

SC356327

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 by a private company. The home provides care for up to two children who have experienced social and emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in April 2025 and holds a level 5 qualification in leadership and management.

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 November 2025

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 **outstanding**

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

Date of last inspection: 5 February 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
05/02/2025	Full	Outstanding
30/01/2024	Full	Outstanding
31/01/2023	Full	Outstanding
13/04/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

At the time of the inspection, one child was living at the home. One child had moved out of the home sooner than anticipated. However, this was a planned and well-managed move. Children have made progress from their starting points.

Children's needs are well considered at the point of referral. The manager consults with placing authorities and carefully considers the needs of children moving in and of those already living in the home. This joined-up working helps make sure children have a safe and happy home where they can stay for as long as they need.

Staff recognise children's achievements and genuinely celebrate them. They capture all children's positive experiences and significant events in their lives. Staff use life-story work and praise books to record important memories for children to look back on fondly. They are sensitive and proactive in supporting and helping children through these situations.

Children make progress in their education. Since the last inspection, one child has successfully returned to school after a long absence from education. When children struggle in education, staff work effectively with education staff and other professionals to resolve barriers to learning. Staff and managers advocate for children, to develop their engagement in school life to improve their achievements.

Staff continue to collaborate closely with the in-house clinical team and other professionals to provide children with specialist and informed care. For example, staff receive bespoke training in a therapeutic model and are committed to developing their practice using the model. This helps them provide good care to meet children's emotional needs. This means children are better supported to manage their emotions and reflect on their behaviours and choices.

Children enjoy a welcoming, comfortable and nurturing environment that is decorated to a high standard. Staff and children take pride in their home and bedrooms are personalised to suit children's wishes and interests. Children's photos and certificates are proudly displayed throughout the home. This creates a homely atmosphere where children make good progress. This level of care and nurture shows children that they are valued and respected. However, staff practice does not always ensure that the environment is homely. For example, there is a blanket approach by staff to locking away cleaning and washing products. This is not proportionate to any potential or identified risks for children.

Managers took steps to reduce disruption for children following the departure of some senior and experienced staff. The registered manager was able to maintain continuity of staffing in the home, so children's attachments were not overly disrupted. However, despite this proactive approach, when new staff were recruited, managers did not obtain

all the relevant information to demonstrate that all staff are suitably skilled and experienced.

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

There is a strong safeguarding culture. The protection and welfare of children are at the centre of staff practice. Staff have a good understanding of children's needs and vulnerabilities. They support children to have established routines, and they set appropriate boundaries for acceptable behaviour. This is an important aspect of staff care for children and demonstrates that they value them as individuals.

Incidents of children going missing from the home are rare. If children go missing, the registered manager has a missing-from-home protocol in place and staff are responsive in implementing this to ensure that children are quickly located. This reduces the potential risks to children in the community.

Children understand their rights and know how to make a complaint. Managers ensure that any concerns are quickly investigated and addressed. This assures children that any issues they raise are taken seriously and timely action is taken.

The registered manager and staff take appropriate action and respond quickly to ensure the safety and welfare of children. For example, staff follow up issues relating to self-harming behaviour, ensuring that children receive timely emotional and medical care and support. This promotes children's health, welfare and safety.

Important and meaningful conversations take place to help children to understand the risks and dangers around drugs, alcohol, safe friendships and emotional wellbeing. When needed, staff also ensure that referrals are made for children to have specialist support. Good-quality work with, and support for, children help them stay safer.

Since the last inspection, physical restraint has been used on three occasions to keep children safe. Staff receive training on the use of physical restraint and de-escalation techniques. The number of incidents involving physical restraint has continued to fall. This is a result of staff having a good understanding of a range of de-escalation techniques to distract children and manage their behaviour.

Overall, recruitment practice is thorough and ensures that staff are suitable and safe to work with children. However, on occasions, managers do not consider whether agency staff have the appropriate skills and training to keep children safe.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The registered manager demonstrates strong leadership and innovation, creating a positive and lasting impact on children and staff. Her approach fosters a family-oriented culture in the home, where children experience appropriate care and affection. Staff say they feel supported and inspired by her ethos. One staff member stated, 'We can always

go to [name of manager] and ask for any advice if we are struggling or not sure what to do in a situation.' This guidance has enabled staff to enhance their own practice. The manager actively listens to staff and promotes their professional development, resulting in a highly skilled, committed and dedicated team. Consequently, children benefit from enriching experiences and improved outcomes.

The manager demonstrates a proactive and assertive approach to advocating for children's needs. She consistently challenges other professionals and raises awareness to ensure that children receive the necessary support and services. For instance, the manager successfully advocated for a child to access targeted services. She has played a key role in escalating concerns to senior managers when required. Additionally, the manager ensures that all children have access to independent advocacy, enabling their wishes and feelings to be heard and understood. This persistent, child-centred practice keeps children's care and progress as the priority for staff and partner agencies.

Leaders and managers use a range of internal audits to monitor and track children's progress very well. These help to identify the home's strengths and areas for development. They closely scrutinise patterns of behaviour and evaluate these to improve the quality of care. This consistent monitoring means that children receive high-quality care.

The manager ensures that staff engage with specific training to support children effectively. This has included training to improve staff's understanding of childhood trauma-informed practice and emotional wellbeing, using tools to aid learning about feelings and thoughts. In addition, new staff receive an in-depth induction that includes face-to-face training. This bespoke approach provides staff with knowledge and skills in how to support children with their emotional challenges.

Staff benefit from leaders and managers who promote and support a learning environment. Reflective discussions in formal supervision provide effective support and challenge. In addition, new staff receive regular formal supervision to help them understand their roles and responsibilities, children's challenging needs and how to keep them safe. This means that staff progress and professional development are consistently monitored effectively.

Leaders and managers work closely with a range of professionals to ensure that the quality of care provided to children is well coordinated. The registered manager recognises the importance of maintaining strong relationships with partner agencies. She attends regular meetings internally and externally with therapists, teachers, health professionals and social workers to closely scrutinise children's progress. In addition, she uses learning to continually develop the care of children and generate creative ideas to support children and provide positive experiences for them. Feedback from a range of professionals was unanimously positive, with one social worker saying, 'One of the most impressive things within the home is the relationships that managers and staff have with children. They keep me informed and respond to all my calls.'

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should consider the skills, qualifications and any induction necessary for agency staff before they start work in the home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 54, paragraph 10.16)
- The registered person should demonstrate every effort to achieve continuity of staffing so that children's attachments are not overly disrupted, including ensuring that the employment of any temporary staff will not prevent children from receiving the continuity of care that they need. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 51, paragraph 10.1)
- The registered person should ensure that children are able to access all shared areas of their home unless there are specific reasons why this would not meet a child's needs. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.10)

Information about this 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: SC356327

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: Laura Duckers

Registered manager: Tracey Healings

Inspector

Patrick McIntosh, Social Care Inspector

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