

# 1248979

**Little Belsteads Care Home Limited**

Monitoring visit

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, who have learning disabilities and/or sensory impairment.

The manager has been registered since July 2019.

**Inspection date:** 3 March 2020

## **This monitoring visit**

The monitoring inspection was undertaken after concerns were raised with Ofsted. At this monitoring visit, several shortfalls were identified.

The management of allegations about members of staff is poor. The manager's actions to address poor practice are inconsistent. Several of the internal investigations into allegations and identified practice concerns are incomplete. These failures mean that the children are not safeguarded as far as practicable.

The manager has not informed the designated officer of every allegation that has been made about members of the staff. He failed to investigate an allegation of staff making derogatory comments about the children. Aspects of the safeguarding records are incomplete. The records are not all signed by the author and there are discrepancies in some of the records. In some cases, it is not clear if the placing authorities have been informed. There are investigations that have no recorded outcome and, in some cases, no record of the actual allegation or the actions taken in response. These failures mean that there are ineffective safeguards for the children and that actions are not in accordance with the home's safeguarding policy.

The manager has failed to inform Ofsted of allegations and serious concerns about the staff's practice. A failure to notify means that Ofsted does not have up-to-date information about the home and how well the children are protected.

The manager has failed to provide support when the staff clearly need guidance and monitoring. This is despite records that detail a member of staff making

inappropriate comments and behaving negatively towards the children. This fails to safeguard the children or properly monitor poor practice.

The home's location risk assessment does not include an assessment of the use of the home's gates as a measure to keep the children safe. Therefore, not all possible action to reduce risks to the children has been considered.

The staff have applied some unreasonable sanctions. On one occasion, a sanction that was applied to a child who had expressed thoughts of self-harm actually caused some self-harm. There is no record of any other behaviour to warrant the measure of control that was used. Use of an unreasonable sanction happened on a second occasion, demonstrating that the manager fails to monitor the sanction records and discuss whether the staff's actions are justified, meaningful and proportionate.

The internal and external monitoring of the home is weak. The managerial monitoring is hindered by a failure to hold information centrally. The records of allegations and concerns about staff's practice are held in staff supervision and recruitment files and held electronically. This makes the records difficult to audit and monitor comprehensively and, therefore, areas for improvement are not identified. This reduces the effectiveness of the safeguards intended through this monitoring.

This monitoring visit identified some aspects of positive practice. The staff spoke positively about the children. The staff enjoy their work. They were clear about the actions that they would take if they had a concern. The interactions observed between the staff and the children were positive.

The staff provide high levels of supervision to the children. Effective communication between the separate houses where the children live ensures that the staff can request extra support if required. The staff confirmed that the children access activities and have made progress living at the home. A social worker supported this view.

The manager has taken swift action in response to some concerns regarding staff practice, and two of the staff have been dismissed. The records of staff's supervision indicate that, in these cases, there have been no further concerns about practice and the quality of care has improved.

The management has reflected on a child's placement breakdown following a significant incident. It has considered possible actions that may reduce the risk of a recurrence in a similar situation.

Two of the four requirements and three recommendations made at the last inspection were not monitored at this inspection. These will be reviewed at the next inspection.

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
18/06/2019	Full	Good
05/12/2018	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
09/05/2018	Full	Good
07/03/2018	Interim	Improved effectiveness

## 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 positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on—</p> <p>mutual respect and trust;</p> <p>an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and</p> <p>positive responses to other children and adults.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>understand how children's previous experiences and present emotions can be communicated through behaviour and have the competence and skills to interpret these and develop positive relationships with children; and</p> <p>are provided with supervision and support to enable them to understand and manage their own feelings and responses to the behaviour and emotions of children, and to help children to do the same. (Regulation 11(1)(a)(b)(c)(2)(a)(ix)(x))</p>	31/03/2020
<p>The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person;</p> <p>take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and</p> <p>are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies. (Regulation 12(1)(2)(a)(v)(vi)(vii))</p>	31/03/2020
<p>The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p>	13/03/2020

<p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12(1)(2)(b))</p> <p>In particular, review the home's location risk assessment.</p>	
<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>understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home; and</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)(f)(h))</p>	31/03/2020
<p>No measure of control or discipline which is excessive, unreasonable or contrary to paragraph (2) may be used in relation to any child. (Regulation 19(1))</p>	13/03/2020
<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 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—</p> <p>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 or the authorised person adds to the record</p>	30/08/2019

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— include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child; are kept up to date; and are signed and dated by the author of each entry. (Regulation 36(1)(a)(b)(c))	31/03/2020
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; or there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40(4)(c)(e))	20/03/2020

## 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.

## Information about this inspection

The purpose of this visit was to review practice at the home following Ofsted's receipt of concerns about the home.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

## **Children's home details**

**Unique reference number:** 1248979

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

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

**Responsible individual:** Peter Adams

**Registered manager:** Alec Cussell

## **Inspectors**

Natalie Burton, social care inspector

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