

SC053529

Registered provider: The Beeches UK Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A private company operates this home which is registered to accommodate up to five children who have learning difficulties, and/or emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Inspection dates: 24 to 25 May 2017

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers good

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 21 February 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: Improved effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection

None

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because:

- The manager encourages the staff to extend their understanding of the children's needs.
- The staff, guided by individualised care plans, enable the children to learn to manage their behaviour.
- The children attend groups outside the home, supported by the staff, which has enabled them to develop a peer group in the local community.
- The impact risk assessments ensure that the staff can safely meet the needs of children who are new to the home alongside the needs of the children already living in the home.
- The children have developed positive relationships with each other and with staff.
- The school day is planned to meet the individual needs of each of the children. As a result, attendance at school has improved.

The children's home's areas for development:

- The practice of using personal mobile phones to take photos of the children engaged in activities does not safeguard the children.
- The role of agency staff in physical interventions, and their understanding of the provider's policy and practices with regard to physical interventions, is not clear.
- The records of physical interventions do not always explain the reasons that the event took place.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/02/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
21/09/2016	Full	Good
09/03/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
27/10/2015	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</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 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. (Regulation 12(1)(2)(b))</p>	<p>06/07/2017</p>

Recommendations

- Ensure that the behaviour management strategy is understood and applied at all times by all staff, including agency and temporary staff. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 46, paragraph 9.34)

In particular, when agency staff are involved in physical interventions.

- Ensure that records of restraint enable the registered person and staff to review the use of control and restraint to identify effective practice and respond promptly when any issues or trends emerge. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 49, paragraph 9.59)

This is with particular reference to the recording of decisions regarding where and when staff use physical intervention techniques.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children make good progress because they live in this home. The staff place the overall well-being of the children at the centre of their practice. The manager motivates the staff to ensure that they make every effort to understand the needs of the children. As a result, the staff develop a close and caring bond with the children. Some children use alternative forms of communication. Staff develop their skills to use these methods in

order to engage children who have learning difficulties and/or emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. As a result, children have developed trusting relationships with staff who work diligently to promote the best outcomes for them.

Individualised care plans guide the staff to provide tailored support and good-quality care to the children in a sensitive way. The manager ensures that children are treated with dignity and respect. As a result, the children develop a positive self-view. Risk factors are analysed by the manager and shared with the team. The care plans identify specific approaches to working with the children. This information enables the staff to work in a consistent way to meet the children's needs.

Children are beginning to develop skills in managing their relationships with staff and with other children in the home. Some of the children have specific learning difficulties which means that they need significant support to acquire these skills. Staff continually and skilfully support the children to learn these skills and, consequently, relationships have improved. Children are supported to make their needs known. They have an advocacy service in place and advocacy workers visit to ensure that the children's views are listened to. Staff are particularly attuned to the children's communication styles, particularly when children are using non-verbal communication tools. Staff have carefully observed and grown to understand the distinct and individual ways that the children make their needs known.

Staff support children to make and keep appointments with medical professionals who are significant in maintaining the children's healthcare package. Children are engaged in a range of activities, including after-school clubs and sporting activities such as hand cycling and trampolining. These activities, along with home-cooked food, help to maintain children's good physical health. Staff monitor the children's health and enjoyment to ensure that any concerns are acted on quickly and effectively.

The children attend the on-site education provision. They have up-to-date education plans which the staff in the home actively support. The school day includes activities and lessons that are planned to meet the individual needs of each of the children. Older children are engaged in life-skills work. Attendance at school is rewarded with extra activities. Since living at this home, some children who were previously not engaging have returned to education. This improves their learning opportunities and provides a positive routine for them.

Children have positive family contact because staff have evaluated the quality of the events to ensure that children benefit. Some of the children's contact has increased and now includes overnight and weekend contact. Other children are having activity-based contact which better meets their needs. These changes have improved children's relationships with their family, which in turn enhance their understanding of their background.

