

1253711

Registered provider: Beacon Childcare Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is run by a private company. It is registered to provide care for up to three children who have had adverse childhood experiences.

The manager was registered with Ofsted in May 2020. They are working towards the level 5 qualification in leadership and management.

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 October 2022

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
---	--

How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
---	---------------------------------

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

The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 22 February 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
22/02/2022	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
27/07/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good
22/01/2020	Interim	Improved effectiveness
08/05/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

The registered manager and staff have not brought about sustained improvements. Several requirements have been raised at this inspection; two of these are restated from the last full inspection. Staff, external professionals and the registered manager confirmed one child's view. The child told the inspector, 'I don't feel I have made any progress here. It has got worse.' One staff member said, 'I don't think he [child] has made any progress since he has been here.'

Children's experiences at the home are mixed. At the time of the inspection, three children were living in the home. Since the previous inspection, two children have moved into the home and two children have moved out. Most children moved in and then moved on in a planned manner. However, one child moved out of the home sooner than anticipated. Staff were unable to keep her safe because of incidents of her going missing multiple times despite their efforts. This resulted, in the home serving notice on the placement.

Staff do not always provide children with a homely and well-maintained environment to live in. At the time of the inspection, the inspector found that children's bedrooms needed a deep clean and did not provide children with a sense of dignity. For example, two children's bedrooms had not been cleaned and were unhygienic. There were trip hazards, stained carpets and ligature risks from loose cables. Also, there was damp in the children's bathroom, and other maintenance work was required. This does not give children a sense of being valued or that staff are prioritising their needs.

Children's progress in education varies. Staff successfully support one child with their college education and training, and this child has good attendance and is doing well and making good progress. However, this is not consistent for all children. For example, staff do not always engage children effectively each day in structured learning and education activities. Consequently, children are at times left to their own devices during the day. Staff have failed to ensure that all children have structured daily activity when they are not attending school. Furthermore, staff do not engage children or are curious about how children spend their time in their bedrooms.

Staff ensure that some children are supported to attend routine medical appointments. Healthcare plans identify children's individual needs. Statutory health assessments have been completed and children attend specialist appointments. However, this is not consistent for all children. Despite efforts from staff they have not been able to engage one child effectively in attending routine appointments. As a result, the child's social worker has intervened and successfully supported the child to attend their medical appointments.

The quality of relationships between staff and children is inconsistent. Some staff build positive relationships with children, which has a positive impact on children's progress. However, not all children benefit from this engagement. One child told the inspector, 'I wake up randomly, get breakfast, go back to my bedroom, play on the console, come down for dinner, then go back to my bedroom. This is what it's like from Monday to Friday.'

Staff do not regularly review and update children's records to capture their progress. For example, daily records do not contain relevant information about the children's experiences. Furthermore, on one occasion, staff had failed to record any information in a child's daily record. This means that, if children want to access their files in the future, this has the potential of limiting information and misrepresenting the child's journey.

Children enjoy a range of community activities. Staff support children to develop their hobbies and interests. For example, two children who enjoy football are members at football clubs and attend competitions. This supports and encourages children to build wider social networks and friendships.

Staff ensure that children spend time with people who are important to them. They work to develop positive relationships with family members and friends. When appropriate, staff advocate on the children's behalf, so that they can spend safe, enjoyable and memorable time with family and friends. This provides children with a positive sense of identity and belonging.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

The approach to risk management has the potential to compromise children's safety. Children's risk assessments have not been reviewed and updated following incidents. It is unclear if staff have read and understood risk assessment documents.

Staff are not curious enough about the safety of children in their care. They are inquisitive about children's use of their electronic devices and mobile phones. However, staff do not always ensure that regular checks are undertaken or fully understand the amount of time children spend on these devices. This makes children more vulnerable to harm while online.

