Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	**07/10/2015**
Unique reference number	**SC066912**
Type of inspection	**Full**
Provision subtype	**Children's home**
Registered person	**Oracle Care Limited**
Registered person address	**Unit 54 Wrest Park, Silsoe, BEDFORD, MK45 4HS**

Responsible individual	**Steven Bromley**
Registered manager	**Post Vacant**
Inspector	**Matt Hedges**

Inspection date	**07/10/2015**
Previous inspection judgement	**Inadequate**
Enforcement action since last inspection	A restriction of accommodation order was in force from to 7 July 2015 to 18 August 2015. A monitoring visit took place on 21 July 2015 and found the order had been complied with.
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	**Good**
The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.	
how well children and young people are helped and protected	**Good**
the impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	**Requires improvement**

SC066912

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- The manager has acted quickly to address deficits identified at the home's previous inspection.
- Young people now make significant progress in key areas of their lives.
- Relationships between core staff and young people are strong.
- Young people now feel safe.
- Incidents, including aggressive behaviour, physical restraint, and police intervention, have significantly reduced.
- The home has undergone a complete refurbishment. The quality of the accommodation is significantly improved.
- A few shortfalls are identified at this inspection. These relate to aspects of e-safety, assessing staff skills, medication, and monitoring processes.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Statutory Requirements

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person/s meets 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 with the given timescales.

Requirement	**Due date**
12: The protection of children standard In order to meet the protection of children standard, with particular reference to risk assessment and helping children the registered provider must ensure that staff: (2)(a)(i) assess whether each child is at risk of harm and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child (ii) help each child to understand how to keep safe.	20/11/2015
13. The leadership and management standard In order to meet the leadership and management standard with particular reference to staff skills the registered person must: (2)(c) ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child.	20/11/2015
The registered person must compile in relation to the children's home a statement ("the statement of purpose") which covers the matters listed in Schedule 1. (Regulation 16 (1))	20/11/2015
The registered person must ensure medicine which is prescribed for a child is administered as prescribed to the child for whom it is prescribed. (Regulation 23 (2) (b))	20/11/2015
The registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it. (Regulation 45 (2) (b))	20/11/2015

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home provides care and accommodation for up to 2 children with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The home is owned and operated by a private provider.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
29/06/2015	CH - Full	Inadequate
02/03/2015	CH - Interim	Declined in effectiveness
30/10/2014	CH - Full	Good
31/03/2014	CH - Interim	Good Progress

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	**good**

The home has undergone a significant number of improvements since being judged as inadequate in June 2015. This includes a number of staff leaving and new staff joining the team. The core staff team have worked tirelessly to limit the impact of these changes on young people and ensure they have consistency in their lives. As a result, young people have developed excellent relationships with key staff. Young people comment that this makes them feel secure. A social worker highlighted, 'the young person has told me that this is the most settled they have ever felt. Their whole attitude has changed, they know staff want the best for them. Because of this they are starting to think about the future and what they want to do'.

Staff enjoy spending time with young people and support them to engage in a wide range of positive activities. Skiing is a particular favourite. Young people are encouraged to try new things and are enthusiastic about this. For example, fitness and boxing. This helps to improve their physical health and increases their opportunities to socialise with other young people. One young person also went on holiday to Kos with a favourite member of staff. They reflected positively on this and were relieved to have escaped the 'piranhas' they had seen when snorkelling! This helps to expand young people's horizons and further develop their relationships with staff.

Young people's school attendance improves. One young person's attendance was 74% last year. This year it has increased to over 90%. This has helped to improve their academic and social attainment. An education professional states, 'they are like a different child. They manage their behaviour better…They have more stability and feel more secure with the people around them. Due to this they are less anxious and are developing relationships better.'

Young people are proud of the progress they make, one young person stating, 'it's going alright for me' and was particularly proud of achieving maximum points at school for their behaviour.

Young people have access to the services they need. This includes support for their emotional health and well-being. Young people generally engage well, helping them to achieve more. One health professional notes progress across a variety of key areas including, 'improvements in education, behaviour, communication, and relationships'. This helps to equip young people with the confidence and skills they need as they approach adulthood.

