

SC397092

Registered provider: Bryn Melyn Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home registered with Ofsted in July 2009 and is operated by a private company. It provides care for up to three children with complex social and emotional behavioural difficulties.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since April 2020 and holds a qualification in management at level 4.

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.

We last visited this setting on 4 February 2021 to carry out a monitoring visit. The report is published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection dates: 14 and 15 December 2021

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
---	--

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

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

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: 10 December 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10/12/2019	Full	Good
05/02/2019	Full	Good
31/01/2018	Full	Good
23/03/2017	Interim	Declined in effectiveness

Inspection judgements

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

Managers and staff do not always provide consistent care to the children or respond appropriately to concerns to protect children. As a result, managers and staff do not always promote children's welfare and safety to a good standard.

Children benefit from having a warm and stimulating environment. The home is decorated and well furnished. There are photos of the children in place and areas of the home have been personalised to meet children's interests. This provides a feeling of homeliness for the children. However, the registered manager has failed to regularly review the use of door alarms on children's bedrooms. Consequently, the alarms have remained in place when there are no risks to children. This means that children's privacy is not always respected.

Some staff do not understand the home's therapeutic model of care. One external professional commented that staff do not always support (the child) in a therapeutic manner. As a result, children do not always receive consistent care and there has been an increase in incidents requiring physical restraint with the child. This inconsistent care means that children do not always make progress in the important areas of their lives.

Children enjoy good health, and staff help them to lead healthy lifestyles. Also, staff support children to register with local healthcare services and to attend routine appointments. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has led to some delays in children receiving support from the home's clinical team. The registered manager has taken action to overcome these issues. As a result, children are now starting to receive specialist support in line with their needs.

Children make progress at school and in their education. Staff put in place boundaries and good routines to support children to attend school. Furthermore, staff work with education professionals to identify and address any barriers to learning. One child's attendance is 100% and another child spoke positively about her school to the inspector. This means that children are supported to understand the importance of education.

Children have access to a range of activities, and staff support and encourage them to develop their individual interests. For example, one child plays for a local football team and attends regular boxing sessions. These activities help to improve children's confidence and self-esteem.

Staff help children to maintain and develop positive relationships with their families when this is appropriate. They recognise how significant these relationships are to children and their well-being. This support ensures that children are not isolated from the people who are important to them.

Staff support children's transitions effectively. One child has recently moved on from the home and returned to foster care. This was a result of the good progress she had made while living in the home. The move was well planned and supported by staff. This means that children feel supported during important moments in their lives.

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

Leaders do not always respond appropriately and take effective action when children have made allegations against staff. For example, on two occasions, the registered manager failed to respond to an allegation made by a child. As a result, the local authority and senior leaders were not informed. Furthermore, when this was identified by the provider's national care manager, during an external audit, the registered manager did not carry out an investigation or speak to the child. These shortfalls compromise the safety of children.

On other occasions, the registered manager has followed the home's child protection procedures in response to allegations made by children. She has notified the local authority and senior leaders in the company. As a result, internal investigations have taken place. However, leaders have not consistently spoken to children or captured their views and feelings as part of these investigations. This means that important information can be missed, which has the potential to leave children vulnerable.

Staff do not always follow risk assessments when working with children. For example, following an allegation made by a child against a member of staff, the registered manager implemented a risk assessment to safeguard both the child and staff. However, during a further incident, staff failed to follow the risk assessment effectively. This resulted in another allegation being made against staff and left the child feeling distressed.

Recruitment in the home is not consistently safe. Managers have not ensured that the recruitment agency commissioned to provide agency workers to the home has always explored why agency staff have left previous roles working with children. Furthermore, the work history provided by the agency does not match up with dates given in references provided. These shortfalls were not identified or acted on by the registered manager prior to staff working in the home.

Since the last inspection, there has been a high number of incidents requiring the use of physical intervention with children. These measures were used by staff as a last resort and to keep children safe. The manager has ensured that staff and children have been spoken to following every incident. However, the registered manager has not evaluated or recorded the effectiveness of the measures of physical restraint used by staff. Consequently, staff and children miss out on the opportunities to reflect and learn from their experiences.

