b)) In particular, leaders must make adequate arrangements to deliver the day-to-day care arrangements for children, which protect them from harm.	14 November 2021
*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—	14 November 2021

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 work as a team where appropriate; ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child; and ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e)) In particular, leaders and managers must ensure that the home's child protection and safeguarding policies are followed in the home. Managers must also have clear monitoring and review systems in place to improve practice and understand children's progress. This also relates to staffing arrangements in the home and ensuring that the home has sufficient and suitably experienced staff to work with children and protect them from harm. This requirement was made at the last monitoring visit and is restated.	
*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— 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—	14 November 2021

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)(a)(b) (2)(f)(g)(ii)(h)) This relates to the manager's oversight and monitoring of children's risk assessments and significant incidents in the home. It further relates to the manager's oversight of staffing in the home. In addition, leaders need to ensure that there is a system in place for monitoring and acting on complaints made by children in the home and for providing feedback.	
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. The registered person must— keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16 (1) (3)(a)(b)) In particular, leaders must review and submit an up-to-date copy of the home's statement of purpose to Ofsted within 28 days of the revision. This requirement was made at the last monitoring visit and is restated.	14 November 2021
Restraint in relation to a child is only permitted for the purpose of preventing— injury to any person (including the child); serious damage to the property of any person (including the child); or a child who is accommodated in a secure children's home from absconding from the home.	14 November 2021

Restraint in relation to a child must be necessary and proportionate. (Regulation 20 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)) In particular, staff may only physically restrain children when the threshold for justifying physical intervention has been met.	
The registered person must— ensure that each permanent appointment of an employee is subject to the satisfactory completion of a period of probation. The registered person must ensure that all employees— undertake appropriate continuing professional development; and receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (1)(b) (4)(a)(b)) In particular, all staff must receive regular supervision to support their development in the home. Furthermore, it relates to the record-keeping for monitoring staff performance during their probationary period. This requirement was made at the last monitoring visit and is restated.	14 November 2021
*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; and the measures of control, discipline and restraint which may be used in relation to children in the home. The registered person must keep the behaviour management policy under review and, where appropriate, revise it. 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— the name of the child;	14 November 2021

details of the child's behaviour leading to the use of the measure; the date, time and location of the use of the measure; 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 name of the person who used the measure ("the user"), and of any other person present when the measure was used; the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result 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)(b) (2) (3)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(b)(i)(ii)(c)) In particular, managers must ensure that incidents requiring physical intervention with a child are recorded. It also relates to the manager's oversight of these incidents in the home and the need to ensure that staff use de-escalation techniques to avoid physical intervention.	
The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children's home at least once each month. The independent person's report may recommend actions that the registered person may take in relation to the home	14 November 2021

and timescales within which the registered person must consider whether or not to take those actions.
(Regulation 44 (1) (5))

In particular, the independent person's report must provide actions that the registered person may take to improve the quality of care received by children in the home.

* 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: 2484180

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Bryn Melyn Care Limited

Registered provider address: Atria, Spa Road, Bolton BL1 4AG

Responsible individual: Neil Hedges

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Dean Wilton, Social Care Inspector

Fiona Roche, Social Care Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2021