



## Inspection Report on

**Birch Grove**

**Powys**

**Date Inspection Completed**

10 November 2022

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## About Birch Grove

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Type of care provided                                      | Care Home Service<br>Children's Home  |
| Registered Provider  | Fair Ways Community Benefit Society.  |
| Registered places  | 3   |
| Language of the service                                    | English   |
| Previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection                | 16 June 2021  |
| Does this service provide the Welsh Language active offer? | This service is working towards providing an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language and demonstrates a significant effort to promoting the use of the Welsh language and culture. |

## Summary

Birchgrove is a crisis intervention residential service which provides care and support for up to three young people with complex needs. They provide care for young people experiencing "crisis" for an approximate duration of 12 weeks with a view to preparing them to transition home or on to a longer term placement. Young people have their care and support needs met and are achieving positive personal outcomes.

The home has established care and support planning systems in place. Care staff deliver consistent approaches through routines and structures which support the safe and smooth operation of the home. The service provider has clear arrangements in place for the oversight and governance of the service and to ensure good outcomes are achieved for young people. The home is safe and provides young people with an environment suitable for their needs.

## Well-being

Young people have a good understanding about the aims and expectations of their placement and what actions are taken in their best interests. They are provided with a home guide which details relevant and useful information about their stay. Young people can access an advocate and are confident to raise any concerns or complaints they may have. The home challenges the responsible placing authority when care staff have concerns about the move on plan for young people. Young people are supported to attend or represent their own views at their children looked after reviews and meetings. Their voices are promoted and opportunities at regular house meetings enables young people to share their views about the care they receive and make choices. They are encouraged to be involved in decisions about the home, about what they eat and 'carer led days' ensures young people get to choose how they spend some of their time. Young people have opportunities for one-to-one discussions with care staff during their daily interactions and keyworker sessions. Their views are valued, and they are treated with respect. A young person told us they get "good care" and '*it is the best place I've been out of a bunch*'. Young people complete feedback when leaving the home and these are used to formulate quality-of-care reviews.

Arrangements are in place to meet young people's physical, mental, and emotional health needs. Family contact is promoted and reviewed subject to risk assessments and young people's best interests. Young people have focused incentive charts which are outcome driven and offer suitable rewards. Activity planners and daily records show young people are encouraged to be active and healthy and they are enabled to develop positive relationships with care staff. Young people have access to health services when they need them. We saw fresh fruit and vegetables and young people are provided with a variety of healthy, balanced meals suited to their dietary requirements and have snacks of their choice. They are enrolled on the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) qualification and have opportunities to participate in activities such as hillwalking, climbing, paddleboarding, cycling etc. Young people are supported to gain work experience with businesses in the surrounding area. Young people participate in the service provider's outdoor activities centre and are encouraged to access other clubs and activities in the surrounding areas. Care staff arrange activities, trips and days out to reflect young people's interests and preferences. Young people's positive experiences and progress are captured in memory 'picture books' which supports their life journey.

The home has good links with local authorities and there are effective safeguarding measures in place. The accommodation provides sufficient space to meet the needs of young people who live there. Health and safety audits are undertaken to ensure the environment is a safe place.

## Care and Support

The service has arrangements in place to consider the compatibility of young people, environment, care staff suitability and risk assessments to ensure placements are suitable and safely matched. Provider assessments consider young people's care and support needs and desired outcomes. The service provider challenges placing local authorities for missing information to ensure collaborative working and to secure good outcomes for young people. The service provider needs to ensure the provider assessment is continuously updated to reflect significant changes.

Admissions to the service are well planned and operate as set out in the service provider's statement of purpose. Transitions are positive; young people are consulted, have opportunities to see the home virtually and are provided with an accessible home guide. Young people are welcomed with sensitivity to help them settle into the home. Care staff treat young people with respect and promote their personal development, a young person told us they are treated "well" and feel "safe". Young people are clear about the duration, aims and expectations of the placement. When young people leave the home, positive endings are promoted.

