

# 1248979

Registered provider: Little Belsteads Care Home Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This home provides care for up to seven children, aged eight to 17 on admission, who have learning disabilities and/or sensory impairment.

The registered manager left the service in May 2019. The new manager started six weeks before this inspection.

**Inspection dates:** 18 to 19 June 2019

**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:** 5 December 2018

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** sustained effectiveness

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
05/12/2018	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
09/05/2018	Full	Good
07/03/2018	Interim	Improved effectiveness
18/07/2017	Full	Inadequate

## 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
<p>The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that—</p> <p>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and</p> <p>promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>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))</p>	30/08/2019
<p>The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety.</p> <p>The requirements are that—</p> <p>full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32(3)(d))</p> <p>In particular, if a person has previously worked in a position involving work with children, so far as is reasonably practicable, verify the reason why the employment or position ended.</p>	30/08/2019
<p>The registered person must ensure that, within 48 hours of the use of a measure of control, the registered person or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ('the authorised person')</p> <p>has spoken to the user about the measure; and</p> <p>has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and</p> <p>within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person</p>	30/08/2019

or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35(3)(b)(c))	
The registered person must maintain records ('case records') for each child which—  are kept up to date. (Regulation 36(1)(b))	30/08/2019

## Recommendations

- Keep the statement of purpose under review. The statement of purpose should be child-focused, indicating how the home provides individualised care to meet the Quality Standards for the children in its care. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 14, paragraph 3.5)

In particular, provide details of the calm room.

- Ensure that staff follow and understand 'Managing medicines in care homes' (March 2014). ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 35, paragraph 7.17)
- Ensure that all staff can access appropriate facilities and resources to support their training needs. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.11)

In particular, provide training in understanding mental health, anxiety and depression.

## Inspection judgements

### Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The majority of children, who have complex needs, make significant social and behavioural progress from their unique starting points. Children learn new skills and their health improves.

All children benefit from the routine of attending school. Some children attend the school run by the provider. Good communication between the home's staff and teaching staff and regular discussion ensure that all children attend regularly and engage positively in their school day. This helps children to reach their learning potential.

Children benefit from a varied and nutritious diet. This encourages children to experiment and try new foods. Some children are encouraged to take an active role in food preparation, which helps to encourage independence. Staff and children have fun together. They celebrate occasions, play games and share meal times. This is inclusive and enables a family atmosphere.

Children's hygiene and ability to achieve small personal goals improve. For example, some children learn how to brush their teeth and feed themselves independently.

Staff actively listen to children. They encourage children to participate in the running of the home and to make suggestions for improvement. This ensures that children maintain a firm sense of identity.

Inside the home, children have enough space to relax and they have shared access to electronic equipment. Children's bedrooms are personalised. The extensive and stimulating grounds offer exceptionally generous space for children to explore, be curious, play and have fun.

Parents are regular visitors and are consistently made welcome. A parent said, 'When we visit, it is like we are one big family together.' Staff do a good job involving children in group and individual activities in the local community. Every child is encouraged to develop their personal interests and unique talents, for example in musical theatre or gardening. Children develop their social skills, are valued and reach their potential.

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

Staff advocate for the children. Children like living at this home. They build good relationships with staff and managers. Children named trusted adults in the staff team to whom they go for help and support. Children recognise that lots of staff do their best to provide them with good help, support, structure and routine.

Rewards, praise, incentives, positive regard and encouragement help most children to manage and regulate their behaviour a lot of the time. Nonetheless, the frequency and intensity of physical intervention spiked significantly for a short time during the admission of one child who has since moved on. Written records are not sufficiently clear about the opportunities provided to staff and children to reflect on practice after an incident. This does not demonstrate that there is learning for all from every physical intervention.

Children going missing from this home is unusual and limited to one child. Staff take positive and proactive action to work transparently and efficiently with all relevant agencies to ensure children's safe return. This significantly reduces the likelihood of recurrence.

There have been no complaints from children, parents or placing local authorities. The quality assurance officer takes positive action to ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibilities to make known any concerns or worries. Internal investigations inform recommendations to improve safeguarding practice. Very recent additional safeguarding training has ensured that all staff are aware of the required action in the event of staff seeing or hearing anything of concern.

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

The registered manager has left the service, and her application to voluntarily cancel registration has been received. The new manager, who was recently appointed, has submitted an application to Ofsted to register as manager. The new manager has the relevant experience and knowledge to help staff to understand their responsibilities.

Some new staff have been recruited to work at the home. Some of the recruitment procedures are not satisfactory. Specifically, reference checks are not sufficiently far reaching, which does not ensure that full information about every individual's suitability is available prior to their working with vulnerable children, some of whom are non-verbal.

Staff undertake a relevant level 3 qualification. The assessor visits the home, and this arrangement encourages groups of staff to talk to one another about some practice issues. A recently revamped induction process helps to ensure that staff are equipped with the required knowledge to fulfil their role and that all staff are familiar with the internal whistle-blowing procedures.

Staff receive training, and this can be face-to-face or online. They have received training in understanding autistic spectrum conditions and managing challenging behaviour. However, the breadth of training available does not focus on some of the mental health issues that some of the children are dealing with. Thus, not all staff are fully prepared to deal with specific challenges.

The statement of purpose refers to the home having a calm room available for children to use. However, this room is currently unavailable for children. This reduces the resources available to staff to help them to support children to manage stress when they are at the home. This is misleading for parents, commissioners and children.

Quality assurance processes are not good enough. The managers and leaders do not identify and respond to errors in documentation quickly enough. Much of the paperwork and written documentation is poorly organised. Some information about the arrangements for the administration of children's medication is not clear enough. Large sections of children's records are muddled, incomplete or not up to date. This does not ensure that full and satisfactory information is available for every child living at the home. Lack of accurate information can result in inconsistency in practice and errors of judgement. However, the new manager is working well with the home's two deputy managers. Together with the quality assurance officer, they have developed an action plan that identifies many areas for improvement. This means that the current managers and leaders are aware of and working to address some of the shortfalls identified at this inspection.

A maintenance log helps leaders to keep track of the physical improvements needed at the home. The responsible individual ensures that appropriate funds and resources are available to repair damage and wear and tear.

The responsible individual has achieved a relevant level 5 qualification, which demonstrates that he is committed to continuing his professional development in social care.

## **Information about this inspection**

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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:** 1248979

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** Little Belsteads Care Home Limited

**Registered provider address:** Little Belsteads, Back Lane, Little Waltham, Chelmsford  
CM3 3PP

**Responsible individual:** Peter Adams

**Registered manager:** Post vacant

## Inspectors

Rosie Davie: social care inspector

Joanna Heller: social care inspector



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