

SC372630

Registered provider: Bryn Melyn Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The service is owned by a private company. The home is registered to accommodate four children. The home consists of two two-bedded houses. Both houses are detached and share the same garden. They have independent access, in a very quiet residential area.

The registered manager was registered with Ofsted in December 2018.

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

Ofsted last visited this setting on 2 December 2020 to carry out an assurance visit. There were no serious and widespread concerns identified and the report is published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection dates: 23 to 24 August 2021

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

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

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

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 12 June 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/06/2019	Full	Good
15/01/2019	Full	Good
05/12/2017	Full	Good
30/03/2017	Interim	Declined in effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children make progress in the key areas of their lives. This is because staff know them well and provide the children with individualised and consistent support. As a result, children experience positive relationships. Staff understand children's starting points and celebrate their progress and achievements. This means that children feel valued and respected.

Staff support and help children to prepare for independence effectively. Staff promote and develop independent skills by working closely with children and the important people in their lives. The registered manager balances the risks with opportunities for children to improve their skills. For example, one child has recently moved into semi-independence having lived at the home for four years. The move was carefully planned around the child's education. In addition, staff have continued to provide support for the child since leaving the home. This transitional support means that children are better prepared when they move on from the home.

Staff capture and acknowledge children's progress and achievements effectively. Furthermore, they ensure that important events and milestones are celebrated. For example, staff held a leaving party for a child preparing to move on from the home. The child left the home with photo albums and personalised gifts relevant to his interests. He informed an external professional that the home 'was a positive placement' for him.

Staff understand the importance of education for children. They work hard to ensure that children have opportunities to achieve. For example, one child has recently passed his GCSEs. These achievements have led to the child securing a place at college. At the last inspection, another child was not in education, employment or training. However, staff have supported the child to attend a local training provider. In addition, the child has accessed a voluntary work placement and also secured part-time employment in a supermarket. As a result, children are provided with opportunities to learn and achieve.

The registered manager ensures that she acts and responds to children's views and wishes. She advocates well for children. For example, one child is preparing to move on from the home and the registered manager has been actively involved in the child's care planning. Another child excluded from education was supported to make a complaint. This allowed the child to return to full-time education.

The home's environment is well maintained and decorated. Since the last inspection, the home has been decorated and refurbished. Also, children's bedrooms had been prepared and personalised in preparation for two new admissions to the home. This helps children to settle into the home and feel valued.

Staff work effectively with the home's therapist and health professionals to provide specialist support to children. An external professional commented positively on the support that one child had received from the home's therapist. In contrast, staff do not always correctly record when a child has refused to take prescribed medication for allergies. This has the potential to leave children and staff vulnerable.

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

Children's risk assessments are well recorded and have clear strategies for staff to follow. For one child, staff have ensured that their risk assessments are balanced and implemented to safeguard the child, while also promoting her independence and not restricting her ability to develop. Furthermore, staff consult with the home's therapist in their decision-making. Consequently, staff know how to keep children safe.

Staff manage significant incidents and support children's anxieties very well. For example, staff have responded sensitively and appropriately to safeguard one child during times of crisis. They have effectively managed incidents linked to physical aggression, self-harm and suicide. In addition, when children need to be protected from harm, staff are proactive by working together with parents and other agencies. When risks escalate, the registered manager shares any concerns and requests support from other agencies. This means that staff are equipped to safeguard children during difficult times in their lives.

Staff only use physical intervention with children as a last resort. When faced with these incidents, staff manage and record them effectively. Furthermore, management oversight is evaluative, and the registered manager ensures that children and staff are spoken to. This reflective practice helps staff and children to learn from their experiences.

Children's behaviour improves because of the support they receive from staff. Staff promote positive behaviour and involve children in their planning. As a result, the number of consequences given to children are very low and these are proportionate to the behaviour displayed.

Since the last inspection, the registered manager has addressed shortfalls in staff recruitment. She has put in place new systems to ensure that staff are safely recruited before working in the home.

In an isolated incident, when the manager was absent, the manager overseeing the home did not follow the home's child protection policy and referral processes. This is because following an allegation made by a child against a member of staff, they did not notify the local authority on the same day as instructed in the home's policy and procedure. Furthermore, the manager failed to discuss and review the incident with senior leaders, which is also directed in the policy. Consequently, a member of staff who was the subject of the allegation remained working in the home. This potentially left the child at further risk of harm. In contrast, following another incident, the registered manager followed the policy correctly and ensured that the

local authority and senior leaders were informed on the same day. This meant that appropriate action was taken, and the child was effectively safeguarded.

