

2503142

Registered provider: Solace Care Partners Limited

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home provides care for up to five children aged between 11 and 18 who may experience social and emotional difficulties. There has been no registered manager since 24 September 2024. A new manager has been appointed and has submitted an application to register with Ofsted.

Two children were living in the home at the time of this inspection.

No children were spoken with during the inspection.

Inspection date: 23 January 2025

Date of last inspection: 14 May 2024

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Information about this inspection

At this inspection, the inspector evaluated:

- the care of children
- the safety of children
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers.

The inspector has looked closely at the experiences and progress of children, using the social care common inspection framework. This assurance 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'.

Findings from the inspection

We did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance inspection.

Children are building positive relationships with staff and expressing their needs, wants and aspirations. Staff supported one child in applying for a hairdressing college course. The child now has a place and attends regularly. Staff have also provided the necessary hairdressing equipment for the child to practise their new skills.

The quality of risk assessments varies. Some risk assessments are up to date and help staff understand a child's vulnerabilities and the response needed to keep them safe. However, other risk assessments lack essential details, such as relationships and the specific vulnerabilities of a child.

Since the last inspection, there has been a notable reduction in the number of missing-from-home incidents. In cases where children do go missing, staff adhere to the established missing-from-home protocol. Upon their return, children are given access to an independent person for support and discussion. One child was missing from home for three days and was identified as being at potential risk due to an abusive relationship. The manager took appropriate action by notifying the child's placing authority and the police and following their advice.

When children are ready to move out of the home, staff ensure that there are clear plans in place. This has helped children to have successful moves.

Staff encourage children to attend health-related appointments and will seek medical advice when a child has refused to take their prescribed medication. When a child requested a specialist medical appointment, steps were taken to facilitate this. When appointments are cancelled, or a child does not attend, these are rescheduled.

Managers have not ensured that the environment is kept safe. For instance, there are hazards in the upstairs bathroom due to two protruding metal hooks near the hand sink that no longer serve a purpose and could potentially cause injury to a child. In addition, a garden rake had not been locked away and could pose a risk to children.

When incidents occur, managers ensure that the children's social workers are informed. However, they do not always ensure that Ofsted is also notified.

The manager is still unable to confirm whether staff have received their annual appraisals from the previous year, and they are still not able to demonstrate the effectiveness of the quality of care. Additionally, the manager has not sent a quality-of-care review to Ofsted since June 2024.

The safe recruitment process has gaps. For example, one new staff member's application form and their employer's reference had inconsistent employment dates.

When consequences are used, the views of the children are not always secured.

Staff continue to receive support and training. The in-house therapists are an additional resource to help staff to reflect on their practice and to better understand the needs of the children in their care. However, not all staff have completed their level 3 diploma in residential childcare in the required timescale.

Staff are clear in their understanding of whistleblowing. They know what to report, when to report it and to whom they should report concerns.

The manager has committed to conducting a comprehensive review of the current recording systems, along with all policies, procedures, and recruitment processes. Additionally, the manager is ensuring that staff undergo a revised induction to assess their needs before appraisals take place.

This inspection has found that although there has been progress made since the last inspection, there are still areas that require improvement. As a result, several requirements from the last inspection have been reinstated.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/05/2024	Full	Requires improvement to be good
18/07/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
13/09/2022	Full	Good
27/04/2021	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, The 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
The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— 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; and that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health; (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(d)) In particular, the registered person should ensure that risk assessments are updated to include essential details of risk and provide staff with clear strategies to minimise risk of harm. The registered person should ensure that staff follow all procedures. In addition, leaders and managers must ensure that the home environment is safe for children and any hazards are addressed without delay. This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	30 April 2025
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and	30 April 2025

promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home; and use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(f)(h)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that the monitoring and reviewing systems lead to consistent improvements in the quality and consistency of records. This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children’s safety. The requirements are that— full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. For the purposes of paragraph (3)(b), an individual who works in the home in a care role has the appropriate qualification if, by the relevant date, the individual has attained— the Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare (England) ("the Level 3 Diploma"); or a qualification which the registered person considers to be equivalent to the Level 3 Diploma. (Regulation 32 (1) (3)(d) (4)(a)(b)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that staff complete level 3 diploma training within 2 years of employment in residential childcare, and gaps in employment are addressed as part of safer recruitment processes.	30 April 2025

This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	
The registered person must ensure that all employees— receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience; and have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (4) (b)(c))	30 April 2025
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(e)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that any incident relating to a child that they consider to be serious is notified to HMCI.	30 April 2025
The registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ("a quality of care review") at least once every 6 months. In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing, and evaluating— the quality of care provided for children; the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it; and any actions that the registered person considers necessary to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children. After completing a quality-of-care review, the registered person must produce a written report about the quality of care review and the actions which the registered person intends to take as a result of the quality of care review ("the quality of care review report"). The registered person must—	30 April 2025

supply to HMCI a copy of the quality-of-care review report within 28 days of the date on which the quality of care review is completed.
(Regulation 45 (1) (2)(a)(b)(c) (3) (4)(a))

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 2503142

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Solace Care Partners Limited

Registered provider address: Unit 2A, 420 Eastern Avenue, Ilford IG2 6NQ

Responsible individual: Umer Ahmed

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Ruth Okezie, Social Care Inspector

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