

SC372611

Registered provider: Bryn Melyn Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is part of a private organisation. It provides care for up to two children who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

The registered manager is not currently in day-to-day charge of the home. An interim manager has applied to Ofsted to register to cover the absence of the substantive registered manager.

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 May 2024

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	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 17 May 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
17/05/2023	Full	Good
05/07/2022	Full	Good
18/01/2022	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
16/11/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the last inspection, one child has moved out of the home and two children have moved in. At the time of the inspection, two children were living at the home.

Careful consideration before the children moved in helped to ensure that the children were well suited. Both moved from children's homes within the company and attend the same school. Therefore the children knew each other and some of the staff who now support them. This has enabled them to settle quickly.

Staff take time to listen and get to know the children well. This helps the children to form positive relationships with staff and to develop an improved sense of self. The children are helping to prepare meals and eating healthily. They are engaging with other professionals such as therapists. They are active members of community groups, such as a boxing club and enjoy a wide range of activities, including going to the cinema and golf driving range. The children are maintaining and being supported to understand family relationships. They are enjoying new friendships and becoming more independent including socialising in the local community. The children speak highly of the core staff team, who they feel 'really care' and are 'fair and understanding'.

Staff help the children to understand how important education is for their future. Both children attend a school run by the provider. One child has high attendance. The other child struggles. However, the manager is working closely with the education team and the child's attendance is improving. Children's academic progress and how they are being supported to make progress is not so clear. For example, the children's school term reports are not kept on the children's records and are unseen by the staff team. This lack of information means staff are not equipped to creatively support the children's learning outside of school or advocate on their behalf. One child has been excluded from outdoor education without a plan for them to return. Instead of attending school to participate in an alternative education activity, the home's staff are being asked to take the child out to do an activity. This does not help the child to engage with others, overcome their barriers to learning or prepare them for further education.

The manager has a plan in place and continues to develop the home's environment with the input of the children and staff. Overall, the home is clean and tidy. The children's bedrooms have been decorated in keeping with children's wishes and the kitchen and bathrooms have been refurbished. Other areas of the home still need attention. For example, broken furniture has been replaced but not removed from, staff bedrooms are being used as storage areas and locked areas such as cupboards and a cellar are not clean or clear.

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

The manager and staff have a good understanding of safeguarding policies and procedures. This ensures that the staff practice is rooted in a culture of safeguarding where the children are helped to understand how to protect themselves and where they feel listened to and respected and are confident that their views matter.

Staff de-escalate the children's behaviours well. They are aware of when the children may struggle and the actions they need to take to keep them safe. As a result, the number of incidents, physical interventions and episodes of going missing from care are low for the two children living at the home.

Staff work closely with partner agencies and parents to safeguard the children. The responsible individual and manager have a good understanding of patterns and trends in incidents in and outside the home. They review incidents and investigate complaints adjusting practices where appropriate. For example, increasing staff supervision of a child, organising additional sexually harmful behaviours training for staff and removing access to an internet-connected phone. Children's risk assessments are updated on the organisation's computer system to reflect changes to practice. However, old risk assessments are not being removed from paper files. The core staff team based in the home are clear of protocols, but this conflicting information does not provide clear guidance to agency or cover staff.

Incidents are reviewed and actions are taken. However, incident reviews do not always consider the full range of measures needed to reduce risk. While the limitations to incident reviews had no impact at the point of the inspection, the responsible individual acted during the inspection to strengthen arrangements including ensuring the staff have access to a second mobile phone.

The manager ensures that staff recruited to work at the home are subject to all the necessary checks. This helps to ensure that staff who work at the home are safe to do so.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The responsible individual and manager are both new to the home. They are clear about the home's strengths and the areas they wish to develop. They are using internal and external auditing tools to inform improvement plans. For example, currently, a core group of permanent staff is providing stability and consistency for the children. They cover shifts where possible to reduce agency use and cover from other homes. There has been a successful recruitment drive to fill the staff vacancies with the aim of a fully recruited staff team by June 2024.

The staff spoken to are positive about the new manager's support. Staff receive a range of training that ensures that they can support the individual needs of the children they care for. They also receive regular professional supervision. However, the quality of these sessions cannot be audited because they are not stored appropriately on the

organisation's computer system and staff appraisals are unavailable. Consequently, the quality of these sessions with staff is unclear.

Over the last year, there has been a reduction in the therapist led reflection meetings with staff and the number of staff able to attend. Minutes from the reflection meetings hold minimal content. This reduces the opportunities for the staff team to access and share information important to developing strategies and practice in keeping with the home's ethos.

The manager and core staff team work effectively in partnership with other professionals. External professionals are positive about the care and support that the children receive and the communication from the manager and staff. They see improvements in the behaviour and confidence of the children living at the home.

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, The Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards'. The registered persons must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— understand the barriers to learning that each child may face and take appropriate action to help the child to overcome any such barriers. (Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(iii))	30 June 2024
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))	30 June 2024
The registered person must ensure that all employees— have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (1) (2) (3) (4)(c))	30 June 2024
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—	30 June 2024

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. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a))	
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Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the children's home is a nurturing and supportive environment that meets the needs of their children, they will, in most cases, be homely, domestic environments. Childrens homes must comply with relevant health and safety legislations (alarms, food hygiene etc.); however, in doing so, homes should seek as far possible to maintain a domestic rather than institutional impression. ('Guide to the Children s Homes Regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should ensure that a record of supervision should be kept for staff, including the manager. The record should provide evidence that supervision is being delivered in line with regulation 33(4)(b). ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.3)

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: SC372611

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Bryn Melyn Care Limited

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

Responsible individual: Eleanor Brammer

Registered manager: Rebecca Jones

Inspector

Dawn Bennett, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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