Young people have accurate and up to date outcome focused personal plans which provide care staff with clear guidance to meet their individualised care and support needs. Personal plans are person-centred, consistent and joined up with their behavioural management plan and risk assessment. Progress towards achieving outcomes is measured. We saw key working sessions demonstrating young person involvement in creating and reviewing documents, which promotes a sense of shared ownership. Any risks associated with young people are clearly identified within their risk assessment and are known and understood by care staff.

Care staff deliver positive person-centred and constructive behaviour approaches in line with the service provider's behaviour support policy. The service provider ensures care staff have completed training in behaviour management and promotes consistent strategies which prevent, de-escalate, and minimise risk. Care staff spend regular one to one time with young people to build trusting relationships and develop their independence skills. Young people learn to cook, do their own laundry, clean their rooms, and manage their own money. The service is working towards being able to provide the 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language.

Young people are safe, and a review of incident and physical intervention records showed consistent management oversight. Discussions and reviews are held with care staff and young people following restrictive physical interventions. 'Re-attunement' sessions focus on restorative approaches. Care staff have received safeguarding training and understand their responsibility in safeguarding and protecting young people. The service provider informs us the safeguarding policy and behaviour support policy are being reviewed to ensure they are aligned to current legislation and guidance in Wales.

## Environment

Birchgrove is situated in a rural area within the County of Powys. The registered manager operates the service provider's other home next door. The manager has worked proactively with the local community, including neighbours and local businesses, to support young people to use local facilities. Young people live in a home which has facilities and equipment to meet their needs and support them to achieve positive personal outcomes. Efforts are made to ensure any damage or wear and tear is quickly repaired. On the day of inspection, we saw a team of decorators repairing damage to the home. The service has arrangements in place to ensure bedrooms are redecorated prior to admitting new young people. The hallway carpet is damaged and needs replacing to ensure it provides a welcoming and homely feel.

Young people have bedrooms they can personalise and have ensuite bathroom facilities. At night, door sensors on young people's bedrooms are activated and alert staff to young people who are unsettled or need assistance. Window restrictors are in place in the upstairs rooms to ensure young people are safe. Specialist blinds have been purchased to ensure a young person's dignity and privacy following repeated damage to a curtain poll. Young people are supported to ensure their rooms are clean and tidy. There is a lounge/sitting room and an open plan kitchen with a dining area to provide a sociable space for preparing meals, eating meals together, games and for young people and care staff to talk and spend time. Information on display in the kitchen includes guidance on healthy eating and a statement about the home's values, alongside Welsh signage, house meeting minutes, incentive charts, and activity planners for each young person. Environmental Health has awarded the home a five-star food hygiene rating and we saw the fridge contained a range of fresh fruit and vegetables and cupboards are well stocked with good quality food products. Kitchen and laundry facilities provide young people with opportunities to develop their independence skills. We saw a young person being supported to make a complex meal using a range of equipment and ingredients. The large garden includes a grassed area for young people to play football/games or grow flowers and vegetables.

A record is maintained of all visitors to the home. Procedures are in place to ensure confidential information is stored securely. Health and safety checks of the premises and vehicles are being carried out. There are regular health and safety checks as part of the daily routine of the home, including fridge and freezer temperatures and fire safety equipment. Records show routine maintenance of gas and electrical equipment, and there are regular fire evacuation drills.

## **Leadership and Management**

The Responsible Individual (RI) and home manager ensure good standards of care for young people and promote positive well-being outcomes. Birchgrove is managed effectively and efficiently by a permanent, suitably experienced and qualified registered manager. The manager operates two homes within close proximity and staffing structures are currently under review. Birchgrove is operating in accordance with the statement of purpose (SoP).

