

2550082

Registered provider: Oaktree Childcare Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and managed by a private provider. It provides care for up to two children who may experience emotional and/or social difficulties and have learning disabilities.

At the time of the inspection, the home was providing care for one child.

The manager registered with Ofsted in June 2024.

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 August 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: 25 July 2023

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
25/07/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
27/04/2022	Full	Good
18/11/2021	Interim	Improved effectiveness
02/06/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The home was closed for a period. Since reopening, one child has moved into the home. Initially, this was a difficult time, with many incidents and a high turnover of staff. Over the last two months, the frequency of incidents has significantly reduced as the child is becoming more settled in the home. Staffing levels required to support the child are also reducing. The commitment and tenacity of the registered manager and staff are enhancing the child's experiences and the child is making good progress.

When the child moved into the home, they were welcomed sensitively and with care. The registered manager visited the child in their previous home and ensured that the child was able to visit the home before moving in. This provided the child with an opportunity to meet staff and begin to form early relationships with their new carers.

The child is building meaningful and trusting relationships with staff, reflecting the length of time they have been living in the home. Staff promote positivity in the home and are aspirational for the child's future. They offer nurturing and supportive care to the child, who says they enjoy living in the home and are happy.

Staff ensure that the child's health needs are met. They support the child to attend regular routine and specialist health appointments as well as implementing advice from specialist health professionals. Staff advocate effectively on behalf of the child, ensuring that appropriate medical assessments are undertaken which inform their care planning. Staff carry out a range of direct-work sessions with the child to develop the child's knowledge and skills in meeting their own health needs.

The child does not attend an education provision. The registered manager and staff have implemented an informal education plan while appropriate provision that meets the child's educational needs is being sought.

The home is warm and welcoming and is decorated and furnished to a good standard. The child's personal space reflects their individuality. The child has been involved in buying things for the home and is routinely involved in menu and activity planning.

Staff use a range of communication methods to support the child in expressing their views and wishes. Staff regularly seek the views of the child, and the child knows how to make a complaint confidentially should they wish to. However, staff action to respond to the child's requests is not clear. This does not support the child to understand that their views are important or ensure that they feel listened to.

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

The child says that they feel safe in the home and identifies adults they trust. Staff respond to immediate risks to the child and take appropriate action to reduce these. There are detailed safety plans in place, informed by information from the child's placing authority, with clear guidance for staff to follow. Staff understand their responsibilities in

safeguarding the child and understand thresholds for sharing information. Staff complete direct work with the child to reflect on any incidents and to develop the child's understanding of how to keep themselves safe.

Safer recruitment processes are followed when staff are appointed, which provides assurances that staff are suitably vetted and qualified to provide care. New staff complete an induction period to help them learn each aspect of the role and to help them understand how to respond to the child's presenting needs.

Before the child moved into the home, the manager completed a risk assessment. This identified the needs of the child and considered the knowledge and experience of the staff team and their ability to meet the child's needs. The assessment included input from professionals involved with the child and strategies to mitigate risks. This means all matching considerations for the child were appropriately assessed.

The number of times the child has been physically held by staff has significantly reduced. When the child has been physically held, this has been necessary and the use of restraint has been proportionate. Records of incidents are detailed and identify action taken by staff to de-escalate situations. The child is always spoken to by staff following incidents. However, discussions with staff after the incident are not always completed and management oversight is not always recorded in a timely manner. The child is not offered an independent advocate to speak to following incidents.

Significant incidents are not always reported in a timely manner to professionals working with the child and to the regulator. This means that Ofsted is unable to scrutinise information to ensure that the child is kept safe.

Consequences used are appropriate and proportionate. Staff use natural consequences and rewards and incentives to manage the child's behaviour. However, records of consequences are not completed in line with regulation and the child's views about the measure used are not clearly recorded.

Searches of the child's bedroom are undertaken appropriately and items are removed when necessary. The child is present when searches are carried out. However, records are not clear that consent has been obtained from the child to enter their bedroom before the search has taken place. Records do not always include the child's voice. Management evaluation is not always completed to consider whether searches are appropriate and proportionate.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is managed by a permanent and suitably qualified registered manager. She is child-centred and understands both the needs of the child and the home well. The registered manager has a clear understanding of the home's strengths and areas for development. She is passionate about her role and has a clear vision for the home.

Staff say they love coming to work. On the whole, staff say they feel well supported by leaders and managers. Staff benefit from regular reflective supervision. They discuss

their care of the child and their strengths and future aspirations. Any shortfalls in practice are raised and staff are given clear guidance on actions to complete.

The registered manager communicates well with partner agencies. She advocates for the child and escalates concerns when the child's needs are not being met. External professionals said that the staff are providing excellent care and that the registered manager and staff are creative when considering strategies to support and care for the child.

Staff are provided with a wide range of training to meet the child's individual needs. As a result, staff have the necessary knowledge and skills to promote the child's safety and welfare.

The registered manager has a number of monitoring and auditing systems in place. However, these are relatively new and are not yet embedded in practice. Some shortfalls, including in the home's statement of purpose, quality of care review and independent scrutiny of the home have not been identified by the registered manager.

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person 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 must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
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— use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(h)) This specifically relates to the statement of purpose, quality of care report and regulation 44 report.	12 October 2024
The registered person must prepare and implement a policy ("the behaviour management policy") which sets out— how appropriate behaviour is to be promoted in the children's home; and the measures of control, discipline and restraint which may be used in relation to children in the home. The registered person must ensure that— within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes— the date, time and location of the use of the measure; details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure;	12 October 2024

the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")— has spoken to the user about the measure. (Regulation 35 (1)(a)(b) (3)(a)(iii)(v)(vii)(b)(i)) This specifically relates to the use of consequences.	
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation; an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious; there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there; a child protection enquiry involving a child — is instigated; or concludes (in which case, the notification must include the outcome of the child protection enquiry); or there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(a)(b)(c)(d)(i)(ii)(e))	12 October 2024

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that rooms are only searched if the child has been informed or asked for their permission. Immediate searching may be necessary when there are reasonable grounds for believing that there is a risk to the child's or another person's safety or well-being. Children's views on the room search should then be captured. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 16, paragraph 3.20)
- The registered person should ensure that the child is consulted regularly on their views about the home's care, to inform and support continued improvement in the quality of care provided. Due consideration should be given to the child's cognitive

ability in the development and implementation of any consultation processes. The child should be able to see the results of their views being listened to and acted on. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 22, paragraph 4.11)

- The registered person should ensure that records of restraint incidents include a discussion with the user about the measure and the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure. The child should be offered the opportunity to access advocacy support to help them express their feelings about their experience of the restraint. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 50, paragraph 9.60)

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 Limited

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

Responsible individual: Lee Ridgley

Registered manager: Stacey Crouch

Inspectors

Leanne Carr, Social Care Inspector
Paula Shepherd, Regulatory Inspection Manager

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