

2548334

Registered provider: Oak House Childrens Home Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home registered with Ofsted in August 2019 and is privately owned. It provides care for up to three children who experience social and emotional difficulties.

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

The manager registered with Ofsted in April 2025.

Inspection dates: 28 and 29 July 2025

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: 14 May 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/05/2024	Full	Good
18/07/2023	Full	Good
23/11/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
07/12/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The inspector spoke with both children living at the home.

Staff are patient and caring towards the children. They take time to understand children's personalities, likes and dislikes. They carefully consider the best way to initiate meaningful relationships with children. This includes staff and children with similar interests spending time together. This encourages good communication and trusting relationships between children and staff.

Children feel safe and build positive relationships with other children in the home. They live in a harmonious and inclusive environment. Children are prepared when they move into the home, and conversations are held to ascertain their wishes and feelings. Detailed care plans help staff understand children's needs. The manager ensures that information from the local authority informs these plans. This leads to a thorough understanding of the children's needs. Children live at the home for a long time.

Children participate in many activities they enjoy. Staff work with care and attention to discover children's interests. For example, one child loves composing music and has visited a music studio. Another child regularly enjoys go-karting.

Children's interests and passions are celebrated. Children share their achievements with staff. One child passed their exams, and staff celebrated with them. Another child has discovered a keen interest in gardening since living at the home. Children say they enjoy their time at the home. Staff keep memory books for the children that they can take with them when they leave the home.

Children have good educational outcomes. Staff identify when children require more support and collaborate effectively with the virtual school and partner agencies to meet their needs. One child who was not in education or training for a lengthy period achieved good exam results and now has a choice of several college placements. Staff ensure that a learning routine is in place in the home and help children complete vocational training and work experience. Children gain confidence and have greater aspirations for their future.

Children's health improves living at this home. Staff work effectively with partner agencies to ensure that children receive specialist support and their individual needs are responded to appropriately. When needed, staff implement therapeutically informed interventions and action strategies agreed in individualised crisis plans.

The home is warm and welcoming, and it is brightly decorated. Numerous photos that capture key events in the children's lives are proudly displayed. Children use the garden and are encouraged to plant vegetables and flowers, ensuring a sense of value in their

home and surroundings. However, staff have not ensured that the garden is maintained to the same standard as the rest of the home.

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

Children are safe in this home. When incidents occur, staff manage them effectively. Staff debrief children and talk about what happened, so children are listened to, and their feelings are understood.

Staff know children's vulnerabilities and how to best support them. Detailed risk assessments provide staff with clear guidance. Staff and children regularly discuss risky situations and how children can keep themselves safe. The registered manager ensures that concerns are raised with partner agencies and that children are offered appropriate support. Safety plans are regularly reviewed to ensure that children's growing autonomy is respected and promoted while they are in the community.

Staff respond effectively when children go missing from the home. Over time, the frequency of these episodes for children reduces. Through a creative use of incentives, children now stay in contact with staff and make choices that keep them safe. However, when children have been missing from home, the manager has not requested independent return home interviews. This is a missed opportunity to better understand the risks posed to the children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Leaders and managers know the children well. Their warmth and affection help engage children. This builds confidence in the team of staff, who model these interactions.

Staff feel supported by leaders and managers and enjoy their roles. They gain new skills and experiences because the manager is ambitious about improving the service for children and staff.

Supervision is reflective and child focused, and these sessions support staff in confidently caring for children. Leaders and managers pay attention to discovering the unique skills of the staff and exploring ways to use them to benefit children. For example, a member of staff who is good at football is the key worker for a child who enjoys this sport.

Team meetings are effective forums where staff discuss children's needs and progress. Managers facilitate clinical supervision, which informs staff practice. This helps staff understand and implement better strategies to care for children. Staff benefit from learning reviews that support them in improving practice.

To support staff in maintaining accurate records, leaders and managers have recently invested in an electronic database. This has increased the manager's ability to monitor and review children's progress at the home.

A new independent person has been appointed to provide professional challenge. This has resulted in an improvement in the management of the home and the day-to-day experiences of the children.

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the garden is maintained so that it provides a nurturing, supportive and welcoming environment for children. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.7)
- The registered person should ensure that when a child returns after being missing or away from home without permission, the responsible local authority provides an opportunity for the child to have an independent return home interview. The registered person should take account of information provided by such interviews when assessing risks and putting arrangements in place to protect each child. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.30)

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: ABC Care Solutions, 249 Cranbrook Road, Ilford IG1 4TG

Responsible individual: David Whitty

Registered manager: Symone St Marthe

Inspector

Angela Reid, Social Care Inspector

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