

SC066917

Registered provider: Oracle Care Limited

Full 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 three young people aged eight to 18. The young people may have social and/or emotional difficulties.

Inspection dates: 11 to 12 September 2019

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

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

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

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 22 January 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: declined in effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
22/01/2019	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
12/07/2018	Full	Good
08/02/2018	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
26/10/2017	Full	Requires improvement to be 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 leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— 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. 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)(2)(f)(ii)(h))	15/11/2019
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The requirements are that— full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1)(2)(3)(d))	15/11/2019
The registered person must ensure that all employees— undertake appropriate continuing professional development; receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience employees. (Regulation 33 (4)(a)(b))	15/11/2019

Recommendations

- Regulations 35-39 details the records that must be kept in children's homes. All children's records must be kept up to date and stored securely whilst they remain

in the home. Case records must be kept up to date. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.3) In particular, risk assessments are too generic and not all risks are documented to the right young person.

- The statement of purpose is of particular importance to this standard (regulation 6(2)(a) and (b)(i)). Homes are required to develop and keep under review a 'statement of purpose' (regulation 16 and schedule 1). The homes statement of purpose should be children focused, indicating how the home provides individualised care to meet the quality standard of the children in their home. The information set out in this statement of purpose is an essential part of the process of agreement between the registered persons and placing authority that placement in that home is the right one for that child and the home will be able to respond effectively to the child's assessed needs. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', pages 14–15, paragraphs 3-5 and 3.6.) In particular, the registered manager should ensure that the statement of purpose accurately reflects the staff structure and staffing levels.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Young people develop positive relationships with the staff and the registered manager. Staff understand young people's complex needs and manage their vulnerabilities well. This positive relationship helps young people to express their wishes and feelings. This gives young people a sense of comfort, acceptance and reassurance.

Young people have good school attendance and enjoy their learning experiences. The registered manager and staff encourage young people to succeed by supporting them with their homework, helping them to pursue interests and promoting their individual aspirations. Staff communicate well with young people's teachers and attend meetings to support young people's educational needs.

The registered manager and staff promote young people's emotional and physical health needs. Young people access the in-house therapy support, which helps young people to keep themselves safe and have a better understanding of their vulnerabilities. The staff receive regular input from the in-house therapist. This support helps them to provide young people with a consistent approach in line with the home's therapeutic model of care.

The registered manager and staff continue to ensure that young people maintain important and positive relationships with their families.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: good

The registered manager and staff understand young people's vulnerabilities. Staff understand the risks that young people can face and keep a detailed record of how young people are safeguarded.

Staff write detailed risk assessments and use these records to help them to identify triggers that can result in young people being placed at risk. However, sometimes staff do not pick up on conflicting information. This means that, occasionally, advice for staff to help them to manage young people's vulnerabilities can be unclear.

When staff are required to physically intervene to safeguard a young person, these incidents are well documented. These records show that young people and staff receive a debrief.

Young people rarely go missing from the home. On the rare occasion when young people have gone missing, the staff have acted quickly, working closely in partnership with the placing local authority, local services and the police.

Staff carry out regular one-to-one sessions with young people. These sessions help young people to discuss the risks of accessing social media sites, online gaming and self-harming. This creative support helps to encourage young people to take responsibility for keeping themselves safe.

Since the last inspection, the registered manager has addressed shortfalls raised by the fire and rescue service. The registered manager was quick to correct a new fire safety concern that was picked up during this inspection.

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

Staff show a good understanding of the therapeutic approach used in the home and how this helps them to support young people to make progress, socially, emotionally and physically.

The registered manager escalates matters on behalf of young people when he identifies shortfalls in the support and care that young people receive from their placing authority. When required, the registered manager is not afraid to challenge local authorities to ensure that young people get the right help at the right time.

The registered manager does not always use monitoring and review systems well enough to help with his oversight of the home. For example, the statement of purpose needs to be brought up to date to reflect changes in the staff structure.

Management has failed to carry out suitable checks on staff working in the home. For example, managers do not always verify references before staff start to work at the home. This does not promote safe recruitment of staff and potentially leaves young people vulnerable.

Staff receive formal supervision. However, these sessions are not always regular and do not include practice-related discussions. This creates a missed opportunity to help the staff to develop their practice.

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.

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: SC066917

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Oracle Care Limited

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

Responsible individual: Dawn Tattersall

Registered manager: Alexander Scott

Inspector

Patrick McIntosh, social care inspector

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