

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC372611
Inspector	David Morgan
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Bryn Melyn Care Limited
Registered person address	2 High Street Dawley Telford Shropshire TF4 2ET

Responsible individual	Melissa Johnson
Registered manager	John Derek Locke
Date of last inspection	24/01/2014

Inspection date	03/06/2014
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Previous inspection	inadequate progress
Enforcement action since last inspection	There has been no enforcement action since the last inspection.

This inspection	
Overall effectiveness	good
Outcomes for children and young people	good
Quality of care	good
Keeping children and young people safe	good
Leadership and management	good

Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	good
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At the interim inspection in January 2014 this service was found to be making inadequate progress and seven requirements were made. These have been addressed and improvements have been made in other areas too so that a good overall standard is now being achieved. This change is principally due to effective leadership by the new manager who was registered in January 2014. Young people benefit from highly personalised care and feel positive about the home and its staff.

Key improvements include the appropriate matching of young people and the establishment of a full team of permanent staff. This has led to significant improvements in safeguarding and a substantial decrease in incidents. Young people are settled in their home and show clear progress, particularly in their education.

The manager is aware that the service has a history of fluctuating inspection judgements. He is establishing clear working practices that are effective for young people and used to best affect the therapeutic and educational services that are available. There is substantial capacity to achieve further improvement. No requirements are made as a result of this inspection. Recommendations are made to assist in the improvement process, particularly regarding the evaluation of data and prompt managerial attention to incident reports.

Full report

Information about this children's home

This privately operated children's home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to two young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
24/01/2014	Interim	inadequate progress
15/05/2013	Full	good
14/02/2013	Interim	inadequate progress
28/09/2012	Full	adequate

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

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the service should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure the home is fully implementing a written education policy that promotes and values children's education. This is with regard to having a system to promote social diversity (NMS 8.5)
- demonstrate that the company consistently follows good recruitment practice, statutory requirements and guidance, in staff recruitment selection. This is with regard to having sufficient evidence on site (NMS 16.2)
- implement effective procedures for monitoring and controlling the activities of the home. This is with regard to such procedures identifying patterns and trends and evaluating them as part of a process of improvement (NMS 21.1)
- monitor, in line with regulations, all records kept by the home to ensure compliance with the home's policies, to identify any concerns about specific incidents and to identify patterns and trends. This is with regard to the monitoring of log books being undertaken sufficiently frequently by the manager

(NMS 21.2)

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for children and young people **good**

Outcomes for young people improve substantially in the home; one young person was described by a social worker as 'a different person now'. Their levels of safety increase significantly, which allows them to engage positively in a wide range of legitimate activities and regular attendance at school. They acknowledge this improvement and engage constructively with staff; they say that 'it's a good home'. School attendance is now at a very high level, which is a complete change for some young people; programmes are undertaken to assist in their re-engagement. These are supported well by staff, for example regarding home-work. Aspirational targets are set and young people understand what they need to do to succeed both now and in the future.

Young people gain confidence in their social skills which facilitates their access to opportunities in the community. A good range of activities are undertaken which promote sport and recreation. These help to keep young people healthy, reduce risk-taking behaviours and are often educational. Opportunities are taken to learn new skills, for example regarding artwork and cooking, that are undertaken at home. All young people are involved in the home and contribute to decoration, choice of ornaments and most recently the purchase of indoor plants. This helps them to have an investment in the home. Young people's contact with their friends and families is maintained in line with their placement plans. They improve their understanding of their backgrounds.

Quality of care **good**

The overall quality of care has now achieved a good standard. The service is small and each young person benefits from personalised care and a high standard of accommodation. The home is located in a rural area close to a large town. Young people have a reasonable level of consistency from the adults that care for them and the use of agency staff is now low. The staff team has recently been completed by the employment of the final permanent member of staff, which enhances the good relationships that already exist. Important work has been completed to ensure that young people are as well matched as possible; this has contributed substantially to improved outcomes for young people.

