

2708415

Registered provider: Solace Care Morden Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home provides care for up to three children. The home is registered to care for children with social and emotional difficulties and learning disabilities.

The home registered with Ofsted on 23 January 2023. The registered manager left their post on 23 June 2023. This is the home's first inspection.

There were two children living in the home at the time of this inspection. The inspector spoke to both children.

Inspection dates: 4 and 5 July 2023

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: not applicable

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
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Not previously inspected		
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Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

The overall judgement of requires improvement to be good takes account of the shortfalls in help and protection and leadership and management.

Children's feelings, views and wishes are sought through consultation forms, key-work sessions and house meetings. Furthermore, referrals have been made for an independent advocate for the children. However, there are only three recorded house meetings and one completed consultation form. Consequently, records do not always reflect all the opportunities offered to the children to express their views or how their views impact the decisions made about them.

Managers and staff strive to help children to achieve academic success. One child was supported to attend an assessment centre to take GCSE exams. Another child is completing online schoolwork in preparation to starting school after a period of time out of school. Children are encouraged and rewarded for their educational achievements. However, children's achievements are not always reflected in their records.

Staff's ability to build positive relationships with children and create a homely atmosphere are the strengths of this home. Staff show care, empathy and warmth towards children. On occasions, staff have gone above and beyond. For example, one staff member supported a child to attend their appointment on the staff member's day off, in line with the child's wishes. This helps children to settle into the home and make good progress from their starting points.

Children's health needs are met well by staff. Staff support children to attend medical appointments and ensure that they have access to specialist advice. Staff ensure that children take their medication as appropriate.

Staff support children to maintain relationships with people who are important to them. This positive support helps children to develop and maintain important relationships.

The home is clean, comfortable and decorated to a good standard.

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

Children's risk assessments are not reviewed regularly and do not include all known risks and vulnerabilities. The actions set out regarding how staff should respond to and manage individual risks for one child do not ensure that the child is safeguarded effectively and do not align with the information provided or expectations of the

placing local authority. This compromises staff's ability to respond effectively to safeguarding concerns.

Staff respond promptly when children go missing from home. They maintain regular contact with children and encourage their safe return home. Staff work collaboratively with key professionals and families. This has led to a reduction in missing-from-home incidents for the children. However, the records of missing-from-home incidents do not consistently include all relevant information. This compromises management oversight and the continuous improvement of the home.

Staff focus their efforts on building positive and meaningful relationships with children. This child-centred care helps children to feel safe and know that staff care about them. However, the key-work sessions that staff undertake with children to help them to learn how to be safe do not address all known risks and vulnerabilities.

The recruitment processes need to improve to ensure that all relevant checks are carried out. For example, two candidates provided various accounts of their previous employment and the provider did not explore potential gaps in their employment history. This does not demonstrate that recruitment processes are consistently safe.

Staff demonstrate a good knowledge of the policies and procedures relating to the management of allegations against staff and whistle-blowing procedures. This helps to keep children safe.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

There have been recent changes in the management team, with the registered manager resigning from her post. This has created a level of anxiety among staff and children in the home. The responsible individual and managers within the company have been working hard to provide stability to the home.

Leaders and managers have a good understanding of the home's strengths and areas for improvement. Work is ongoing to improve the quality of children's records and care planning. Leaders and managers are focusing on the recruitment of a new manager and permanent staff to provide consistency and stability for children.

Staff are provided with regular, effective supervision and have access to training opportunities. However, not all staff have completed training relevant to the needs of the children in their care, such as training around child criminal exploitation.

The arrangements for new children moving into the home are not consistently robust. Leaders and managers did not ensure that the most recent transition into the home was carefully considered and well supported. The process did not involve pre-admission visits to allow the new child to become familiar with the environment and staff. Consequently, the child left the home on the first day and was reported missing. The child was brought back by the police. Furthermore, the needs of the child already living in the home were not considered sufficiently.

The home's statement of purpose has not been updated in relation to the use of internal CCTV to reflect that there are no internal cameras fitted in the home.

Feedback from children's professional networks and families regarding the quality of care provided and children's progress is positive. However, information about some significant events has not been shared with placing local authorities promptly.

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.

Requirements	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; help each child to understand how to keep safe; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(v)) In particular, risk assessments and behaviour management plans should demonstrate that staff identify, review and explore risks and their impact on the child. Risk assessments and behaviour management plans should provide staff with clear strategies to manage risk. Key-work sessions that staff undertake with children should address the known risks and vulnerabilities to help children to learn how to keep themselves safe. Leaders and managers should ensure that staff complete all training relevant to the needs of the children in their care, such as training around child criminal exploitation.	4 August 2023
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that—	8 September 2023

helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(h)) In particular, the registered person must monitor and improve the quality of key documents. These include documents relating to key-work sessions, behaviour support plans and significant incidents.	
The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that children are admitted to the home only if their needs are within the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home's statement of purpose. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that transitions for new children moving into the home are carefully considered and well supported. This includes consideration of the needs of the children already living in the home.	8 September 2023
The registered person must— keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16 (1) (3)(a)(b))	4 August 2023

The registered provider must appoint a person to manage the children's home if— there is no registered manager in respect of the home. If the registered provider appoints a person to manage the home, the registered provider must, without delay, give HMCI notice of— the name of the person so appointed; and the date on which the appointment takes effect. (Regulation 27 (1)(a) (2)(a)(b))	8 September 2023
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Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that children's records reflect that their achievements are recognised and celebrated. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 31, paragraph 6.7)
- The registered person should ensure that children are consulted regularly on their views about the home's care, to inform and support continued improvement in the quality of care provided. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 22, paragraph 4.11)
- 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 gaps in employment are explored. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1)

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people, 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: 2708415

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Solace Care Morden Ltd

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

Responsible individual: Alison Macaulay

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Aneta Wasilewska, Social Care Inspector

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