The registered manager and staff use monitoring and surveillance of some children without good reason. For example, one child's bedroom door is fitted with door alarm to alert staff when the child leaves their bedroom. This places unnecessary restrictions on children's ability to move freely in their home and infringes on their privacy. This does not create a homely environment.

Not all children are provided with enough support from staff to help them develop socially acceptable behaviours. There is a culture in the home where effective direct work with children who are known to be at risk is not given enough attention to help them progress.

Some staff continue to do some good work with children in helping them to understand their behaviour and learn better coping strategies. However, this approach is inconsistent. For example, staff do not carry out work with children about extremism and radicalisation when they have concerns related to this or to equality and diversity and the LGBTQ community. Furthermore, when direct work is undertaken, follow-up work is not carried out with children to develop their understanding of important issues. This does not actively encourage children to keep themselves and others safe.

Staff are skilled in supporting children's heightened behaviours. They know how to de-escalate behaviour which may become challenging. Restraints are used proportionately when there is a risk or serious concern for children or staff. As a result, children and staff are kept safe. Furthermore, staff ensure incidents are recorded accurately. This means that the registered manager can review all physical interventions using records that contain all the relevant information.

When children go missing from home, staff respond well and know how to follow children's missing-from-care protocols. They act quickly to escalate concerns by working in partnership with the local authority, local services and the police to ensure that children are returned home as soon as possible. This means that risks to children in the community are reduced.

Children are able raise concerns or make a complaint with support from staff without fear of any adverse consequences. For example, one child complained about the impact another child's behaviour was having on their experience in the home. The registered manager was responsive and thorough throughout the complaints process and provided feedback to the child. As a result, the child felt listened to and appropriate action was taken.

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

The registered manager is making some progress in developing a better understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the home. However, there is still an inconsistent approach in leadership and in the effectiveness of monitoring and oversight of the home. For example, shortfalls in this inspection have not been identified by the registered manager to improve the quality of care of children. This continues to restrict the capacity to make good and sustained change.

The registered manager does not always use their monitoring and review systems effectively. For example, they do not ensure that children's risk assessments and placement plans are updated and reviewed. Staff may therefore lack relevant information about children and their safety.

Staff feel supported by the registered manager and can make progress within the company. Team leaders have positive relationships with staff. However, the quality of supervision that staff receive is variable. Although some staff have reflective and

practice-related supervision, others do not. This means that the registered manager does not always monitor staff progress and professional development effectively. This does not improve practice in the home.

Staff have received bespoke training to better help them understand and support children's complex needs. In addition, the registered manager has introduced some reflective learning at team meetings. This has been a useful development. However, the registered manager has not ensured that they and all core staff have the skills and training to meet the needs of the children, for example, in relation to safeguarding children, knife crime prevention, health and safety, internet safety, exploitation and county lines. This has the potential to limit staff knowledge and skills and compromise children's progress and development. The registered manager acknowledges this shortfall.

The statement of purpose is not up to date. This document does not provide correct information that reflects the changes in staff structure. This means that Ofsted and local authorities do not have the most up-to-date information about the care provided.

The registered manager ensures they send their quality of care review to Ofsted within the required timescales. However, this report does not contain feedback from parents and external professionals. This leaves the regulator without the full information needed to review the manager's own assessment of the quality of care.

Working relationships with professionals are mixed. One social worker spoke positively about good communication and information-sharing between staff, the registered manager and themselves. However, written updates on the child's progress needed improvement. Another social worker told the inspector, '[Name of child] has not made any progress,' since they moved into the home. As a result, professionals feel that good partnership working is not consistent, and children do not always remain central to the care they receive.

