

1277158

Registered provider: Oaktree Childcare Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is operated by a private provider. It is registered to provide care for two children.

The manager registered with Ofsted in August 2021.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021.

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 November 2021

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	requires improvement to be good
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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: 5 December 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
05/12/2019	Full	Good
11/01/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

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

There was one child living in the home at the time of the inspection.

The child has made some positive progress. However, in some areas, progress has been limited due to inconsistent care planning and partnership working. Some relationships between staff and the child are good. However, others are not as positive, and the child does not feel that some staff care for him or support him as well as others.

The child has not made good progress academically because he has not been in education or training for several months. Furthermore, relevant plans have not been reviewed, which means that the child's educational needs are not fully understood. A home learning timetable and tutor have provided some structure for the child; however, this is not a suitable long-term alternative. Being out of education has caused the child to feel frustrated. The child said, 'I have been failed.'

The child has been supported to develop some skills in preparation for independence. However, the future plans for him are uncertain. The child is worried about his future, and his parents are concerned that a lack of effective planning will result in a negative transition.

The staff team understands the child's health needs and ensures that these are met. He has access to a range of health services, including in-house therapeutic support. There are clear plans to manage lifelong conditions, and the arrangements for managing medication are safe and effective.

The home conditions do not constitute a welcoming and homely environment. For example, the standards of decoration are poor in some areas, and other areas do not meet good hygiene standards.

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

Some risks are reducing for the child because staff have a good understanding of these and take action to address them. Risks are clearly identified and assessed. However, in some instances, strategies to manage risk lack clarity and can be conflicting.

Risk management is restrictive in some instances and results in the routine deprivation of the child's liberty. In the absence of the correct authority, these restrictions have not been subject to continual review.

Consequences are not restorative and do not help the child to understand the impact of his behaviours. They are not well recorded or reviewed effectively, and some consequences have been repeated with no positive impact on behaviour.

The recruitment of staff is not always carried out in line with procedures that are designed to promote children's safety. For example, the home has not obtained sufficient written references to assess a person's suitability to work with children.

A complaint made about a member of staff was not documented thoroughly. The investigation and management of this complaint were poor and did not evidence that steps were taken to address the conduct issue and prevent this from reoccurring.

There are some good examples of multi-agency working which helps to safeguard the child. For example, the home's therapist described the manager as committed to understanding the therapeutic model and how to implement this.

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

The manager has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the home, and staff feel that he is supportive and approachable.

The manager understands the needs of the child and recognises that these are not being met by the placement or the local authority. The manager has not challenged the local authority effectively in respect of the plans for the child's care, and actions taken in response to concerns are not child centred.

There have been recent changes in the staff team, which has affected the stability and security of the child. Two staff members left suddenly, and, on occasion, staff have been required to leave the home and work elsewhere, which has caused disruption to the child's daily routine. Despite the staff vacancies, the home does not use agency staff. Therefore, the child is always cared for by staff who he knows well.

The staff undergo a comprehensive induction. However, there are some gaps in training, including areas which are specific to the needs of the child.

The manager does not make effective use of internal or external monitoring systems, which means that areas for improvement are not always identified or addressed.

The manager has not notified Ofsted of a significant event, and some notifications have been delayed. This does not support effective monitoring and therefore compromises children's welfare and safety.

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
In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff— seek to involve each child's placing authority effectively in the child's care, in accordance with the child's relevant plans; seek to secure the input and services required to meet each child's needs; if the registered person considers, or staff consider, a placing authority or a relevant person's performance or response to be inadequate in relation to their role, challenge the placing authority or the relevant person to seek to ensure that each child's needs are met in accordance with the relevant plans. (Regulation 5 (a)(b)(b))	6 January 2022
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; help each child to understand how to keep safe. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii))	6 January 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 their full potential; and	6 January 2022

promotes their welfare. In particular the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that the staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; ensure that the home’s workforce provides continuity of care to each child; 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; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)(e)(f)(h))	
The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children’s home; and have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that arrangement are in place to— manage and review the placement for each child in the home; and plan for, and help, each child to prepare to leave the home or to move into adult care in a way that is consistent with arrangements agreed with the child’s placing authority; that each child’s relevant plans are followed; that the child’s placing authority is contacted, and a review of that child’s relevant plan is requested, if— the registered person considers that the child is at risk of harm or has concerns that the care provided for the child is inadequate to meet the child’s needs.	6 January 2022

(Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(ii)(iii)(c)(e)(i))	
Restraint in relation to a child must be necessary and proportionate. (Regulation 20 (2))	6 January 2022
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(e))	6 January 2022

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the home is a nurturing and supportive environment that meets the needs of the children. Children's homes will, in most cases, be homely, domestic environments. ('Guide to the children's home regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should ensure that any sanctions used to address poor behaviour are restorative in nature, to help children to recognise the impact of their behaviour on themselves, other children, the staff caring for them and the wider community. ('Guide to the children's home regulations including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.38)

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: 1277158

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Oaktree Childcare Limited

Registered provider address: Ground Floor, Seneca House, Links Point, Amy Johnson Way, Blackpool FY4 2FF

Responsible individual: Geoffrey Bond

Registered manager: Leslie Boylan

Inspectors

Emma Thornton, Social Care Inspector
Marie Cordingley, Social Care Inspector

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