

SC372611

Registered provider: Bryn Melyn Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This service is owned by a private company. The home is registered to provide care for two children, irrespective of gender, aged 10 to 17 years, with social or emotional difficulties (EBD).

The registered manager's post is vacant. A manager is in post, but they are not registered with Ofsted and an application to register has not been received.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021.

Inspection dates: 16 and 17 November 2021

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 4 June 2019

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
04/06/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good
03/10/2018	Full	Good
01/12/2017	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
12/07/2017	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

The experiences of the children at the home are mixed. Overall, the home is welcoming and homely. However, for one child their room was not to an adequate standard. The conditions of the child's room did not provide them with a positive environment.

Staff do not capture the experiences of the children and do not consistently provide children with memories of their time in the home. This does not provide children with a sense of their life story, which is integral in helping them to understand their own experiences.

Children at the home have made progress in their education. Staff support the children to attend education and work closely with education providers. This joint working helps children to achieve positive educational outcomes.

A limited number of incidents take place at the home. Staff understand the needs of the children and carry out work with them to reduce their risks. Considering children's starting points, the low number of incidents demonstrates the progress they have made.

Staff support the children to engage in activities they enjoy. One child attends a regular dance and gymnastic club. Another child enjoys photography and staff encourage the child in this activity. This provides positive experiences for the children, and supports them to develop their social, emotional and physical well-being.

Staff recognise the importance of children maintaining important relationships. They support the children to stay in contact with family members. Staff have also developed positive relationships with children's families, to encourage good communication. This allows children to maintain important relationships and promotes a sense of belonging for the children.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

Managers' and staff's response to allegations made by children is poor. There have been two occasions when allegations have been made and safeguarding procedures have not been followed adequately. In one incident, a child shared their concerns with a trusted staff member about an incident involving another staff member at school. However, the home's previous manager did not respond to this allegation, and a formal investigation was not carried out. Conversations that took place with the child following this incident lacked curiosity and were not child centered. No action has been taken by the new manager to rectify these concerns. As a result,

the child has been left with an unresolved experience which is likely to have had a negative impact on their self-worth.

Staff have not cared for children with sufficient skill and understanding of safeguarding concerns. Staff did not recognise that a second allegation was an allegation and, as a result, safeguarding procedures were not followed. Again, conversations between staff and the child lacked curiosity and consideration of the impact of this experience on the child. The manager did not address these concerns with the relevant staff members. This was another missed opportunity to listen to the child. This does not provide children with reassurance that they are able to trust staff and that their concerns will be taken seriously.

Physical intervention records demonstrate that, on occasion, the use of physical intervention may have been avoided if a different approach had been taken. The physical intervention records do not contain the required information, which hinders the manager's oversight of practice within the home. Records are not clear about how long each hold is for and staff debriefs are not consistently undertaken. On one occasion, the manager was involved in the physical intervention but carried out the debrief with the child. Therefore, the child was not provided with the opportunity to speak to someone impartial about their experiences.

Risk assessments for children are in place and are regularly reviewed. Risks are understood by the manager and staff. This ensures that staff respond to the individual needs of the children to keep them safe. However, the environmental risk assessment is not up to date. This risk assessment does not provide justification for why children are unable to access one of the bathrooms in the home.

Planned key-work sessions take place with the children on a regular basis. This work is linked to children's care plans. Through this work, children are supported to learn about and reduce risks.

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

The manager does not always take action when concerns are raised. For example, when the independent visitor raised concerns about a physical intervention record, senior leaders and the manager did not ensure that these concerns were responded to. This was a missed opportunity to ensure that the child concerned was supported and safe.

Supervision takes place for staff. This involves discussions about the children and considers their development. However, the manager does not always use supervision to explore concerns about a member of staff or issues with staff practice. As a result, actions are not always taken to improve staff practice.

Children are encouraged to participate in regular meetings with staff. These meetings take place, but children do not always get feedback from them. Therefore,

children are not always aware of how the manager has responded to their requests or concerns.

The manager has recently implemented tools to support them in overseeing the home and monitoring the quality of care provided. However, these have not always identified shortfalls in safeguarding practice and physical intervention records and actions have not been taken to improve the quality of care that children receive.

External monitoring does not consistently scrutinise the practice in the home to support the manager in developing the quality of care. The independent visitor did not recognise the poor response in relation to allegations made by children. The manager does not always notify Ofsted when required. This hinders the regulator's oversight of the quality of care.

The manager has a vision for the home and is aware of the areas that require development. There are plans in place to develop the home, which involve input from the children. This ensures that children feel valued and are able to take ownership of what their home looks like and the care they receive.

When plans were made for a child who was moving out of the home, the manager raised concerns. These concerns were about the proposed placement and how it did not meet the needs of the child. The manager successfully advocated on behalf of the child. As a result, an alternative placement was identified, which ensured that the child was cared for in a setting that was able to meet their needs.

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 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 staff— help each child to understand how the child's views, wishes and feelings have been taken into account and give the child reasons for decisions in relation to the child. (Regulation 7 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(iii)) In particular, the manager is to ensure that they consistently respond to the wishes and feelings of children that they share in children's meetings.	14 January 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— have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm;	14 January 2022

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)(iii)(v)(vi)(vii)) In particular, that managers and staff have the skills to recognise and respond to allegations made by children. Also that the manager and staff take appropriate action to ensure that all safeguarding concerns are reported and investigated and all necessary steps are taken to safeguard the child.	
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— promotes their [children's] 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. (Regulation 13 (1)(b) (2)(a)) In particular, the manager is to respond to concerns about staff practice to ensure that the welfare of the child is paramount.	14 January 2022
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; 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	14 January 2022

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 (3)(a)(iv)(b)(i)(ii)(c)) In particular, the manager is to ensure that the length of the time of each physical intervention is clear, and that separate debriefs with the children and staff take place. These should be completed in the required time frame. When the manager is involved in the physical intervention, an alternative manager should be appointed to carry out the debrief with the child and staff.	
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there. (Regulation 40 (4)(c)) In particular, the manager should ensure that allegations against staff are notified to Ofsted.	14 January 2022
The independent person must produce a report about a visit ("the independent person's report") which sets out, in particular, the independent person's opinion as to whether— children are effectively safeguarded; and the conduct of the home promotes children's well-being. (Regulation 44 (4)(a)(b)) In particular, the manager is to ensure that the independent visitor reviews records effectively to ensure the safety of the children.	14 January 2022

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff understand the importance for children of understanding who they are and where they come from, and that staff play a full role in helping children to understand their life story. ('Guide to the

children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 16, paragraph 3.14)

- The registered person should make the children's bedrooms an environment that supports children's physical, mental and emotional health. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 33, paragraph 7.3)
- The registered person should ensure that staff continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)

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: Laura Duckers

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Melanie Griffin, Social Care Inspector

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