

Beacon House Therapeutic Services And Trauma Team

Beacon House Psychological Services Limited

Ground Floor, The Old Hospital, Chapelfields, Ardingly Road, Cuckfield, West Sussex RH17 5JR

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this adoption support agency

Beacon House Therapeutic Services and Trauma Team is jointly owned by the responsible individual and finance director. The service operates from a large building in Cuckfield. The agency, including the manager, was registered on 18 September 2020.

Alongside offering therapeutic services to the public, the agency also provides adoption support services to children, adults and families. It also offers professional and organisational consultation and training services.

At the time of this inspection, the agency was working with 156 adoptive children and their families and 27 adopted adults. In the past 12 months, 176 adoption support packages were funded by a local authority (to include the Adoption Support Fund). There were seven adoption support packages in the past 12 months that were self-funded.

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: 30 November to 2 December 2021

Overall experience and progress of service users , taking into account	good
How well children, young people and adults are helped and protected	good
The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good

The adoption support agency provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: not applicable

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: not applicable

Inspection judgement

Overall experiences and progress of service users: good

The agency provides very good, high-quality packages of individual support to children, families and adult service users. Overall, the support provided has had a positive impact on service users' lives, especially when considering their starting points. This work has supported significant improvements in family relationships. The work has undoubtedly, in some cases, reduced the likelihood of a family breakdown.

The therapeutic support available to adopted adults, children and families covers a range of approaches. This helps individualised support packages to be developed in line with the needs of people affected by adoption. Parents said that their experience of work carried out with them and their children was overall positive. However, one parent did not have a clear understanding of the therapeutic process and felt this could have been explained more clearly.

The quality of relationships between professionals and children is good. Children's feedback is positive, and they said that they feel 'safe' and that the setting feels 'warm'. One child said, 'I feel like a person rather than a thing that they are getting paid to be there for.'

There are opportunities for people using the service to give feedback on their experiences of the work carried out with them. The feedback from commissioners is generally positive. While the COVID-19 pandemic has had an impact on the agency's ability to develop gathering children's views and those of others, the agency is committed to developing this area further.

Challenges for some children and their parents as they move into adult services have an adverse impact on their progress at that stage of their lives. The agency and relevant stakeholders recognise these difficulties and have identified this as an area to develop.

The provider's response to the COVID-19 pandemic has been good. There are robust risk assessments in place. Regular updates are provided to families and staff members. Planned therapeutic sessions continued, albeit virtual, during lockdown. While this approach did not suit all families, the agency resumed face-to-face sessions, or a hybrid approach, as soon as it could.

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

Overall, the agency offers a safe service. Children and their families know about safeguarding practices and understand how to make a complaint through the various individual guides.

As a part of the agency preparing for its registration, the leadership took advice from specialist safeguarding organisations about their safeguarding processes. Staff say that there are now 'procedures in place' and a feeling of being 'held and safe'. However, one incident of a safeguarding concern was identified. This relates to an event that occurred prior to the agency's registration. In this example, the decision to prioritise the therapeutic relationship over a safeguarding matter was not appropriate and demonstrates staff were not clear about when and how to report safeguarding concerns.

Other, more recent, safeguarding matters that the leadership has identified have been dealt with appropriately. There is evidence of professional challenge from managers and leaders when the local authority response is not robust.

Parents and carers are prepared and supported to develop their parenting skills so that they can manage children's behaviours more effectively. This helps to minimise risks to children.

The agency is limited in how creatively it can work with children and their families when the work is funded by The Adoption Support Fund. This is due to the contractual arrangements. However, in these cases and for people self-funding, the agency works as creatively as possible. One parent said that working with the agency had been a 'guiding light'.

The building and resources within are of a high quality. Effective maintenance and safety systems ensure that a safe and nurturing environment is provided. Parents and children feel welcomed and they like coming to the agency. One child commented on how much he liked the hot chocolate given to him on arrival.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager and responsible individual are ambitious, dedicated and child-centred in their approach. They provide a nurturing, welcoming and effective service; they know their strengths and aim to build on these. They know the majority of the areas for development and have plans in place to address these.

The agency's creativity during the COVID-19 pandemic is impressive. For example, the agency opened up its online training services, offering some training at no cost to the participant. This has led to the impact of the training reaching a wide and diverse audience, which includes service users, schools, commissioners and other interested parties. More generally, the leaders and managers have worked hard throughout the pandemic to manage change effectively and have kept staff feeling appreciated and valued.

Staff are employed on a contracted basis, but are equally committed and passionate about the work that they do and feel supported in their work by the leadership team. The vast majority of staff have provided positive feedback. Staff morale is high.

The staff team is from a variety of disciplines, including psychology, family therapy, psychotherapy, social work and occupational therapy. All staff show exceptional commitment to their roles. In some cases, therapists from different specialisms work together with a family, offering and providing a complex package of support that meets the individual and collective needs of the family.

The leadership invests well in the staff training programme. The range of training on offer to contracted staff is broad and of a high quality. The senior management team also has access to three days per year of external training with financial support towards this.

Staff recruitment practice is generally good. However, one staff member's file showed that their employment history only included years. Therefore, potential gaps in employment may have been missed. This shortfall compromises the agency's confidence that staff have been recruited safely.

What does the adoption support agency 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, the Adoption Support Agencies (England) and Adoption Agencies (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2005 and the national minimum standards. The registered person(s) must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
<p>The registered person shall not—</p> <p>employ a person to work for the purposes of the agency unless that person is fit to work for the purposes of the agency; or</p> <p>allow a person who is employed by a person other than the registered provider to work for the purposes of the agency unless that person is fit to work for the purposes of the agency.</p> <p>For the purposes of paragraph (1), a person is not fit to work for the purposes of an agency unless—</p> <p>full and satisfactory information is available in relation to him in respect of each of the matters specified in Schedule 2. (Regulation 19 (1)(a)(b) (2)(d))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that the work history of staff includes precise dates of employment with written evidence of any gaps.</p>	<p>14 February 2022</p>

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that all adoption and agency support staff and volunteers understand what they must do if they receive an allegation or have suspicions that a person may have behaved in a way that has, or may have, harmed a child. The registered person ensures that the required actions are taken, or have been taken, in any relevant situation of which it is aware. With specific reference to the agency's monitoring of the development plan in this area. ('Adoption: national minimum standards', 22.1)

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children, young people and adults, using the 'Social care common inspection framework'.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the adoption support agency, how it meets the core functions as set out in legislation, and to consider how well it complies with the Adoption Support Agencies (England) and Adoption Agencies (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2005 and the national minimum standards.

Adoption support agency details

Unique reference number: 2585564

Registered provider: Beacon House Psychological Services Limited

Registered provider address: Ad5 Littlehampton Marina, Ferry Road,
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Responsible individual: Dr Shoshanah Lyons

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Inspectors

Skye Frain, Social Care Inspector

Rosemary Dancer, Social Care Inspector

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