Staff respond well when children go missing from the home. Their actions are well coordinated and in line with behaviour support plans. For example, staff actively look for children and work in partnership with children's parents and the relevant external professionals. For one child, these actions resulted in the child promptly returning to the home. In contrast, on two occasions, staff did not show professional curiosity in their assessment of risk for a child. As a result, they did not ensure that the child was adequately supervised. These shortfalls led to the child going missing from the home and left her at risk of harm. The manager has reviewed these incidents and taken action to address these shortfalls in practice.

The registered manager has reviewed the home's location risk assessment. However, the mitigation of risk is not sufficiently detailed. For example, local risks posed by the area around child sexual exploitation and criminal exploitation have not been included. Therefore, the assessment of local risks to children has not been fully explored.

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

A suitably qualified and experienced manager leads the home. She was registered in December 2018.

The registered manager failed to effectively assess the risks when placing one child at the home. For example, the registered manager failed to identify the potential impact of the risks in the local area on the child despite receiving information from the local authority. Furthermore, the registered manager failed to consult with the key professionals involved in the child's care. These shortfalls in the placement planning process led to the child leaving the home after a short period of time. The registered manager has learned from her mistakes. Consequently, the inspector was able to observe more proactive planning and consultation with professionals for two children preparing to move into the home during the inspection.

Leaders do not ensure that staff receive regular supervision to support them in their role. For example, the registered manager has not received regular supervision from the home's responsible individual. Furthermore, staff in their probationary period do not receive regular supervision in line with the company's policy. This means that staff and the registered manager are not provided with the opportunities to improve their practice in caring for children.

The registered manager is in the process of embedding a new system to monitor staff's training needs. She was able to evidence that staff are up to date with mandatory training. However, training is not consistently used effectively to improve staff practice and understanding of important issues for children. For example, one new member of staff completed nine online courses on the same day. Another member of staff was unable to demonstrate a full understanding of child sexual

exploitation. This means that children are not always cared for by staff who have the skills to support them.

An independent person visits the home every month. The reports produced do not always identify actions necessary to improve the service provided for children. Also, they fail to offer adequate challenge to the registered manager or drive improvement in the home.

The registered manager has not submitted an up-to-date version of the home's statement of purpose to Ofsted. The statement of purpose has failed to include details of the staffing structure in the home. Furthermore, it has failed to include details of supervision arrangements for staff delivering therapy and it has not assessed the quality of the therapy delivered effectively. This prevents the reader from having accurate information about the home.

There is a stable and consistent staff team in place. Since the last inspection, no staff have left, and three new staff have started working in the home. Staff state that they feel supported by the management team. During difficult periods, the registered manager has ensured that the home is sufficiently staffed to meet the additional needs of the children.

The registered manager does have some oversight of the home. She ensures that files and records are audited on a regular basis. This allows her to assess the home's strengths and weaknesses. Senior leaders are also supportive and are beginning to introduce new systems to address shortfalls. For example, a new system for matching children's placements is to be used by the registered manager.

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 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. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)) This specifically refers to staff's assessment of risk for children in relation to missing from home.	28 September 2021
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— are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(vii)) This specifically refers to an incident when leaders in the home failed to report an allegation made by a child in the timeframes specified in their policies and procedures.	28 September 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.	28 September 2021

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; 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)(a)(c)(h)) This specifically relates to the registered manager’s monitoring and oversight of the home. This relates to shortfalls in staff training around child sexual exploitation and child exploitation. This also refers to shortfalls in the quality of staff supervision records.	
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. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b)) This specifically relates to the care planning arrangements for one child moving into the home and that, prior to moving to the home, the registered manager failed to carry out a full assessment or consult with the relevant professionals.	28 September 2021
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. (Regulation 16 (1)) This relates specifically to the fact that key information highlighting the staffing structure for the home was not included in the home’s statement of purpose. Furthermore, the registered manager failed to include specific details relating to supervision for the home’s therapist and how the effectiveness of therapy is measured.	28 September 2021
The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children’s home at least once each month.	28 September 2021

The independent person's report may recommend actions that the registered person may take in relation to the home and timescales within which the registered person must consider whether or not to take those actions. (Regulation 44 (1) (5)) This specifically relates to the independent person's report and the lack of actions recommended to ensure that improvements are made in the quality of care received by children.	
The registered person must review the appropriateness and suitability of the location of the premises used for the purposes of the children's home at least once in each calendar year taking into account the requirement in regulation 12(2)(c) (the protection of children standard). (Regulation 46 (1)) This specifically relates to the home's location risk assessment and the need for the registered manager to review, update and include all risks to children based on the environment and home's location.	28 September 2021

Recommendations

- The registered person should review the systems in place for the records of the administration of all medication, which includes occasions when prescribed medication is refused. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 35, paragraph 7.15)

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: SC372630

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Bryn Melyn Care Limited

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

Responsible individual: Tracy Francis

Registered manager: Shanice Jackson

Inspector

Dean Wilton, Social Care Inspector

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