Young people benefit from a service which has effective quality assurance processes, the RI and manager actively and regularly monitor the quality of care provided and they have a clear understanding of the progress young people are making. The RI completes monthly visits, engages with young people and care staff, completes file audits and produces reports in compliance with the regulations. An Independent Visitor visits the home and provides reports detailing findings on compliance with regulations and the quality of care and support provided by the home. A review of the quality-of-care report demonstrates the service are child and outcome focused and have effective arrangements in place to identify the home's strengths, compliance with the regulations and areas for improvement and development. Feedback and views of relevant people such as social workers and other professionals are included. Records are maintained, and CIW have received notifications of incidents as required by regulation. Action is taken to address issues of concern and investigations are carried out. Host and placing authorities are engaged as necessary.

The service provider has experienced recruitment and retention challenges, but this has not had a significant impact on young people. The manager ensures consistency for young people by using the same agency worker who is in the process of being made a permanent employee. Care staff are moved from the neighbouring home to best meet the individualised needs of young people and to ensure best practice experience is shared between both homes. Team meetings are held monthly, all care staff contribute towards good quality discussions about how young people are progressing and what is working well. Young people can be assured they are cared for by suitable care staff and care staff report they are well led and managed. The service provider has rigorous recruitment and vetting processes. Induction, training and development is completed by all care staff. Care staff are encouraged to undertake accredited qualifications through the Qualifications Credit Framework.

Arrangements are in place to ensure the manager and care staff receive valuable support, supervision, and relevant training. Young people are supported by care staff who are suitably supervised as set out in the SoP and they have opportunities to develop good practice. Records indicate good oversight of care staff's development, care practices and include discussions about young people. Training records show care staff have undertaken a range of training as outlined in the SoP and have further opportunities to develop more specialist skills.

| Summary of Non-Compliance |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| Status                    | What each means   |
| New                       | This non-compliance was identified at this inspection.  |
| Reviewed                  | Compliance was reviewed at this inspection and was not achieved. The target date for compliance is in the future and will be tested at next inspection. |
| Not Achieved              | Compliance was tested at this inspection and was not achieved.  |
| Achieved                  | Compliance was tested at this inspection and was achieved.  |

We respond to non-compliance with regulations where poor outcomes for people, and / or risk to people's well-being are identified by issuing Priority Action Notice (s).

The provider must take immediate steps to address this and make improvements. Where providers fail to take priority action by the target date we may escalate the matter to an Improvement and Enforcement Panel.

| Priority Action Notice(s) |  |          |
|---------------------------|--|----------|
| Regulation                | Summary  | Status   |
| N/A                       | No non-compliance of this type was identified at this inspection   | N/A      |
| 34(1)(a)                  | Ensure that all staff are suitably trained having regard to the statement of purpose and the care and support needs of children. | Achieved |

Where we find non-compliance with regulations but no immediate or significant risk for people using the service is identified we highlight these as Areas for Improvement.

We expect the provider to take action to rectify this and we will follow this up at the next inspection. Where the provider has failed to make the necessary improvements we will escalate the matter by issuing a Priority Action Notice.

| Area(s) for Improvement |   |          |
|-------------------------|---|----------|
| Regulation              | Summary   | Status   |
| N/A                     | No non-compliance of this type was identified at this inspection  | N/A      |
| 18                      | Provider assessment. This should identify children's care and support needs to support them to achieve their personal outcomes and ascertain their views, wishes and feelings.  | Achieved |
| 80                      | Quality of care review. This should reflect analysis of aggregated data on incidents, notifiable incidents, safeguarding matters, whistleblowing, concerns and complaints, any action taken and outcome of any audits undertaken. | Achieved |
| 36                      | The service provider must ensure that staff receive core training appropriate to the work to be performed.  | Achieved |
| 79                      | The Responsible Individual (RI) must put suitable arrangements in place for the review of policies. The RI must ensure that policies are kept up to date and accord with relevant legislation                                     | Achieved |
| 7                       | The service provider must provide a service in accordance with the statement of purpose.  | Achieved |
|                         | Ensure that children do not have access to hazards as far as is reasonably practicable.   | Achieved |
|                         | Ensure that the external grounds have sufficient and suitable seating.  | Achieved |

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