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

A suitably qualified and experienced manager leads the home. She registered in April 2020. Staff describe her as being supportive and approachable. Supervision sessions are regular and reflective. This means that staff feel valued and supported in their role.

Staff are not always equipped to deliver the home's therapeutic model of care to children. This is because training systems used by the registered manager are inconsistent. For example, some staff have completed therapeutic parenting training. Other staff have completed a short course online. Consequently, staff were unable to explain or demonstrate how they use their training to support children therapeutically. These shortfalls mean that staff are not always suitably equipped to meet the needs of children.

Leaders have failed to ensure that monitoring systems in place support the development of the home. For example, the independent person's reports following visits to the home do not challenge shortfalls or identify areas for improvement. In addition, the registered manager's systems have failed to identify shortfalls in staff's knowledge, staff recruitment and children's records. Consequently, two of the requirements made at the last inspection were not met. This has the potential to impact on the quality of care received by children.

The registered manager regularly reviews the quality of care received by children. The quality of these reviews is improving, and the views of children, staff and external professionals are used to improve the service. However, leaders have failed to consistently send the reports to Ofsted within the required time frames. This means that the regulator is not always up to date or able to have accurate information about the home.

The registered manager ensures that the home is suitably staffed to meet the needs of the children. There is a continual process of staff recruitment to cover vacancies in the team. Also, staff work hard to cover gaps in the home's rota. This ensures that children are cared for by staff who are familiar to them.

Senior leaders have recently become more involved and are supporting the home. The national care manager has completed audits which have identified areas for improvement. Furthermore, she has delivered additional training and developed new systems for staff to use to assist them with recording incidents. However, these improvements are not yet fully embedded in 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, 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— understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(v)(vii)) In particular, the provider should ensure that staff understand and follow risk assessments which have been put in place to keep children safe. Furthermore, the provider should ensure that all concerns about children's welfare are reported and investigated appropriately, and that children are spoken to following allegations of abuse made against staff working in the home.	19 January 2022
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— 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;	19 January 2022

ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; 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)) In particular, the provider should ensure that staff receive training and are suitably equipped to deliver the home's therapeutic model of care to children in line with the home's statement of purpose. Also, leaders must ensure that monitoring systems are used to identify areas for improvement in the quality of care received by children.	
The registered person must ensure that— any limitation placed on a child's privacy or access to any area of the home's premises— is intended to safeguard each child accommodated in the home; is necessary and proportionate; is kept under review and, if necessary, revised; and allows children as much freedom as is possible when balanced against the need to protect them and keep them safe. (Regulation 21 (c)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)) In particular, the provider should ensure that the use of alarms on children's bedroom doors is regularly reviewed and that they are not used for any longer than is necessary.	19 January 2022
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The registered person may only— employ an individual to work at the children's home; or if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home, if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3).	19 January 2022

The requirements are that— full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1) (2)(a)(b) (3)(d)) In particular, managers should ensure that recruitment agencies commissioned to provide agency staff carry out the relevant background checks on staff before they work in the home with children.	
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 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 effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure. (Regulation 35 (1)(a)(b) (3)(a)(vii)) In particular, managers should ensure that all behaviour management records are regularly reviewed and that they record the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure. This requirement was made at the last monitoring visit and is restated.	19 January 2022
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 and timescales within which the registered person must consider whether or not to take those actions. (Regulation 44 (1) (5))	19 January 2022

In particular, the independent person's report should ensure that recommendations are made for improving the quality of care received by children in the home. This requirement was made at the last monitoring visit and is restated.	
The registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ("a quality of care review") at least once every 6 months. The registered person must— supply to HMCI a copy of the quality of care review report within 28 days of the date on which the quality of care review is completed. (Regulation 45 (1) (4)(a)) In particular, leaders must ensure that the home's quality of care review is sent to Ofsted within the required time frames.	26 January 2022

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: SC397092

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Bryn Melyn Care Limited

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

Responsible individual: Stephen Travis

Registered manager: Karen White

Inspector

Dean Wilton, 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