

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 registered with Ofsted in January 2023. It provides care for up to three children who experience social and emotional difficulties and have learning disabilities.

The registered manager left their post on 23 June 2023. The current manager was appointed in January 2024 and has applied to register with Ofsted.

One child was living in the home at the time of this inspection.

Inspection dates: 23 and 24 April 2024

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: 4 July 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/07/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

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

The child living in the home has built positive relationships with staff. Staff show care, compassion and warmth towards them. As a result, the child is settled and enjoys positive experiences with those caring for them.

Leaders and managers have not ensured that staff can meet children's needs before they move into the home. As a result, one child moved into the home despite this not being suitable. Subsequently, this child's placement ended abruptly after only 10 days. This had a negative impact on the experience of the child who moved in and on the child who was already living in the home. Leaders and managers did not challenge the placing authority effectively when they did not provide the required information and support to meet this child's needs. For example, the placement planning meeting did not take place within the required time frame. This contributed to the placement failing.

Children know how to make complaints and they are investigated appropriately. However, records of complaints do not include all relevant information, such as the actions that are put in place to address the issue raised, the child's views, or learning from the complaint. This compromises the manager's oversight of staff development and the continuous development of the home.

Staff make sure that children's general health needs are met. They work closely with health agencies to ensure that children receive 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. As a result, the child residing in the home was able to return to school after a long time out of education.

Children have access to social, educational and recreational activities. Furthermore, staff support children to prepare for independent living. Children are encouraged to prepare their own meals, tidy their bedrooms and do their laundry. This helps them to develop important life skills.

Staff do not record consequences and rewards used in the home. Therefore, it is unclear how staff encourage good behaviour, whether measures taken to address behaviours of concern are effective and how children's achievements are celebrated. The new manager has recognised this shortfall and is working to address this.

Staff understand that it is important for children to maintain relationships with the people who are special to them. Staff support and arrange for children to spend time with their family when it is safe to do so. This helps children to stay connected to the people who are important to them.

Feedback from professionals and a family member is positive. They praise staff for their child-centred relationships, stability and the care offered to children. They also praise staff for providing verbal and written updates and communicating concerns promptly. This helps children's networks to maintain their focus on the children.

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

Children have individualised risk assessments. These help staff to understand children's needs and vulnerabilities and provide strategies to reduce risks. However, for one child, staff did not consistently follow this guidance in relation to room searches. Staff records of room searches are also inconsistent. This compromises how staff safeguard children and weakens their ability to provide a consistent approach to managing risks to children in their bedrooms.

Staff do not consistently follow guidance in children's records regarding the use of emergency medication. Staff offered emergency medication to one child daily, which is contrary to the written recommendations of medical professionals regarding the use of the emergency medication. This compromises children's health and safety in urgent situations.

Staff use physical intervention to prevent self-injurious behaviour with one child. Records of these incidents lack detail, and managers' oversight of restraint is not recorded. This does not enable leaders and managers to monitor the use of restraint effectively and identify any emerging themes and patterns.

Staff and managers have not ensured that the environment of the home is well maintained or safe. The inspector found that the empty bedroom, which has a broken window, was unlocked and accessible to the child living in the home. Furthermore, broken furniture was found in the back garden. This is unsightly and could pose a significant risk to the child and staff.

When children go missing from the home, managers and staff respond promptly and maintain regular contact with children. Managers and staff work collaboratively with children's families and professionals to secure children's safe return to the home.

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

Leadership and management of the home have been inconsistent since the last inspection. The registered manager left in June 2023. The current manager was appointed in January 2024 and has applied to register with Ofsted. There is also a new responsible individual. Furthermore, a new director has been appointed since the last inspection and leaders did not inform Ofsted of this change. This instability has had a negative impact on management oversight and consistency in staff practice.

Leaders and managers are aware of the home's strengths and areas for development. The new manager has plans in place to monitor the quality of care children receive and improve practice. However, these measures are not yet fully implemented, so their effectiveness is untested.

Managers' oversight of children's records is poor. For example, some records are not signed or dated, including by the manager, and some records could not be found. This included room search records, the placing authority's care plan for one child and records of significant conversations with children. This compromises the understanding of children's experiences and practice in the home.

Leaders and managers have failed to complete a quality of care review report since the home registered. This is a breach of regulations and compromises the provider's development of care in the home. Leaders and managers also do not ensure that Ofsted is notified of all significant incidents in a timely manner. These factors hinder the regulator's external oversight of the home.

Staff feel well supported by leaders and managers, who are available and approachable. Staff say that communication has improved since the new manager was appointed. Leaders and managers prioritise training for staff. At the time of this inspection, staff were undertaking relevant, planned training. The manager is in process of carrying out performance appraisals for all relevant staff so that they can develop and improve their practice.

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; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; 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)(v)(vii)(d)) In particular, leaders and managers should ensure that risk assessments and behaviour management plans provide staff with clear strategies to minimise risks of harm. The registered person should ensure that staff follow these strategies. In addition, leaders and managers should ensure that the home environment is safe for children and any hazards are addressed without delay.	23 July 2024
The registered person must ensure that— within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes—	23 June 2024

the name of the child; details of the child's behaviour leading to the use of the measure; the date, time and location of the use of the measure; a description of the measure and its duration; details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure; the name of the person who used the measure ("the user"), and of any other person present when the measure was used; the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result of the measure; within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")— has spoken to the user about the measure; and has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(b)(i)(ii)(c))	
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	7 May 2024

any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order 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— 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; and make a copy of the quality of care review report available on request to a placing authority, if the placing authority is not the parent of a child accommodated in the home. The system referred to in paragraph (2) must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff. (Regulation 45 (1) (2)(a)(b)(c) (3) (4)(a)(b) (5))	
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— lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose; 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;	23 July 2024

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; 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)(a)(f)(g)(ii)(h)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that the monitoring and review systems lead to consistent improvements in the quality and consistency of records. In addition, the registered person should ensure that records of complaints and allegations clearly note the actions taken and what impact they had on practice in the home when they are concluded.	
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious; there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(b)(e))	23 June 2024
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))	23 June 2024

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. This requirement was raised at the last inspection and is restated.	
The registered person must give notice in writing to HMCI, as soon as it is reasonably practicable to do so, if any of the following events take place or are expected by the registered person to take place— if the registered provider is an organisation— any change of director, manager, secretary or other similar officer of the organisation. (Regulation 49 (e)(ii))	23 June 2024

Recommendation

- 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)

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: Mwansa Bwalya

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Aneta Wasilewska, Social Care Inspector

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