

SC441080

Registered provider: Bryn Melyn Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The service is owned by a private company. The home is registered to care for three children. Children come to live at the home because of family or placement breakdowns. Some children have difficulties that make their situation very difficult. Some children experience abuse.

The home does not have a registered manager. The current manager has been in post since July 2021. He is in the process of applying to Ofsted to be the registered manager. He is currently completing the level 5 diploma in leadership for health and social care, and the children and young people's services residential management pathway.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021.

Inspection dates: 16 and 17 November 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	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 6 August 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
06/08/2019	Full	Good
18/07/2018	Full	Good
06/03/2018	Full	Good
02/01/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

There are three children currently living in the home. One of these children has lived in the home for over three years. Since the last inspection, one child has moved out and one child has moved into the home.

The home is decorated and furnished to a good standard. Soft furnishings and photos of the children create a homely feel. Children enjoy living in a spacious and comfortable home and have been supported to personalise their rooms. One child told the inspector that he was happy living at the home. This helps the children to feel valued and to develop a sense of belonging.

Children attend education and are progressing well. Children who have previously experienced barriers to attendance and learning are now attending full-time education. Staff work closely with education providers to ensure that children are provided with learning in line with their needs. As a result of this, children have made considerable progress.

Staff are proactive in ensuring that children's health needs are met, with all primary healthcare appointments taking place. Staff understand children's additional health needs and support children to attend specialist appointments.

Children spend time with people who are important to them. Staff develop good relationships with children's families and understand the importance of these relationships. One parent told the inspector that the staff were like an extended family. For some children, their relationships with their family members have improved, which has resulted in one child having overnight stays with his family.

Children are encouraged to participate in activities in the local community. For example, one child has an interest in fishing and will go on a regular basis with staff. During the inspection, the child was eager to show the inspector her fishing equipment. Another child has a passion for nature. Staff have purchased him a National Trust pass. In addition, children have experienced other enjoyable activities such as swimming, walking and trips to theme parks. These activities provide children with a sense of enrichment and enjoyment.

Children receive help to develop life skills, so that they are prepared for their future. For example, one child is being supported to apply for a part-time job, and another child is being supported to cook meals independently. Both children are developing their confidence and are making progress with their independence. This helps children to prepare for their futures.

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

The committed staff work hard to keep children safe. Staff are consistent in their approach as they understand children's risk and behaviours and the plans in place to manage these. During the inspection, children told the inspector that they felt safe and identified key members of staff that they can talk to.

Children's care plans provide staff with a clear overview of their risks and behaviours. The plans are reviewed by the manager and are updated when new risks emerge. Staff work alongside external professionals, such as social workers and teachers, to gather key safeguarding information. This joined-up approach ensures that children are effectively safeguarded.

Staff respond quickly when children go missing. This is because staff understand what they need to do in such situations. Staff undertake thorough searches for children using their knowledge of the likely places that children will have gone to. When required, staff do not delay in reporting children as missing to the police. When children are located, staff take the time to understand the reasons why they may have gone missing. However, the manager does not always ensure that return home interviews take place.

Staff use rewards to encourage children to make positive choices. Children respond well to this practice and enjoy receiving rewards for their good behaviour. Children are included in setting their own goals. This helps children to feel valued and to want to make positive choices.

Physical restraints have reduced since the last inspection. Staff only use physical restraint when it is necessary to safeguard children and others. Following incidents, children receive good support which enables them to reflect on their emotions. Records reflect thorough accounts of incidents and include the manager's oversight and evaluation. However, some records did not record the details of the individual restraints used. This recording shortfall has not compromised the safety of the children.

Professionals told the inspector that communication from the home is excellent. Staff provide regular updates and feel that any incidents are well managed. They are happy with the strategies put in place by the home and feel that the home manages risk well.

Allegations into possible harm are investigated thoroughly and swiftly. Children are supported and protected throughout the process. The manager ensures that any identified learning is actioned and verified.

Safer recruitment practice is in place for most new staff joining the home. This includes all appropriate references being completed in accordance with regulation. However, during the inspection the inspector identified that not all references are verified before staff commence their employment. The registered manager reviewed

the recruitment process during the inspection and additional measures were put in place to prevent this happening again.

The manager has not reviewed the home's location risk assessment in over a year and, therefore, the assessment has not considered current risk factors. The manager was aware that this was outstanding and intends to review this assessment soon.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The current manager has been in post since July 2021 and is becoming increasingly established in his role. The manager has worked hard to develop his staff team and to put children at the centre of their practice.

The manager's effective monitoring means that he has a sound understanding of the strengths of the home and the areas for development. The manager continually makes improvements to the home, which enhances the quality of care provided to children.

Staff enjoy working at the home and feel supported by the management team. This has contributed to the home having a stable staff team. This means that children are looked after by familiar adults who know them well.

The manager is committed to developing the staff team and enabling it to progress professionally. Staff benefit from a varied training programme which is tailored to help staff meet the individual needs of the children. Most staff hold a level three qualification and those who do not are working towards it. This equips staff with the level of knowledge and skills needed for the role.

The manager ensures that staff have regular supervisions. These are beneficial and productive and support staff in developing their skills further. The manager is also well supported by senior managers and receives regular supervision.

Good communication between staff and other professionals helps to promote a collaborative approach to meeting the children's needs. Professionals are positive about the home and the support provided to children. A social worker told the inspector that, 'The home is amazing.'

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 registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety.</p> <p>The registered person may only—</p> <p>employ an individual to work at the children's home; or</p> <p>if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home,</p> <p>if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3).</p> <p>The requirements are that—</p> <p>full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1) (2)(a)(b) (3)(d))</p> <p>This specifically relates to references being verified before staff commence employment.</p>	30 December 2021
<p>The registered person must review the appropriateness and suitability of the location of the premises used for the purposes of the children's home at least once in each calendar year taking into account the requirement in regulation 12(2)(c) (the protection of children standard).</p> <p>When conducting the review, the registered person must consult, and take into account the views of, each relevant person. (Regulation 46 (1)(2))</p> <p>This specifically relates to the location risk assessment not being reviewed for over a year.</p>	30 December 2021

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that, when a child returns to the home after being missing from care or away from the home without permission, the responsible local authority must provide an opportunity for the child to have an independent return home interview. Homes should take account of information provided by such interviews when assessing risks and putting arrangements in place to protect each child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.30)
- The registered person should ensure that records of restraint must be kept and should enable the registered person and staff to review the use of control, discipline and restraint to identify effective practice and respond promptly where any issues or trends of concern emerge. The review should provide the opportunity for amending practice to ensure it meets the needs of each child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 49, paragraph 9.59)

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: SC441080

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Bryn Melyn Care Limited

Registered provider address: Atria, Spa Road, Bolton BL1 4AG

Responsible individual: Laura Duckers

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Lydia Isaac, Social Care Inspector

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