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

The home has employed a practice whereby the staff use their own mobile phones to take pictures of the children engaging in activities. The purpose is to record and preserve these memories as part of the children's stories of their lives at the home.

There has been no management oversight of the practice to ensure that the photographs have been deleted. Although the purpose of this practice is not in question, allowing staff to use their personal mobile phones to take these photographs does not safeguard the children and does not protect the staff. During the inspection, the manager took immediate action to review this shortfall and to introduce a process to prevent further occurrences. The staff and managers are reviewing the implementation of the new processes and practice.

Children say that they like living in this home. One social worker commented, 'I have no concerns about the safe care for this child. The child has developed some positive relationships and they have enjoyed going out with the staff for shopping or trips out.' Another social worker commented, 'This child is happy and at ease with staff. They have positive relationships in the home. The staff have helped the child to individualise their bedroom.'

Risk assessments identify and provide actions to minimise hazards. The manager has a suitable relationship with the designated officer. There have been no notifiable events since the last inspection.

Staff intervene to prevent children from harming themselves or others. There have been 20 physical interventions since the last full inspection. The manager has reviewed all of these interventions to ensure that they are justified and proportionate. However, some of the records are not clear about the events which led to staff taking the action required. This does not help the staff to develop their practice as they are not able to reflect fully on the restraint details. A review of the records relating to agency staff during the inspection shows that the agency staff are trained in a different physical intervention technique to that of the permanent staff. This gives the potential for confusion between agency and permanent staff when managing children's behaviours. The manager is taking steps to review the role of agency staff workers in the event that they are required to physically intervene.

The children's needs are such that they require a high level of staff supervision. The children do not go missing from the home and the staff ensure the children's safety.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager has a relevant level 4 qualification in child care and has worked in this and other settings for a number of years. She motivates the staff through effective supervision and observation of their practice. This ensures that the staff work in accordance with the children's care plans and assures the manager that the children's needs are being met. The provider has supported all eligible staff to achieve the required diploma level 3 qualification. The provider offers additional, more specific, training to the staff to enable them to meet the complex needs of the children. This means that the staff have the knowledge base and skills to provide good-quality care.

There are suitable monitoring arrangements of the care provided in the home. The manager reviews the information from the independent visitor and rectifies any shortfalls that are noted. This information is shared with the staff to assess whether the service provided is managed as described in the statement of purpose. There has been an overall improvement in the quality of records following a review by the manager and

subsequent changes.

The manager maintains good working relationships and open communication with placing authorities. She is unafraid to raise any issues which she feels negatively affect the care provided. If needed, she follows the complaints process to escalate any concerns. She ensures that she has the most up-to-date information from social workers before deciding on the suitability of a new placement. The manager quickly appraises herself of the issues that may have an impact on a new placement. This ensures that the staff can safely meet the new child's needs alongside the needs of the children already living at the home.

The manager works with the staff to help them to build positive relationships with the children and to support the children to build relationships with each other. This is a significant piece of work, as some of the children have specific learning needs that have an impact on their ability to make and keep friends. Children are now attending groups outside the home. This is because staff have supported the children to recognise the needs of the others. Consequently, the children have developed a peer group in the community.

The manager acknowledges the commitment of the staff, some of whom have worked at the home for ten years or more. Through her drive and motivation, the staff care deeply for the children. The manager encourages staff to look at the children's actions as part of their holistic needs and not to dwell on any potential negatives. She has improved the individualised care plans, which has helped the staff to enable children to learn to manage their behaviour. The direct work with the children helps them to tune into their own behaviour and develop an awareness of the impact on themselves and those around them.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people who it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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: SC053529

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: The Beeches UK Ltd

Registered provider address: 19-20, Bourne Court, Unity Trading Estate, Southend Road, Woodford Green, Essex IG8 8HD

Responsible individual: Quinton Lovis

Registered manager: Denise Grayston

Inspector

Michael Mulvaney, social care inspector

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