

1248979

Little Belsteads Care Home Limited

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The children's home is owned by a small independent provider. The home provides care for up to seven children, aged eight to 17, with learning disabilities and/or sensory impairment.

The accommodation comprises a main house and a barn annex.

The registered manager left in February 2021. A new manager is in post and has applied for registration with Ofsted.

Inspection date: 14 October 2021

This monitoring visit

This monitoring visit was undertaken to explore anonymous complaints received by Ofsted about the home. The complaints outlined concerns about the staff's ability to manage children's behaviour and the suitability of the environment.

At the time of the visit, four children were living at the home. One child recently moved out in an unplanned way following incidents that resulted in staff being injured and serious damage to property. This child's move to the home was well planned. Managers and staff had met the child and consulted with the child's school to inform their assessment. Unfortunately, this child's needs increased after the admission and the staff were unable to manage the child's behaviour safely.

The management team has reflected on this child's admission to the home and how staff and managers responded to the incidents. This debrief was led by a psychologist and identified lessons learned. These have been included in a development plan for the home, with an emphasis on providing stability to children and staff.

Managers undertake individual debriefs with staff following incidents. This allows staff to share their views and worries. Managers also facilitate hold team debriefs to reflect on staff practice.

There have been changes to managers and staff since the last inspection. Staff have found this unsettling. In addition, staff leaving, staff sickness and staff injury have resulted in staff shortages. The children require high levels of supervision. Staff and managers have worked tirelessly to offer children continuity of care. As a result, staff are tired and staff morale is low. Managers are prioritising the recruitment of staff. They have successfully appointed some new staff and have a clear plan for the recruitment and induction of more staff before any new children are considered.

Staff receive regular supervision and team meetings take place every fortnight. Some staff feel that management support could be improved. Others are complimentary about the support from managers, including the out-of-hours support provided. Managers are aware of staff concerns and are working to address these to ensure staff always feel supported.

Staff have all attended face-to-face physical intervention training. However, some staff continue to feel anxious about managing the physical aggression that the children sometimes display. One of the managers has experience as a behavioural support practitioner and provides clear direction on the approaches and strategies that staff should use. This guidance is reflected in children's individual behaviour management plans.

Serious incidents with one child resulted in a lot of damage to the main house. This included electrical and water damage due to flooding. Managers took immediate action to arrange emergency repairs to make the home safe. Work is ongoing to repair the damage and to replace some items. Managers are implementing a development plan to improve the decoration and furnishings at the home. In the interim, the home is furnished and decorated to an adequate standard. Children were observed to be comfortable in communal areas and they have personalised their bedrooms.

A recent fire risk assessment identified that a number of fire doors needed adapting or replacing. Managers have this work scheduled.

Managers have made improvements since the last inspection. Individual risk assessments have been updated and action has been taken to prevent access to hazardous material. However, the location risk assessment has not been updated following an incident of a child leaving the premises through the perimeter hedge. This does not adequately manage the risk of children accessing the adjoining busy road.

The home is led by managers who are experienced in caring for children with learning disabilities. They have a good knowledge of the service and the improvements that are required.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
13/05/2021	Full	Good
18/06/2019	Full	Good
05/12/2018	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
09/05/2018	Full	Good

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 the premises used for the purposes of the home are located so that children are effectively safeguarded. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(c))</p> <p>In particular, review the location risk assessment to ensure measures are in place to reduce the risk of children leaving the premises.</p>	1 November 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> <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>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. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(c)(d))</p>	1 November 2021

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that the children's home is a well-maintained, homely and domestic environment. In particular, ensure that the decorative range top is repaired and the home's development plan is implemented. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this visit was to monitor the action taken and the progress made by the children's home since its last Ofsted inspection.

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

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

Responsible individual: Peter Adams

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Paula Edwards, Social Care Inspector

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