

1183494

Registered provider: Slough Children's Services Trust Limited (09487106)

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This purpose-built children's home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to seven children and young people. The home has been without a registered manager since 16 December 2016. The interim manager applied for registration but left before this process was complete. A new interim manager had just taken up post at the time of this inspection.

Inspection dates: 2 to 3 May 2018

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	inadequate
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The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 11 January 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: declined in effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/01/2017	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
11/05/2016	Full	Good
09/11/2015	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 registered person must notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16 (3)(b))	08/08/2018
The registered person must prepare and implement a policy ('the missing child policy') setting out the steps taken, and to be taken, to prevent children from being absent without permission and the procedures to be followed, and the roles and responsibilities of persons working at the home, in relation to a child who is, or has been, so absent. (Regulation 34 (4)(a)(b))	08/08/2018
The registered person must ensure that a record is made of any complaint, the action taken in response, and the outcome of any investigation so that the process followed and how it has led to the outcome is clear. (Regulation 39 (3))	08/08/2018
The independent person must produce a report about a visit which sets out, in particular, the independent person's opinion as to whether children are effectively safeguarded and the conduct of the home promotes children's well-being. (Regulation 44 (3)(a)(b))	08/08/2018
In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it and any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children. (Regulation 45 (2)(a)(b))	08/08/2018

Recommendations

- The principle of listening to the child and taking their views, wishes and feelings into account when planning and undertaking their care applies to all children, including children with disabilities, special educational needs or other complex needs. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 21, paragraph 4.5)
- Where positive relationships exist between the children and staff this should be respected and maintained as far as possible when making any decisions to alter staffing arrangements. The registered person should respond to children's views about changes to staff and be aware of the potential impact this may have for the child's stability and emotional well-being. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 39, paragraph 8.12)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

Some children make reasonable progress and enjoy living in the home. However, managers and staff have been unable to ensure that this is so for all children. Some have experienced care arrangements that are not always considerate of their individualised circumstances. The interim manager agreed that staff fail to gather the views of and consider cultural and diversity issues when planning for some children.

Managers did not inform the children about recent changes in staffing. The sudden loss of key staff has led to some children becoming anxious and slightly unsettled. Some children were able to name staff they have positive interactions with, but others spoke negatively of how certain staff members engage with them.

There have been no proactive efforts by the staff to deter the children from smoking. Children were observed to smoke in the front entrance of the home individually and in groups without challenge by staff. The children have not been referred to any services to address the health concern.

The requirement regarding complaints by young people remains unmet. The process for addressing complaints by children remains unclear. Evidence to support the manager's response to a recent complaint by a child was not available for review on inspection.

Education attainment is encouraged for the children. The virtual headteacher of schools is actively involved with all children, ensuring that they attend a mainstream or alternative provision. The progress of the children is monitored through timely reviews and effective communication with school staff.

Managers plan moves out the home well. Pre-arranged visits and discussions are

undertaken, assisting young people to reduce their anxiety at this time. Young people obtain age-appropriate independence skills that support them to confidently move towards adulthood.

The physical environment of the home is being upgraded internally and externally. The majority of the home has been freshly painted, and further changes are planned for the layout. This is making the home more appealing to young people and accessible for professionals.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

The majority of the children in the home said that they feel safe living in the home. It was not clear whether this is the case for the children not spoken with on inspection. Additionally, some children expressed concerns about how staff treat certain children.

The staff interpretation of missing from care is unsatisfactory. No suitable guidance is in place for the staff, and this results in some children being unnecessarily reported as missing. The majority of the incidents involved children returning late to the home while maintaining contact and their whereabouts were known. Some young people have been unnecessarily exposed to contact with the police because of this flawed practice.

The staff do not always address negative behaviours properly. Some sanctions given to children did not relate to the behaviour. Some key working sessions failed to evidence that children understood the reasons for the discussions.

Physical interventions have greatly reduced. There were only two recorded in this inspection period, and they were recorded properly reflecting actions and learning. This requirement has been met based on the evidence reviewed.

The managers address all concerns for staff practice and performance. A fair process of review is undertaken involving consultation with human resources. These matters are undertaken with discretion and privacy.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

The home has now been without a registered manager for almost 18 months. The recent resignation and withdrawal of registration application by the manager continues this pattern. The lack of a registered manager for a considerable length of time is central to the inadequate judgement in this section.

The majority of the requirements and recommendation made at the last inspection remain unmet. An interim manager was appointed a few days prior to this inspection. The sudden change in leadership has delayed each area from being thoroughly addressed.

No monthly reports have been received since the last inspection. There has been no

information submitted to determine whether the reports have improved in quality and provide useful information to the management.

The statement of purpose requirement remains incomplete. The managers have yet to revise the current document and provide a copy to Ofsted.

The requirement relating to the quality of care report has not been met. The next report is scheduled to be completed in two months' time. Now that the manager has changed again, the management will need to work hard to produce a robust report that contributes to the development of the home in such a short period.

The process of admitting children to the home has improved. The responsible individual endeavours to have all children admitted in a planned way even in emergency situations. This is evident from the successful admission of three children over a two-month period.

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: 1183494

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Slough Children's Services Trust Limited (09487106)

Registered provider address: Ground Floor West, St Martin's Place, 51 Bath Road, Slough, Buckinghamshire SL1 3UF

Responsible individual: Jackie Pape

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

James Harmon, social care inspector

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