

2503143

Registered provider: Solace Care Partners Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately run children's home provides care for up to four children. The home's statement of purpose states that the home cares for children who experience social and/or emotional difficulties.

The home registered with Ofsted in October 2019 and the manager registered in September 2021.

There were three children living at the home at the time of this inspection. The inspectors spoke to all three children.

Inspection dates: 24 and 25 January 2023

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

How well children and young people are helped and protected **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: 11 January 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: improved effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/01/2022	Interim	Improved effectiveness
13/09/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children build positive relationships with staff. Staff show care, compassion and warmth towards children. As a result, children are settled and enjoy positive experiences with those caring for them. Children feel valued, safe and able to talk to staff about their worries.

Children's health needs are met well. Staff work closely with health agencies to ensure that children receive the appropriate healthcare and support. Staff support children in arranging and attending medical appointments.

Staff and managers promote children's education. Staff liaise with professionals and advocate on behalf of the children who are waiting for school placements. Nevertheless, staff do not always ensure that when children are not attending school, they are encouraged and supported to engage in suitably structured educational activities.

Children's feelings, views and wishes are sought through consultation forms, key-work sessions and house meetings. This gives children the opportunity to express their views about their day-to-day care and the home.

The manager and staff help children to overcome any relationship difficulties between them. If any concerns are raised around inappropriate behaviour between the children, staff act promptly and appropriately.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: good

Children's risk assessments are reviewed and updated regularly. They include all known risks and set out specific actions for staff to take to manage risks. Key-work sessions are carried out with children to explore risks and vulnerabilities and to help them to learn how to keep themselves safe.

Staff have completed safeguarding training and demonstrate a good understanding of the policies and procedures to follow if allegations are made against staff. This means that staff are able to respond appropriately to safeguarding concerns within the organisation.

Staff carry out room searches, when necessary, to manage and reduce risks to children. Room searches are recorded appropriately and children's consent for room searches is sought when possible. However, the views of the children following room searches are not always obtained and recorded. Additionally, one room search that was undertaken was intrusive and unjustified.

Records of restraint demonstrate that the use of restraint is proportionate and necessary to keep children safe. Debriefs with children and staff are completed after each incident and there is good management oversight of these incidents.

The manager and staff respond promptly when children go missing from home. However, the missing-from-home records do not include information about staff's attempts to maintain contact with children and encourage their return home. Independent return-home interviews are requested. However, the feedback from the interviews is not consistently sought. This means that there are missed opportunities to take account of information obtained from interviews when assessing risks and putting arrangements in place to protect children.

Feedback from external professionals about the home's safeguarding practices is variable. One social worker told the inspector that staff had put good boundaries and plans in place to safeguard one child. Another local authority expressed concern that staff may minimise the contextualised safeguarding risks to another child. However, this was discussed during a complex strategy discussion that was held on the second day of this inspection, and an action plan was put in place to safeguard the child.

Recruitment processes need to improve to ensure that all safer recruitment checks are carried out. Discrepancies between the employment history provided by two members of staff and in their references were not explored. This does not demonstrate that recruitment processes are consistently safe.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is managed by a suitably qualified and experienced registered manager. There is also a permanent and consistent staff team. This promotes stability and consistency for the children living at the home.

Staff say that they are well supported by the manager. They benefit from regular supervision, appraisals and team meetings. Staff feel able to raise any issues with the leaders and manager. Staff have access to training that is relevant to the needs of the children in their care.

Complaints are investigated appropriately. However, complaint records do not include all relevant information, such as an action plan to address gaps in staff practice. This compromises the manager's oversight of staff development and the continuous development of the home.

The home's physical environment is well maintained and safe for children. The home is warm and welcoming. Children are supported to personalise and decorate their bedrooms. This helps children to feel comfortable in their home.

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
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 promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on— feedback on the experiences of children, including complaints received. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2) (g)(ii)) In particular, this relates to ensuring that records of complaints and allegations include details of the action required to prevent similar situations in the future and/or to address gaps in staff's practice.	28 February 2023
The education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— help each child to achieve the child's education and training targets, as recorded in the child's relevant plans; 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;	28 February 2023

help a child who is excluded from school, or who is of compulsory school age but not attending school, to access educational and training support throughout the period of exclusion or non-attendance and to return to school as soon as possible. (Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(viii)) In particular, this relates to ensuring that children who are not in education are supported to sustain or regain their confidence in education and are engaged in suitable, structured educational activities.	
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; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; 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)(a)(i)(iii)(b)) In particular, this relates to ensuring that the manager works closely with safeguarding partners to address concerns around contextualised safeguarding.	28 February 2023

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that when an independent return-home interview is carried out, information provided by such interviews is taken into account when assessing risks and putting arrangements in place to protect each child. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 45, paragraph 9.30)
- The registered person should ensure that they maintain good employment practice, as set out in regulations 31 to 33. In particular, this relates to ensuring

that all discrepancies in employment history and references are explored. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 2503143

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Solace Care Partners Limited

Registered provider address: Solace Care Partners Limited, Unit 2A, 420 Eastern Avenue, Ilford IG2 6NQ

Responsible individual: Umer Ahmed

Registered manager: Coca Stan

Inspector

Aneta Wasilewska, Social Care Inspector

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