

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 two children aged eight to 18. The children may have complex social, emotional and behavioural needs.

The current manager successfully registered with Ofsted in May 2018.

Inspection dates: 12 to 13 July 2018

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 **good**

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

Date of last inspection: 8 February 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: declined in effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
08/02/2018	Interim	Declined in effectiveness

26/10/2017	Full	Requires improvement to be good
23/02/2017	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
03/11/2016	Full	Requires improvement

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— 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)(vi))	28/09/2018
The care planning standard is that children receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that each child's relevant plans are followed. (Regulation 14(1)(a)(2)(c))	28/09/2018
The registered person may only use devices for the monitoring or surveillance of children if the monitoring or surveillance is for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child concerned, or other children; and the monitoring or surveillance is no more intrusive than necessary, having regard to the child's need for privacy. (Regulation 24(a)(d))	28/09/2018
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The registered person may only employ an individual to work at the children's home if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). 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)(a)(3)(d))	28/09/2018

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children make good progress because they enjoy positive day-to-day experiences. Staff provide nurturing and child-focused care that is centred around children's individual needs.

Relationships between children and staff are positive. Staff use these relationships to seek children's views, wishes and opinions. This means that children are involved in decisions about their care. However, staff do not always make sure that specific targets for achievements, as highlighted by the placing authorities, are incorporated into internal care plans. As a result, children are not always aware of their own targets or progress.

Education is central to the culture and ethos of the home. Children attend the organisation's own independent school. They enjoy education and their attendance is good. One child said, 'School's good. I like learning new things and stuff.' Nevertheless, managers do not always make sure that teaching staff and placing authorities work together to maximise children's achievements. For one child, this means that their personal education plan is incomplete, and they may not receive the bespoke support that they need to assist their learning.

Children have easy access to the organisation's own psychology and therapy services. Following the completion of an appropriate assessment, this personalised support means that children learn to safely express their emotions.

Staff encourage children to take part in new activities. Children are often reluctant to expand their social circles or try new hobbies. However, staff continue to persevere. They recognise the positive impact these interactions will have on children's confidence and self-esteem.

Children benefit from regular contact with their families, and staff recognise how important this is. Staff help and support children to make the most of the time that they spend with their families.

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

Children's risk assessments now include all known factors that may impact on their safety. These documents guide staff on how to respond to children's behaviours. Incidents of complex or challenging behaviours, such as self-harm or physical aggression, continue to reduce. This is because consistent staff practice supports children to develop alternative ways of managing their anxieties and frustrations.

For some children, staff use bedroom door alarms to monitor their movements during the night. However, risk assessments do not identify any current, specific safeguarding concerns to explain the use of these alarms. This means that children may experience

restrictions to their liberty.

Staff use a combination of personalised incentives and sanctions to help children to understand how to keep themselves safe, and to make positive choices. Staff deliver good-quality, reflective one-to-one sessions. These sessions help children to take responsibility for their actions and think about the impact these may have on others.

The manager now ensures that staff only use physical restraint to prevent children from harming themselves or others. Since the last inspection there has been a significant decrease in the use of physical restraint. This is because staff now use their de-escalation skills to defuse potential situations. Records of these events now include all relevant and necessary details. This provides the registered manager with the opportunity to fully review these events and make sure that staff practice is safe and lawful. This positive improvement promotes children's safety and welfare.

Staff receive safeguarding and child protection training. This includes modules relating to children going missing from the home and child sexual exploitation. Although these factors are not identified risks for the children currently living in the home, staff remain alert to the possibility that they could arise. This awareness and recognition promotes children's safety.

The recruitment of new staff is not always safe. Managers do not make sure that they consistently gain all relevant previous employment references, or appropriately verify these. This means that they are sometimes unable to confirm the suitability of all staff to work with children. The negative impact of this shortfall on children's safety is reduced because, in most cases, reference checks are complete.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager has the skills and experience necessary to bring stability and effective leadership to the home. He has a clear vision for the development of the service, and to date has addressed all but one of the requirements raised at the last inspection. This demonstrates the capacity for the service to continue to improve in order to meet children's needs.

Improvements to internal monitoring systems now mean that the registered manager is able to evaluate the quality of care that children receive. He now uses these systems to identify the strengths of the service alongside areas for development. Consequently, , the registered manager makes sure that the service meets the aims and objectives of the statement of purpose.

Staff now receive regular supervision. The registered manager recognises that many staff have little experience of working in children's residential care. He prioritises staff support, training and development. This ensures that the members of the newly formed staff team can gain the skills and knowledge that they need to work with and support children. This gives them the competencies they need to start to work towards gaining

the relevant qualifications for their role.

Partnership working arrangements between managers and external agencies continue to improve. The registered manager is clear in his expectations of others. He is confident in challenging these agencies when necessary. This ensures that children receive integrated care to support their progress.

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: Mark Cole

Registered manager: Alexander Scott

Inspector

Jo Stephenson: social care inspector

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