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 quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who—</p> <p>understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children;</p> <p>use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>understand and apply the home's statement of purpose;</p> <p>ensure that staff—</p> <p>understand and apply the home's statement of purpose;</p> <p>protect and promote each child's welfare;</p> <p>treat each child with dignity and respect;</p> <p>provide to children living in the home the physical necessities they need in order to live there comfortably. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(i)(ii)(iii)(vii))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that children's bedrooms are clean and tidy and the home environment is well maintained, making it homely and welcoming for children.</p> <p>This requirement was made at the previous inspection and is restated.</p>	25 November 2022
<p>The education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the</p>	25 November 2022

<p>registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>support each child’s learning and development, including helping the child to develop independent study skills and, where appropriate, helping the child to complete independent study;</p> <p>understand the barriers to learning that each child may face and take appropriate action to help the child to overcome any such barriers. (Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(ii)(iii))</p> <p>This particularly refers to the registered manager and staff ensuring that children are supported to overcome barriers to their learning.</p> <p>This requirement was made at the previous inspection and is restated.</p>	
<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>meet each child’s behavioural and emotional needs, as set out in the child’s relevant Plans.</p> <p>encourage each child to take responsibility for the child’s behaviour, in accordance with the child’s age and understanding;</p> <p>communicate to each child expectations about the child’s behaviour and ensure that the child understands those expectations in accordance with the child’s age and understanding;</p> <p>help each child to develop the understanding and skills to</p>	<p>25 November 2022</p>

<p>recognise or withdraw from a damaging, exploitative or harmful relationship;</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. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(i)(iii)(v)(vii)(ix))</p> <p>This specifically relates to the registered manager ensuring that they support children to keep safe.</p> <p>This also refers to staff supporting children to explore their emotions and build positive relationships.</p>	
<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>help each child to understand how to keep safe;</p> <p>understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(v))</p> <p>This particularly refers to the registered manager and staff ensuring they understand and follow children's risk assessments, and that these documents are up to date.</p>	<p>25 November 2022</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 to aspire to fulfil their potential; and</p> <p>promotes their welfare</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the</p>	<p>25 November 2022</p>

<p>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>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)(h))</p> <p>This particularly refers to the registered manager ensuring that staff have a consistent approach to managing children’s behaviours.</p> <p>It also relates to the registered manager ensuring they and all staff receive essential training.</p> <p>It also relates to the registered manager ensuring they use internal monitoring systems more effectively.</p>	
<p>The registered person may only use devices for the monitoring or surveillance of children if—</p> <p>the monitoring or surveillance is for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child concerned, or other children;</p> <p>so far as reasonably practicable in the light of the child’s age and understanding, the child is informed in advance of the intention to do the monitoring or surveillance; and</p> <p>the monitoring or surveillance is no more intrusive than necessary, having regard to the child’s need for privacy. (Regulation 24 (1)(a)(c)(d))</p> <p>This specifically relates to the registered manager ensuring that monitoring or surveillance of children is for the purpose of safeguarding.</p>	<p>25 November 2022</p>
<p>The registered person must ensure that all employees—</p> <p>undertake appropriate continuing professional development;</p> <p>receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience.</p>	<p>25 November 2022</p>

<p>(Regulation 33 (4)(a)(b))</p> <p>This specifically relates to the registered manager ensuring that all staff receive reflective supervision.</p>	
<p>The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which—</p> <p>include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child;</p> <p>are kept up to date; and</p> <p>are signed and dated by the author of each entry.</p> <p>(Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b)(c))</p> <p>This relates to staff ensuring that all children's records are updated and capture the child's journey.</p>	<p>25 November 2022</p>

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the home's statement of purpose is regularly reviewed and updated. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 14, paragraph 3.5)
- The registered person should ensure that the quality of care review report contains feedback from professionals and parents. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', pages 64 and 65, paragraph 15.2)
- The registered person should ensure that staff play an important role in ensuring that children attend their health appointments and receive necessary support for their health. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 34, paragraphs 7.7, 7.8 and 7.10)

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: 1253711

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Beacon Childcare Ltd

Registered provider address: 28 Phoenix Business Park, Avenue Close,
Birmingham B7 4NU

Responsible individual: Mark O'Donnell

Registered manager: Lenneah Thomas

Inspector

Patrick McIntosh, Social Care Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2022