

SC066912

Registered provider: Oracle Care Limited

Interim inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and operated by a private company. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to two children aged between eight and 18. Children and young people may have complex social, emotional and behavioural needs and require attachment-aware, trauma-informed care and support.

The current manager successfully registered with Ofsted in July 2018.

Inspection date: 11 December 2018

Judgement at last inspection: good

Date of last inspection: 16 July 2018

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

This inspection

The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection

This home was judged good at the last full inspection. At the interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has declined in effectiveness.

Children do not receive good-quality care and support. Their experiences since the last inspection have been poor and they have made little progress.

Two requirements made at the last inspection have been met. Children have free access to a telephone. In addition, managers now undertake suitability checks and seek necessary employment references for all new staff. However, the registered manager has failed to meet the two remaining requirements and one recommendation. Ofsted has made further requirements and raised one recommendation at this inspection.

Since the last inspection, the home has experienced a period of instability. One child was admitted to the home but has subsequently been discharged. Throughout the planned placement of this child, the manager did not ensure that the home had sufficient numbers of permanent staff. This does not provide children with appropriate or consistent levels of care and support. A requirement to address this shortfall was also made at the last inspection. The home remains reliant on the use of agency staff. These transient arrangements do not help children to form good relationships with staff.

Although the organisation operates its own school, managers and staff do not prioritise children's education. They do not work effectively with school staff to address the barriers to learning that children face. Education plans are ineffectual and do not reflect children's skills, abilities or learning needs. This means that these plans do not provide children with adequate support to help them to reach their full potential. For one child, this means that their educational achievements have declined since the last inspection. One child said that they feel frustrated by 'rubbish lessons' and are anxious that they 'will be left behind and not be able to get a good job'.

Children's risk assessments now include considerations associated with staff who lone work. However, managers do not regularly review or update children's risk assessments. These documents do not accurately reflect all known risks. Risk assessments do not help staff to address children's behaviours because the assessments do not detail suitable strategies to help staff to manage and reduce risks.

Occasions when children display challenging or anti-social behaviours have increased. Staff do not help or support children to recognise the impact that these behaviours have on themselves or others, or encourage children to take responsibility for their actions. Furthermore, sanctions used to address poor behaviour are not restorative in nature. This means that children are not motivated to change their behaviours.

Staff do not ensure that children's case files include all necessary documentation or information. This limits their ability to provide children with good-quality care that reflects the aims and objectives of the placing authority and takes account of their backgrounds, personal circumstances and previous experiences.

Managers do not provide staff with regular formal supervision to support them in their role. This means that managers do not identify or address any staff practice concerns that may impact on children's progress and development.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
16/07/2018	Full	Good
07/02/2018	Interim	Declined in effectiveness

07/08/2017	Full	Requires improvement to be good
01/02/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

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 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; understand the barriers to learning that each child may face and take appropriate action to help the child to overcome any such barriers; and maintain regular contact with each child's education and training provider, including engaging with the provider and the placing authority to support the child's education and training and to maximise the child's achievement. (Regulation 8(1)(2)(a)(i)(iii)(vi))	18/02/2019
The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on an understanding about acceptable behaviour. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure that staff— help each child to develop socially aware behaviour; and encourage each child to take responsibility for the child's behaviour, in accordance with the child's age and	18/02/2019

understanding. (Regulation 11(b)(2)(a)(ii)(iii))	
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. (Regulation 12(1)(2)(a)(i))	18/02/2019
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child; and ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child. (Regulation 13(1)(b)(2)(d)(e))	18/02/2019
The registered person must ensure that all employees receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33(4)(b))	18/02/2019
The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child; and are kept up to date. (Regulation 36(1)(a)(b))	18/02/2019

Recommendations

- Ensure that any sanctions used to address poor behaviour are restorative in nature, to help children recognise the impact of their behaviour on themselves, other children, the staff caring for them and the wider community. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.38)

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care

provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and 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 whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

This inspection focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

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: SC066912

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Oracle Care Limited

Registered provider address: Unit 54, Wrest Park, Silsoe, Bedford MK45 4HS

Responsible individual: Mark Cole

Registered manager: Rebecca Gardner

Inspector

Jo Stephenson, social care inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: <http://www.gov.uk/ofsted>

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