

2548334

Registered provider: Oak House Childrens Home Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately owned home cares for up to three children with emotional and social difficulties. At the time of this inspection, there was one child living in the home.

The home registered with Ofsted in August 2019. The post for a registered manager has been vacant since November 2023. A new manager has been in post since February 2024.

Inspection dates: 14 and 15 May 2024

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 18 July 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
18/07/2023	Full	Good
23/11/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
07/12/2021	Full	Good
05/03/2020	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

There is only one child living at the home presently. The inspection considered the experiences of the child currently living at the home and children who have lived at the home and left since the last inspection.

Children who have lived in this home make steady progress from their respective starting points. Social workers report that children are well cared for and that their concerns are responded to appropriately by staff.

Children are supported to develop their talents. Staff make efforts to discover children's interests and to support them in building their confidence. For example, staff encourage the child currently living in the home to write and record music. This supports the child to pursue their interest in music while building their self-esteem.

The registered manager works in partnership with education professionals to ensure that the children's educational needs are met. When children require more support at school, staff advocate for the children to ensure that they receive the support they need. This has resulted in children feeling settled at school, and improving their school attendance and education outcomes.

Children receive incentives and rewards for good attendance and for doing well in school. This encourages positive behaviour and recognises the children's efforts.

Staff prioritise children's physical health and emotional well-being. Children are supported to attend health appointments and encouraged to understand the importance of maintaining good health. A personal trainer visits the home weekly to engage children in physical activity. This ensures that children develop a pattern of exercise, and promotes good health outcomes.

Children are supported to spend time with the people who are important to them. Staff understand that spending time with family members is important for the children's identity and well-being. Staff support children to express their views about spending time with family and friends. Staff also ensure the children's well-being is prioritised when they spend time with their families. This enables children to know that their views are considered, and that staff will prioritise their safety.

Children's care plans are thorough and include the children's views. This ensures children's wishes and feelings are known and respected.

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

Children rarely go missing from the home. Staff follow the appropriate protocol when children go missing from the home. Staff work effectively with partner agencies to reduce risks when children go missing from the home.

Staff use detailed and individualised key-worker sessions to address the children's support needs. Children and staff had informal and formal conversations to discuss targets for the children, and children engaged well with these discussions. These conversations supported the children's understanding of how to keep themselves safe online and in the community. The conversations were instrumental in supporting the children to understand how to build positive relationships and reduce potential risks.

Risk assessments were robust, detailed and addressed the concerns about children. They equipped staff with appropriate information to inform their understanding of children's histories and how to mitigate the risks. Risk assessments were updated following incidents of concern. This ensured they continued to be relevant and supported staff in understanding the risks posed to children. When children faced escalating risks, staff ensured that partner agencies were notified and requested professional meetings to ensure those risks were mitigated.

The child living at the home has an individualised and detailed behaviour support plan in place. Staff benefit from the input of the in-house therapist, who ensures the plan captures how staff can implement appropriate strategies to support the child. This supports staff in being more attuned to the needs of the child.

Leaders and managers have consulted with partner agencies to consider risks within the vicinity of the home. They have knowledge of the local services and crime statistics. However, the local area risk assessment does not consider strategies to mitigate the risks; this could limit staff's understanding of how to respond to risks within the locality.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The new manager had submitted an application to register with Ofsted, the day before this inspection. The manager has good support from leaders, which has helped to create a stable environment.

Inductions for new staff are detailed and the training provided is specific to the needs of the child. The training and induction programme is detailed and comprehensive. Staff benefit from training updates that ensure that they are aware of new developments in practice.

Although there has been some staff turnover in the last year, this has not impacted the care provided to the child. There is a stable staff team in place, and feedback from staff indicates that they find leaders and managers to be supportive of their professional development.

Staff receive thorough supervision that equips them to be more attuned to the needs of the child. The progress of the child is at the heart of supervision, and appraisal targets focus on how effectively the child is supported to achieve positive outcomes.

The child's feedback is incorporated into staff's monthly supervisions, and this ensures that staff consider and reflect on their views and experiences. This feedback is also used to inform improvements in interventions with the child.

Team meetings take place regularly. In the meetings, the child's progress and safeguarding needs are discussed. Staff use the meetings to support each other to develop effective interventions for building rapport with the child.

Leaders and managers need to ensure an adequate workforce development plan is in place. This will further drive improvements within the home.

While leaders and managers consider the needs of children moving into the home, it is not always clear that they have fully considered the staff's ability to respond effectively to the assessed needs of the child moving in or the child already living in the home.

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that a workforce development plan is in place that complies with the quality standards and includes the experience and qualifications of the leaders and staff team. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 52, paragraph 10.8)
- The registered person should ensure that they only accept placements for children where they are satisfied that the home can respond effectively to the child's assessed needs as recorded in the child's relevant plans and where they have fully considered the impact that the placement will have on the existing group of children. The statement of purpose is an important document in the process of care planning as it sets out the needs of children the home is set up and equipped to care for. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 56, paragraph 11.4)
- The registered person should ensure that they review the appropriateness and suitability of the location and premises of the home at least once a year. The review should include the identification of any risks and opportunities presented by the home's location and strategies for managing these. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 64, paragraph 15.1)

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: 2548334

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Oak House Childrens Home Limited

Registered provider address: A B C Care Solutions, 249 Cranbrook Road, Ilford IG1 4TG

Responsible individual: Saheena Saeed

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Angela Reid, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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