

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, with learning disabilities and/or sensory impairment. Five children may live in the main house and two in the barn annexe.

The registered manager left in February 2021, and a new manager was quickly appointed. The new manager has yet to submit a complete application for registration.

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.

We last visited this setting on 30 March 2020 to carry out a monitoring visit. The report is published on our website.

Inspection dates: 13 to 14 May 2021

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 18 June 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

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

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The staff have supported the children effectively through the COVID-19 pandemic. The staff were mindful of the potential risks to a child who is clinically vulnerable.

One child moved into the home and has now returned to their family home since September 2020. Another child, due to staff no longer being able to manage their behaviour, has moved out. Most of the children have lived at the home for over two years and have enjoyed a stable environment.

The manager has ensured that the children are suitably matched so that the needs of children who move into the home are compatible with the needs of the children already living at the home.

The staff have helped the children to maintain their learning and development. The staff celebrate children's achievements. One child was very excited and ran off to show everyone a favourite book they had received as a reward for their achievements.

One child attends the on-site school and has been able to maintain their education throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. The children are supported to attend schools or colleges that meet their individual needs. The staff are supporting a child in their part-time work at a local butchers.

The staff encourage each child to develop independence skills according to their age and ability. Some children assist with preparing vegetables for dinner while others cook and manage their laundry independently.

Children are consulted about a wide variety of topics in daily conversations and through regular children's meetings. Staff write an action plan after each house meeting. This supports children to understand that their wishes and feelings are listened to and acted on by staff.

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

The children have built and maintained strong and trusting relationships with staff. The inspectors observed positive interactions between staff and children during the inspection. These relationships have helped children to feel safe and secure.

The staff understand their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding children. The staff have had appropriate safeguarding training and they know how to report concerns. External professionals said that they are confident that the staff keep the children safe.

Children are supported to take age-appropriate risks as part of their emotional and social development.

The staff have received suitable training in keeping children safe online. This has helped them be alert to, and address, any issues of concern.

Effective staff recruitment processes reduce the risk of unsuitable people gaining employment in the home. Any issues of concern regarding staff practice are suitably investigated and addressed.

The staff understand the children's individual needs. The staff are trained in behaviour management, which supports them to manage behaviours effectively. However, the staff were unable to manage the behaviours of one child or keep them safe. The provider recognised that remaining at the home was not in the child's best interests, and the child subsequently moved to a home that could better meet their needs.

The children have individual behaviour support plans. However, these plans do not inform staff of potential triggers that could lead to unwanted behaviours.

The children have individual risk assessments. These have not been consistently updated after an incident and therefore staff do not have the most current information to guide them. There are no risk assessments for children going missing from the home. However, when incidents of children going missing from the home have occurred, the staff have managed incidents appropriately.

A shed in the garden that contained a variety of hazardous tools and materials was unlocked and accessible to children. The children were at school at the time and therefore the risk of harm was reduced.

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

The registered manager left in February 2021, and a new manager was appointed in March 2021. This ensured that staff had consistent management support. The new manager has not yet submitted a valid application for registration to Ofsted.

The monitoring of the home is not effective. The home's fire risk assessment does not identify the reason that night-time fire drills do not take place. Records are not of a consistently high quality and are sometimes not reliable. For example, staff rotas and the logbook do not accurately reflect the staff who are working at the home each day. The central complaints log does not include the details of a complaint, and contact details for some children's social workers need updating. Not all records are signed or dated.

On two occasions, staffing arrangements, for a brief time during the morning, have not met the documented needs of the children. The manager advised that this was due to recent rota changes, which are under review.

There is a consistent and stable staff team that knows and understands the children's individual needs. The staff said that they feel supported by the manager and that they have good regular supervision. This support helps the staff to work with the children effectively and enables the staff's professional development. The staff receive appropriate training to support them to meet the children's complex needs.

The statement of purpose does not contain details of the staff's experience and qualifications. There is no information regarding the keypad system on external doors. This means that parents and placing authorities do not have access to the full range of information about the service.

The home is set in a rural location, surrounded by fields and woods. The house and grounds are large and spacious. However, the home needs redecoration in some communal areas. A programme of repair and redecoration is being undertaken by the manager and maintenance team in order to improve the living environment for the children.

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 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>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;</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;</p> <p>that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(b)(d))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that electrical wires are appropriately secured and that unsafe areas such as the garden shed are kept secure at all times.</p> <p>Provide staff and children with suitable instruction on how to safely evacuate the building at night.</p> <p>Ensure that risk assessments are sufficiently detailed and that children's risk assessments cover all relevant areas of risk including going missing from the home.</p>	28 June 2021
<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>	28 June 2021

<p>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>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;</p> <p>ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child;</p> <p>ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child;</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)(c)(d)(g)(ii)(h))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that sufficient staffing is available to meet children’s needs each morning before they go to school.</p> <p>Ensure that records are accurate, signed and dated.</p> <p>Ensure that all staff complete appropriate training in mental health and preventing radicalisation.</p>	
<p>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))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that the statement of purpose includes the details of the experience and qualifications of staff and a description of how the accommodation has been adapted to the needs of children, including the use of keypad locking exit systems.</p>	<p>28 June 2021</p>

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the children's home is a well-maintained, homely and domestic environment. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should ensure that children's individual behaviour management plans are sufficiently detailed to guide staff's understanding of potential triggers for behaviours and how to observe, notice and respond to these. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 22, paragraph 4.10)

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: 1248979

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Little Belsteads Care Home Limited

Responsible individual: Peter Adams

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Joanna Heller, Social Care Inspector
Trish Palmer, Social Care Inspector

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