Staff routinely encourage young people to express their views and they ensure that relevant action is taken whenever possible. Young people see the effect their ideas have on the home, including accessories and colour schemes, and in the activities that are undertaken. All young people engage thoroughly in this process and understand the various ways open to them to express concerns. No serious concerns

have been raised since the last inspection. Their views are sought on a monthly basis by a representative of the organisation. Young people know that their families are involved to an appropriate extent and staff deal with this sensitively.

Thorough placement plans are used to guide direct care, including key worker sessions. These are effectively supported by therapists. The manager has improved the way that key worker sessions are related to individual placement plans so that progress can be readily managed. This has increased the effectiveness of the work since the last inspection.

Keeping children and young people safe **good**

Young people receive a good standard of safety and safeguarding. In line with the Statement of Purpose, the home admits young people with particularly challenging behaviour. As a result, there are periods of highly negative activity. It is to the credit of the team that these are addressed in child-friendly ways that facilitate improvement. High numbers of missing from home incidents, for example, have been replaced with no such incidents. As a result, young people feel secure, speak positively about the staff, and are kept safe and healthy. They are also able to start benefitting fully from the wide-ranging opportunities available to them. This has substantially improved their life-styles, self-esteem and future opportunities. Professionals outside the service and parents feel confident in the team's abilities in this area.

The manager identified that staff training was required in some areas of behaviour management and the remedial steps he implemented have been effective. However, some issues persisted slightly longer than desirable because of delays in checking some log books. On the other hand, the behaviour management processes clearly help young people learn to engage positively. One young person was extremely pleased recently to have earned a new television for his bedroom. Good contact is maintained with social workers, police and other agencies to ensure the most effective strategies are implemented.

There are thorough processes for keeping young people safe both on and off site. An excellent system is used to assess and review risks, which the manager is improving to show young people's progress more clearly. A review of fire safety measures has occurred and although precautions are at a good standard, steps are underway to upgrade many internal doors. Similarly, the recruitment of staff ensures that only appropriate adults work with vulnerable young people. However, the records on site do not sufficiently reflect the steps taken.

Leadership and management **good**

The service benefits from effective leadership and staff supervision. The registered manager has been in post since last year and has suitable qualifications and experience; he brings a mature and reflective approach to the service. The manager also understands the strengths and weaknesses of the service and has been proactive in addressing shortfalls. A strong senior team is in place that has the capacity to further improve the service. The last inspection was in January 2014. It found there was inadequate progress and made seven requirements. These have been addressed and as a result the required communications with Ofsted have improved. Also, important targets are addressed systematically with young people. Consequently, young people benefit from much improved school attendance and a variety of consultation exercises routinely obtain their views.

Of particular importance to the welfare of young people is the establishment of a consistent staff team. There have been changes to the staff team because some staff transferred to another home with a previous young person. This model provides important continuity for the departing young person but leaves gaps in the team. In addition, the manager has instigated other changes to the team. These changes have created challenges that have now been resolved. The manager now has a team of permanent staff that have an appropriate balance of skills and experience and work consistently with each other.

Insightful management means that the skills of individual team members are developed in a supportive way. Staff training is adapted to meet the needs of young people and opportunities are taken to arrange bespoke training. Gaps in attendance at training events arising, for example, from recent sickness are kept under close review to avoid undue slippage. The individual needs of young people are addressed well, as indicated above, as are the shortfalls in their access to opportunities arising from their difficulties. It is less clear, however, despite a high level of positive role-modelling, qualified staff and staff training, how staff systematically promote social diversity. This is necessary to facilitate young people's understanding of society.

Monitoring occurs in a variety of ways and effectively serves to identify shortfalls. The manager is pressing for consolidation of recent improvements in order to address the service's concerning history of fluctuating inspection judgements. However, it remains somewhat unclear how standards will continue to be raised. The written monthly accumulation of data by the manager, for example, does not evaluate patterns and trends or clearly promote future improvement. On the other hand, it is clear that in practice a certain level of improvement is now underway.

What inspection judgements mean

Judgement	Description
Outstanding	A service of exceptional quality that significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Good	A service of high quality that exceeds minimum requirements.
Adequate	A service that only meets minimum requirements.
Inadequate	A service that does not meet minimum requirements.

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service and to consider how well it complies with the relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the framework of inspection for children's homes.