



Lychgate



Malpas



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<https://www.keys-group.co.uk>

Date of inspection visit: 10 September 2025

Service Information:

Operated by:	Bryn Melyn Care Limited
Care Type:	Care Home Service Children's Home
Provision for:	Care home for children - with personal care
Registered places:	3
Main language(s):	English and Welsh
Promotion of Welsh language and culture:	The service provider makes an effort to promote the use of the Welsh language and culture and is working towards a bilingual service.

Ratings:



Well-being

EXCELLENT



Care & Support

EXCELLENT



Environment

EXCELLENT



Leadership & Management

EXCELLENT

Summary:

Lychgate provides an exemplary standard of care and support to children, provided within a detached property, set in a peaceful rural area surrounded by farmland. This tranquil environment enhances the therapeutic value of the home, offering children opportunities for outdoor play, reflection, and connection with nature.

Children's wellbeing outcomes are consistently positive, with care staff demonstrating high levels of skill, compassion, and commitment to supporting children to reach their full potential. As a result, children make meaningful and sustained progress across all areas of their development. Relationships between children and care staff are characterised by emotional warmth and practical support, creating a secure and nurturing environment.

Lychgate is rated 'excellent' across all four inspection themes: wellbeing, care and support, environment, and leadership & management.

Findings:



Well-being

EXCELLENT

Children's views at Lychgate are actively sought, respected, and used to shape their daily experiences. They personalise their bedrooms and contribute to decisions about routines and activities, including meal planning and outdoor activities, which support the development of independence skills. Children feel listened to and know how to raise concerns, with house meeting records showing their requests such as for outdoor activities and equipment are acted upon. They enjoy the vast land surrounding the property and find it valuable for recreation and reflection. Advocacy support is available, and the children's guide to the home is accessible in a suitable format, both in Welsh and English, ensuring children understand their rights and the support available to them.

Children at Lychgate are kept safe and are protected from abuse and neglect through robust safeguarding practices and a vigilant care culture. They are informed about their rights and know how to raise concerns in ways that are appropriate to their individual communication needs. This empowers children to speak up and reinforces a protective environment where their voices are heard and respected. Children report feeling safe, valued, and speak positively about their life at Lychgate.

Children's health and emotional well-being are well supported at Lychgate. They have access to both primary and specialist healthcare services, ensuring their individual needs are met holistically. Care staff act as strong advocates, including challenging professional decisions when necessary to safeguard children's best interests. For example, care staff successfully supported one child to discontinue unnecessary medication after it was confirmed the child had not been diagnosed with the associated condition. This demonstrated courage and professionalism, resulting in significantly improved functioning and behaviour for the child. Such proactive advocacy reflects care staff's commitment to promoting positive health outcomes and emotional resilience.

Children are supported to achieve educational goals, with care staff actively guiding and celebrating progress. Initially disengaged, one child is now thriving in school, another with home tuition, and a third has successfully transitioned to college and is preparing for independent living closer to their family. This demonstrates a clear success in promoting educational engagement and personal development through tailored support and empowerment.

The physical environment of Lychgate is well-maintained and purposefully designed to meet both

individual and collective needs, with resources that support independence and life skills aligned to each child's goals. Health and safety are prioritised through regular checks and prompt maintenance responses, ensuring the home remains a safe, secure, and nurturing space that promotes children's development.



Care & Support

EXCELLENT

Children at Lychgate live healthy and safe lives, supported by a culture of positive risk management that enables them to exercise control and make informed choices. They are provided with accessible information that promotes independence and autonomy. Care staff offer tailored support to meet children's communication, health, and social needs, enabling engagement in meaningful activities and helping them work towards their personal aspirations and outcomes. This approach reflects a strong commitment to child-centred practice and holistic development.

Children receive care and support that is planned, responsive, and tailored to their individual needs. Personal plans are detailed, regularly reviewed, and developed in meaningful consultation with children, families, and professionals. Care staff demonstrate an excellent understanding of each child's background, health needs, and aspirations, responding with empathy, consistency, and expertise. The service maintains strong partnerships with professionals and families, contributing to high-quality, individualised care. Feedback from professionals and family members regarding Lychgate has been positive. They consistently praise the progress children have made, attributing these outcomes to the dedication and support provided by care staff. Observations highlight the nurturing environment and care staff's commitment to promoting children's well-being, development, and positive relationships. This feedback reflects the high quality of care and the effectiveness of the service in meeting the individual needs of children.

Children benefit from consistently high standards of care, underpinned by robust assessment and review processes. Pre-admission planning includes detailed information gathering and compatibility assessments with existing children at Lychgate. Multi-agency collaboration ensures professional input is considered, and children, along with their representatives, are actively involved in developing and reviewing their care and support. Regular reviews, including Child Looked After (CLA) reviews, allow care staff to be informed of each child's evolving needs and preferences, enabling responsive, child-centred support.

Outcomes for children are consistently positive due to the reliable application of behaviour support strategies. Care staff are well-trained in Lychgate's therapeutic model, and regular key working sessions are both structured and impactful. These sessions are underpinned by detailed personal plans and longstanding care staff, ensuring continuity of care. The reward-based behaviour strategy is effectively implemented, motivating children to meet behavioural expectations. Behaviour support plans and risk assessments enable care staff to proactively manage behaviours, identify triggers, and reduce associated risks. As a result, children understand behavioural expectations and responsibilities and receive meaningful recognition for their achievements.



