

2548334

Registered provider: Oak House Children's Home Ltd

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.

The home registered with Ofsted in August 2019, and the manager registered in March 2023.

At the time of this inspection, there were two children living in the home.

Inspection dates: 18 and 19 July 2023

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: 23 November 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
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

Staff know the children well and develop positive relationships with them. Staff have a good understanding of each child's likes, dislikes, strengths and challenges. Children respond well to the warm and nurturing care that staff provide to them. Staff are ambitious for children. One parent said, 'My child would not have progressed as they have if not for the staff.'

Children regularly engage in education. One child has 100% attendance at school. Staff prioritise children's learning by promoting their attendance at school and helping them to develop their independent living skills. With staff's help and encouragement, children learn to budget, shop and cook. Children's confidence has increased as they learn and develop their life skills.

Staff prioritise children's physical health and emotional well-being. Children's health appointments are up to date. A personal trainer visits the home weekly to engage children in physical activity, and a therapist provides weekly in-house therapeutic support to children. The support of staff and other dedicated professionals helps children to make good progress.

Staff promote children's relationships with their families. Children are supported to spend time with the people who are important to them, and staff are in regular communication with children's family members. Staff understand that maintaining positive contact with family is important for children's identity and well-being.

Staff listen and respond to children's views. Children's meetings are an effective space for children to share their views and contribute to decisions about things, such as activities. Children personalise their bedrooms to reflect their individuality. Staff are always available for children to talk to about their day and other things, such as their plans for the future.

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

Children are safe in the home. The home is a calm, safe and secure base for them. There is a strong emphasis on giving children a sense of belonging, and staff ensure that children receive individualised support. Children can speak with their key worker and therapist about any concerns.

Staff undertake appropriate safeguarding training to help them keep children safe. Staff know how to report safeguarding concerns, and they are aware of the whistle-blowing procedures. There have not been any allegations or complaints in relation to the home since the last inspection.

Children's risk assessments are current and provide a good overview of children's known and potential risks. Staff use effective de-escalation techniques to support

children. This helps to reduce risks to children and promotes positive experiences. There have been no incidents requiring the use of physical intervention since the last inspection.

Missing-from-home incidents, which are infrequent, are managed well. Staff follow appropriate procedures and work collaboratively with other professionals when children go missing from home. Staff take proactive steps to contact children to ascertain their whereabouts and ensure they are safe.

Recruitment practice needs to be strengthened to ensure that leaders and managers are assured that staff are safe to work with children. Overseas police checks have not been completed for all staff who have lived or worked overseas. Furthermore, gaps in employment history have not been explored, and proof of addresses has not been sought for all staff.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Leaders and managers have aspirations for the home and moving it forward. The newly registered manager is bringing creative ideas to the home and is implementing a quality assurance system to help monitor children's progress. Children's records capture the caring attitudes of staff and the extent of the positive work being undertaken with children.

Staff receive a comprehensive induction and ongoing training to strengthen their knowledge and skills. Staff receive regular and effective supervision that considers and prioritises children's needs. Staff receive their annual appraisals. However, appraisals could be strengthened by including the views of children and professionals who work with staff.

Team meetings and clinical supervision take place regularly. Clinical supervision is productive and conducive to helping staff reflect on children's risks and how to keep children safe. Staff have access to a wide variety of training, and training is tailored to meet the needs of the children in their care.

Leaders, managers and staff strive to make a positive difference to children's lives and advocate on children's behalf. Staff take pride in children's achievements and enjoy being a positive role model for them. The registered manager has created an ethos for the home that is child-centred and focuses on meeting the needs of children. One child described staff as 'nice and helpful'. Another child says he is less anxious and his confidence has grown since he moved into the home.

The staff team consists of several long-term staff who are dedicated and committed to children. However, there has been some turnover in recently employed staff, but this has not impacted on the consistency of care for children. The registered manager has reflected on feedback from departing staff, and this has resulted in changes to shift patterns and the frequency of supervision.

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, The 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 recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. 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)(d))	31 August 2023

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the development of safe, stable and secure relationships with staff in the home is central to the ethos of the home and supports the development of secure attachments that, where appropriate, persist over time. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 39, paragraph 8.11)
- The registered person should ensure that staff appraisals take into account, where reasonable and practical, the views of other professionals who have worked with the staff member over the year and of children in the home's care. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.5)

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 Children's Home Ltd

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

Responsible individual: Saheena Saeed

Registered manager: Gavin James

Inspectors

Melvin Davies, Social Care Inspector
Julie Cresswell, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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