

2550082

Registered provider: Oaktree Childcare Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is operated by a private provider. The home provides care for up to two children who may have emotional or behavioural needs or a learning disability. At the time of the inspection, there were no children living in the home.

There is a new manager in post who has applied to register with Ofsted.

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

Inspection dates: 2 to 3 June 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: not applicable

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Inspection judgements

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

Children have had some good experiences while living at the home, but overall, their progress has not been successful. This has led to children experiencing unplanned endings because their placements have broken down.

Children's placement plans are individualised and include some child-centred information. However, they lack detail about some aspects of children's needs. For example, one child's placement plan did not fully address her communication needs.

Children are encouraged to maintain valued relationships. Staff ensure that children receive the necessary support to spend time with family and friends, where appropriate.

Staff closely support children to engage in education and have been creative in sourcing further education opportunities for an older child. However, staff did not make best use of information from another child's education, health and care plan (EHCP), which means that they were not fully aware of the child's personal barriers to learning.

Staff ensure that children have access to community healthcare services and provide support and guidance to children about healthy living. When safe and appropriate, older children are enabled to manage their own medication, which promotes their independence. However, on one occasion, a child was denied pain relief by staff, due to a misinterpretation of the home's medication policy.

There are processes in place to enable children to express their views or raise concerns. However, information about matters such as raising concerns or daily routines is not always provided in a format that is accessible to the child. This means that some children may not have the same opportunities as others to have a say about their care.

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

There is good multi-disciplinary work undertaken, which ensures that information is shared between professionals. This helps to keep children safe. However, internal risk management is not always robust. In some examples, guidance for staff about how to keep children safe lacks detail and is not clear.

Staff and the manager have undertaken training in safeguarding matters. This ensures that they have some basic knowledge of safeguarding practice.

On one occasion, the manager failed to follow safeguarding procedures. This led to a delay in reporting a safeguarding concern to the relevant authority. Failure to follow safeguarding procedures means that children may not be protected from harm.

There is a complaints procedure in place. However, the manager's response to a child's complaint was too direct and lacked empathy. Furthermore, the response was not provided in a format that was meaningful to the child. This means that the child may not be confident to raise any future concerns.

Children rarely go missing, but when they do, there is a coordinated response between staff and agencies. Physical intervention is rarely required, but when it is, records are clearly detailed and monitored effectively.

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

The manager is new to the role. He has submitted an application to Ofsted for registration. Staff describe the manager as approachable and child centred.

Staff work effectively with a number of agencies, including social workers and education providers, who receive regular updates on the progress of children. However, managers did not sufficiently challenge an external professional who sought to stop a child from making complaints.

Staff say that they feel supported by management. Supervision takes place regularly. Supervision offers staff reflection and an opportunity to learn from experiences and develop their skills.

Staff are either qualified to the appropriate level or are currently undertaking the relevant learning. However, staff did not receive training in line with one child's individual needs. Therefore, staff did not have a good understanding or sufficient knowledge about how to support the child.

There has been some staff turnover, which has led to a shortage of staff at times. This has caused increased pressure on the existing team and manager. However, two new staff members have recently been recruited, which has helped to relieve some of this pressure.

External monitoring is good. The head of care completes monthly audits and has identified shortfalls in practice. The independent visitor attends the home monthly. They provide an account of progress and identify areas for development. The manager has acted to address concerns raised through this process.

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 children's views, wishes and feelings standard is that children receive care from staff who— take their views, wishes and feelings into account in relation to matters affecting the children's care and welfare and their lives. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff— help each child to express views, wishes and feelings; help each child to understand how the child's views, wishes and feelings have been taken into account and give the child reasons for decisions in relation to the child; ensure that each child— is enabled to provide feedback to, and raise issues with, a relevant person about the support and services that the child receives; has access to the home's children's guide, and the home's complaints procedure, when the child's placement in the home is agreed and throughout the child's stay in the home. (Regulation 7 (1)(c) (2)(a)(ii)(iii)(b)(i)(ii)) This requirement specifically relates to the need to ensure that children are enabled to raise complaints and are provided with a thorough response, and the need to ensure that children are provided with a children's guide that is accessible to their needs.	15 July 2021
The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.	15 July 2021

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; are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home’s child protection policies. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(vii))	
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 fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on— feedback on the experiences of children, including complaints received. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)(g)(ii))	15 July 2021
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. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b))	15 July 2021
The registered person must make arrangements for the handling, recording, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of medicines received into the children’s home. (Regulation 23 (1)) This requirement relates to the need to ensure that children receive medication when they require it.	15 July 2021

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that the children's home produce a children's guide. The children's guide must be made available to all children, must be age appropriate, provided in an accessible format and explained to each child to make sure they understand it. ('Guide to the children's home regulations including the quality standards, page 24, paragraph 4.21)

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: 2550082

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Oaktree Childcare Ltd

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

Responsible individual: Geoffrey Bond

Registered manager: Post Vacant

Inspectors

Marie Cordingley, Social Care Inspector
Rachel Springford, Social Care Inspector

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