Environment

EXCELLENT

Lychgate's physical environment is well-maintained and purposefully designed to meet both individual and collective needs of children. The rural setting provides a peaceful and spacious environment that supports therapeutic care. The home includes resources that promote independence and life skills aligned with each child's goals and aspirations. Lychgate provides a safe, secure, and well-maintained environment for children, care staff, and visitors. Access to the home is carefully managed, with visitor identification verified and recorded in a visitors' log to ensure only authorised individuals are permitted entry, a process observed to be consistently followed during the inspection.

Children benefit from a homely, nurturing environment designed to meet their emotional and developmental needs. Each child has a personalised bedroom, offering a private and comfortable space where they feel safe and at home. Communal areas are warm and inviting, promoting positive social interaction while also providing space for quiet reflection or one-to-one support when needed. The physical environment promotes a sense of stability, belonging, and pride. Care staff maintain a calm and structured atmosphere, with predictable routines that support children feel secure. Outdoor space is accessible and used to encourage physical activity, relaxation, and connection with nature. The home's layout and furnishings are appropriate to the age and needs of the children, contributing to a safe, comfortable, and child-friendly home.

Children at Lychgate are supported to explore and pursue employment opportunities aligned with their individual interests and aspirations. Care staff provide encouragement and practical support to help children gain experience and develop skills in areas that matter to them. For example, one child was successfully supported to secure employment in a hairdressing salon, reflecting the service's commitment to promoting independence, confidence, and future readiness. The environment at Lychgate actively encourages children to continue engaging in their hobbies and interests within the home. Care staff recognise the importance of personal interests in promoting emotional well-being and identity, and they create opportunities for children to pursue these activities in a supportive and familiar environment. This approach helps children maintain a sense of normality, enjoyment, and self-expression as part of their daily lives.

A tour of the premises confirmed the environment is clean, orderly, and free from hazards. Health and safety measures are robust and include secure storage of harmful substances, window restrictors, and up-to-date electrical safety checks. Care staff are trained in fire safety procedures, with regular fire alarm tests and evacuation drills conducted. Each child has a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP), ensuring their individual needs are considered in the event of an

emergency. These measures reflect a proactive approach to health and safety and maintaining a safe living environment.



Leadership & Management

EXCELLENT

Leadership and management at Lychgate are effective and centred on achieving positive outcomes for children. The manager provides clear, hands-on leadership and promotes a shared vision focused on children's wellbeing and development. The leadership team is visible, proactive, and supports a culture of transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement. Care staff are aligned around a common purpose and demonstrate passion and commitment, which directly contributes to the progress children make and supports their emotional security and future aspirations. The manager ensures children, families, and professionals receive accurate and timely information about the service, supporting trust, collaboration, and consistency in care.

Leaders demonstrate a clear vision and strong oversight of the service, ensuring children receive high-quality, consistent care. There is a culture of continuous improvement, with effective systems in place to monitor practice, support care staff development, and respond proactively to challenges. Managers are visible, approachable, and committed to promoting positive outcomes for children, which is reflected in the high levels of care staff morale and the positive feedback CIW received from professionals and families.

The service operates within a robust governance framework that promotes accountability and quality assurance. Scheduled internal audits, regular visits by the Responsible Individual (RI), and a comprehensive monitoring system ensure service provision remains responsive and compliant with regulatory requirements. Quality assurance processes actively engage children, families, and professionals, ensuring their views inform service development. Documentation is detailed and supports the RI's oversight responsibilities, providing clear, auditable evidence of the service's commitment to high standards and ongoing improvement.

Leaders and care staff are trained and equipped to meet the complex and individual needs of children in their care. The training programme covers core areas such as safeguarding, trauma-informed practice, behaviour management, and specialist topics tailored to the children's needs. Regular supervision and reflective practice sessions are embedded into Lychgate's culture, enabling care staff to continually develop their skills and maintain high standards of care. The investment in care staff development contributes to team stability and the quality of relationships formed with children, which in turn supports excellent outcomes and emotional wellbeing.

Children at Lychgate are supported by care staff who possess the necessary expertise, skills, and qualifications to meet their care and support needs effectively. Leaders ensure an appropriate

number of vetted, knowledgeable, and competent care staff are deployed across the service to maintain safe and consistent care. Care staff benefit from ongoing learning and development opportunities, which enhance their practice and contribute to the delivery of high-quality, child-centred support.

Areas identified for improvement

Where we identify **Areas for Improvement** but we have not found outcomes for people to be at immediate or significant risk, we discuss these with the provider. We expect the provider to take action and we will follow this up at the next inspection.

Where we find outcomes for people **require significant improvement** and/or there is risk to people's well-being we identify areas for **Priority Action**. In these circumstances we issue a Priority Action Notice(s) to the Provider, and they must take immediate steps to make improvements. We will inspect again within six months to check improvements have been made and outcomes for people have improved.

CIW has no areas for improvement identified following this inspection.

CIW has not issued any Priority action notices following this inspection.

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