

SC490365

Assurance visit

Information about this children's home

The home is owned by a private limited company with charitable status. The home provides care that meets the needs of Orthodox Jewish children, in ways which are consistent with their culture and faith. The home provides care to eight disabled children who may have a range of physical and/or learning disabilities and communication difficulties. The home can accommodate up to eight children in permanent placements or under short-break arrangements.

Visit dates: 8 to 9 December 2020

Previous inspection date: 20 May 2019

Previous inspection judgement: Good

Information about this visit

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), Ofsted suspended all routine inspections in March 2020. As part of a phased return to routine inspection, we are undertaking assurance visits to children's social care services that are inspected under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF).

At these visits, inspectors evaluate the extent to which:

- children are well cared for
- children are safe
- leaders and managers are exercising strong leadership.

This visit was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000, following the published guidance for assurance visits.

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills is leading Ofsted's work into how England's social care system has delivered child-centred practice and care within the context of the restrictions placed on society during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Findings from the visit

We did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance visit.

The care of children

Children make steady progress and have positive experiences. They receive individualised care, which meets their needs. A parent said of the service, 'It's a home from home.' During recent periods of lockdown, children have appreciated the opportunity to further build trusting relationships with the staff team. Staff are skilled in interpreting children's gestures and non-verbal cues to make sure children's needs are understood.

Children live healthy lifestyles. Their physical, emotional and psychological health care needs are very well met. Staff ensure that children receive specialist services as required. These include speech and language services, occupational health and mental health specialists. A social worker said, 'My young person has significant health needs and is difficult to manage. The home is amazing, and my young person and her parents are very happy with the placement.'

Children's identity, cultural and religious needs are expertly met by the home. The home provides care exclusively to children of the Jewish orthodox faith. Jewish celebrations, festivals and religious observations are strictly adhered to. This includes the preparation of Kosher meals. One child is receiving additional instruction in Kodesh, Jewish religious studies classes.

Most children attend school and are making steady progress. Staff work industriously to promote children's learning and daily living skills. Where children's school placements are yet to be identified, staff advocate strongly to ensure children continue with their education. In one case, staff fought hard to ensure that a child received an increase in the number of home tuition hours that they received.

Children have opportunities to share their views. Staff are skilled in interpreting the needs of all children, including those who do not use speech to communicate. As a result, children are given good choices. For example, a choice of menu, favourite leisure activities and how they prefer to be supported with personal care tasks. Staff periodically support children to complete a user-friendly survey about their experiences and wishes.

During the lockdown period, children participated in an array of creative activities and made good use of the home's facilities. These included sensory play, music, drama and use of the home's hydro-pool. These activities have been effective in keeping children engaged with each other, the staff team and providing a sense of fun during very challenging times.

The safety of children

Staff work hard to keep children safe and protect them from harm and abuse. Staff receive regular training that focuses on child protection. However, some staff are not familiar with safeguarding protocols as it relates to allegations made against senior staff. This was an issue highlighted at the last inspection and the requirement is repeated at this visit.

Risk assessments alert staff to known and anticipate risks and include strategies that help to reduce children's risk-taking behaviour. However, some risk assessments require revision to ensure that they include newly emerging risks. Behaviour management plans provide staff with clear guidance that help them effectively manage any challenging behaviour.

Staff's supervision of children is vigilant, and this helps to keep them safe. Children have access to adapted equipment such as hoists and specialised beds. This supports them to receive safe care. There have been no incidents of children going missing from the home or any allegations made against members of staff.

Children benefit from the clear boundaries set by staff. They are skilled in helping children manage their emotions and reflect on their behaviour. Critical incidents are a rare occurrence and there have been no instances of staff needing to restrain children.

Leaders and managers

Since the last inspection a new manager has been appointed and has been registered with Ofsted. The registered manager is qualified and well-experienced to run a children's home that caters for disabled children. The registered manager's overview of the home is effective and includes completion of regulation 45 monitoring reports. This helps to improve the quality of care that children receive.

Leaders and managers make child-centred decisions when exploring possible new placements. However, some care plans are largely descriptive and not explicit about placement objectives and how and when these are to be achieved. Placement plans are not always focused setting each child's goals and targets. This was an issue at the last inspection, and the requirement is repeated here. In addition, impact assessments do not highlight the risks posed to children already living in the home by children about to start living there.

The provider employs a sufficient number of staff to meet children's needs. Staff have access to good training opportunities. However, it is not clear whether all staff have completed key training such as disability and autism awareness or training in epilepsy.

Managers' support of staff is very good. A member of staff said, 'It's fantastic here now. The manager is super. She listens and tries her best to look after us in order for us to look after children.' Staff inductions are thorough and have improved since the last inspection. These now include comprehensive guidance to new staff about caring for children who practice orthodox Jewish faith.

The staff team receives regular individual supervision as well as annual appraisals. This was not the case at the last inspection.

Staff's communication with external partners is regular and consistent. This helps to ensure that those involved in children's lives are aware of their progress and placement issues. This supports the good coordination of children's care.

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 placement plan must set out, in particular— how, on a day-to-day basis, the child will be cared for, and the child's welfare safeguarded and promoted by the home; the arrangements made for the child's care, education and health; and any arrangements made for contact with the child's parents, relatives and friends. (Regulation 18(5)(a)(b)(c)). Specifically, records of short break placement plans must be explicit in highlighting objectives and timescales for review.	01 March 2021
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. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that each child's relevant plans are followed. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b)(2)(c)) Specifically, that care planning records for looked after children are explicit in highlighting placement objectives and timescales for review.	01 March 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— understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person. (Regulation 12(1)(2)(a)(v)). This relates to staff's understanding of action to take in the event of a child's allegation against senior staff.	01 March 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. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b)(2)(h)) Specifically, the registered person must ensure that staff's recording of information is of a high quality. This relates to risk assessments and impact assessments.	01 March 2021

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC490365

Registered provider: Bayis Sheli Limited

Registered provider address: New Burlington House, 1075 Finchley Road, London NW11 0PU

Responsible individual: Jacob Sorotzkin

Registered manager: Miriam Herzog

Inspector

Sandra Jacobs-Walls, Social Care Inspector

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