

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 for up to three children aged between eight and 18 years. Children may have complex social or emotional difficulties and require attachment-aware, trauma-informed care and support.

Inspection date: 24 February 2022

Date of last inspection: 26 October 2021

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

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 requires improvement to be good at the last full inspection. At this interim inspection, Ofsted judged that it has declined in effectiveness.

There were no children living in the home at the time of this inspection. The child who lived in the home at the time of the last inspection had recently moved on. The provider took the decision to end the child's placement as there were insufficient staffing resources to provide appropriate care.

Regular changes in staff have led to inconsistent care and the child's individual needs not being consistently met. Although the organisation has made every effort to ensure that consistent staff are employed, the loss of experienced and familiar faces has affected the child's stability. Records show that the child was significantly impacted by this lack of continuity of care. For example, the child was distressed on a frequent basis and incidents of challenging behaviour significantly increased. In addition, records show that some shifts were poorly organised and information-sharing between staff was ineffective. This meant that staff were not fully aware of the child's needs and provided inconsistent and poorly thought-through care. For example, on one occasion, staff contacted the police non-emergency service to seek advice on how to manage the child's behaviours.

Care planning is poor. The inspection identified that managers and staff did not provide the child with proactive care to address their emotional and mental health needs. For example, during December 2021, the child displayed behaviour that indicated they may be experiencing significant emotional or mental health issues. Staff did not consult the in-house clinical team or seek specialist advice to support the child. This was a missed opportunity to provide the child with support in line with their needs. In addition, the child's social worker told the inspector that staff did not take timely action to support the child's placement and missed opportunities to work with the local authority to put additional support in place. This lack of proactive partnership working is likely to have been a contributory factor to the sudden and unplanned ending of the child's placement.

Staff did not work in accordance with the child's plans. For example, incident records show that staff did not consistently follow the guidance in the child's behaviour management plans. This meant that the child received inconsistent support.

Managers do not always complete records of restraint to required timescales. In addition, the inspection found that some incidents of restraint are not recorded. This is a missed opportunity to review staff practice and identify learning.

Management oversight of the home is poor. For example, managers do not provide the necessary oversight following significant incidents in the home. This means that shortfalls in practice are not always identified.

The quality of children's one-to-one support is variable. Staff did not undertake effective direct work with the child to help them to manage their feelings and to help them to understand why certain behaviours are harmful to them and/or others. This meant that the child did not receive consistent support to help them to understand risks and the context of their challenging behaviours.

Behaviour management plans are not up to date and do not reflect all known risk behaviours. This means that staff are not always given all the information they need to understand how best to keep children safe. In addition, on occasions, staff use interventions and strategies that are punitive, irrelevant and not associated with the child's challenging behaviour.

Ofsted considered higher enforcement action in response to the serious and widespread shortfalls identified at this inspection. However, during the inspection, the responsible individual acknowledged the shortfalls and informed the inspector that the home does not have sufficient staff to safely care for children. The provider has requested that their conditions of registration be varied so that the provider is required to give Ofsted three months' notice before a child is admitted. Ofsted has agreed to this request.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
26/10/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good
17/09/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good
11/12/2018	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
16/07/2018	Full	Good

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 health and well-being standard is that— the health and well-being needs of children are met; children receive advice, services and support in relation to their health and well-being; children are helped to lead healthy lifestyles. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff help each child to— achieve the health and well-being outcomes that are recorded in the child's relevant plans; understand the child's health and well-being needs and the options that are available in relation to the child's health and well-being, in a way that is appropriate to the child's age and understanding; take part in activities, and attend any appointments, for the purpose of meeting the child's health and well-being needs; understand and develop skills to promote the child's well-being. (Regulation 10 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)) This particularly refers to seeking appropriate and timely advice and treatment in line with children's health needs.	25 April 2022
The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on— mutual respect and trust; an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and	25 April 2022

positive responses to other children and adults. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— meet each child’s behavioural and emotional needs, as set out in the child’s relevant plans; help each child to develop socially aware behaviour; encourage each child to take responsibility for the child’s behaviour, in accordance with the child’s age and understanding; communicate to each child expectations about the child’s behaviour and ensure that the child understands those expectations in accordance with the child’s age and understanding; help each child to understand, in a way that is appropriate according to the child’s age and understanding, personal, sexual and social relationships, and how those relationships can be supportive or harmful. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(v)(vi)) This relates to staff providing children with regular, good-quality one-to-one support in line with their needs, to support them to make sense of their challenging behaviours.	
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)) This particularly refers to staff keeping risk assessments and behaviour management plans up to date to reflect all known risks.	25 April 2022

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; ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate; ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child; 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)(b)(e)(h))	25 April 2022
The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)) This particularly refers to staff working proactively with agencies and taking timely action to address instability in children's placements.	25 April 2022
No measure of control or discipline which is excessive, unreasonable or contrary to paragraph (2) may be used in relation to any child. (Regulation 19 (1)) This particularly refers to staff not using punitive or irrelevant strategies to manage children's behaviour.	25 April 2022
The registered person must keep the behaviour management policy under review and, where appropriate, revise it. how appropriate behaviour is to be promoted in the children's home; and the measures of control, discipline and restraint which may be used in relation to children in the home.	25 April 2022

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—

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 (1)(a)(b) (2)

(3)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(b)(i)(ii)(c))

This particularly refers to staff recording all incidents of restraint in line with regulation.

Information about this inspection

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.

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: SC066912

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Oracle Care Limited

Registered provider address: Suites 1 & 5, Riverside Business Centre, Foundry Lane, Milford, Belper, Derbyshire DE56 0RN

Responsible individual: Jodie Whitehouse

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Gareth Leckey, Social Care Inspector

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