Young people are now appropriately involved in decisions about their lives. Staff advocate for them when needed and sensitively support young people to voice any complaints they may have. This helps young people to feel empowered and reinforces that their views are valued.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	**good**

Young people now feel safe. As a result, incidents of aggression, police involvement, and damage to property have significantly reduced. There has been no use of physical restraint since the last inspection. Young people do not go missing. These improvements are underpinned by core staff who ensure that clear boundaries are in place and positive behaviour is celebrated by increased trust. This helps young people to feel secure. A social worker reflects, 'staff are really clear with young people, this has been really good for them and they have responded well'. A young person explains, 'I like having more trust…but you abuse it you lose it'.

Staff now have positive, proactive relationships with local police who occasionally visit the home to talk to staff and young people. This provides an opportunity to share information when required and predominantly, ensures that young people have the opportunity to view the police in a positive light.

Risks are generally well identified, understood and managed. Young people are now supported to take age appropriate risks. For example, using a mobile phone or having access to the internet. These risks are considered with the young person and their social worker. However, proactive work with young people is not always undertaken beforehand. For example, in relation to staying safe online. This does not help young people to understand how to keep themselves safe. Furthermore, these decisions are not always well documented and written risk assessments are not always completed. This does not provide new staff with a clear assessment as to whether young people are at risk of harm, and the actions they need to take to reduce this. The impact of these shortfalls is reduced by the open, honest, trusting relationships that young people have with core staff, strong oversight from the manager and clear communication of her expectations.

A number of new staff have started in the home. These staff are carefully selected and vetted. The recruitment process ensures that any potential concerns are assessed by the manager and monitored appropriately. This helps to protect young people.

The home has been completely refurbished. Young people talk positively about the

improvements as do the staff team. One member of staff comments, 'the premises have improved dramatically. It feels more like a home and less like a care home.' Young people are clear that this is important to them, one young person comments, 'the home needs to look normal'. As a result young people live in a pleasant, safe and secure environment.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	**requires improvement**

The home is managed by a suitably qualified, experienced manager. The manager started in May 2015 and has applied to register with Ofsted.

The manager has taken robust action to address the vast majority of shortfalls identified at the home's previous inspection. Core staff have responded well to the changes. This has had a significant impact on the quality of the service provided and the progress young people make.

The home is now adequately staffed. However, many of the staff are new to the home and have only been in post a few weeks. There has been little formal analysis of their learning during this period, particularly in relation to areas such as whistleblowing and e-safety. As a result managers are unable to ensure that all staff have the skills to meet the needs of all young people.

Monitoring processes within the home are satisfactory. The manager undertakes regular 'quality of care reviews'. These reviews inform the home's development plan and ensure that the manager is aware of the majority of the home's strengths and weaknesses. However, the reports produced do not fully monitor, review and evaluate the feedback and opinions of young people about the home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it. This reduces the formal opportunities they have to influence the development of the home.

In one incidence the manager did not ensure monitoring of medication was robust. Specifically, that medicine which is prescribed for a young person is administered as prescribed. Appropriate action was taken during the inspection to address this and minimise the impact on the young person.

The manager puts young people at the centre of her work and has a clear understanding of the progress they make in relation to their planned aims and objectives. This information is collated and shared with young people in an easy to understand format. This helps young people to identify their own progress and celebrate their achievements.

The home's statement of purpose does not provide all of the required information.

Specific omissions include; how people can access the home's child protection or behaviour management policy, how staff competence in restraint is assessed, and the arrangements for enabling children to take part in and benefit from a variety of activities. These shortfalls do not allow young people, families or professionals to have a complete and accurate overview of the service offered by the home.

Staff talk positively about the support they receive from the manager. Supervisions are effective and focused on the needs of young people. This helps to ensure consistency and develop staff practice.

What the inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection.*

An **outstanding** children's home provides highly effective services that contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help and protection and care. Their progress exceeds expectations and is sustained over time.

A **good** children's home provides effective services that help, protect and care for children and young people and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

In a children's home that **requires improvement**, there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. The welfare of looked after children is safeguarded and promoted. Minimum requirements are in place, however, the children's home is not yet delivering good protection, help and care for children and young people.

A children's home that is **inadequate** is providing services where there are widespread or serious failures that create or leave children and young people being harmed or at risk of harm or result in children looked after not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people living in the children's home. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference adults make to the lives of children and young people. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with children, young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care given to children and young people. Wherever possible, they talked to children, young people and their families. In addition the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people who it is trying to help, protect and look after.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service 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.*

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