

2626458

Registered provider: Orchard Children Homes Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is registered to provide care for up to three children aged between seven and 17 years old with emotional and behavioural difficulties. The manager is appropriately qualified and is registered with Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 September 2022

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

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

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

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 16 February 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
16/02/2022	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Two children live in the home, and both have lived there for nearly one year. The overall experiences for children are positive. Staff forge strong relationships with children, they genuinely care about children and take pride in their achievements. This positive affirmation encourages children to achieve their goals. As a result, both children are making good progress in all areas.

Staff help to promote children's learning and understand the importance of children's education. One child who had been out of education for an extended period sat their GCSE exams. Staff worked effectively with the school staff and supported a gradual and sensitive return. Children's attendance at school or college has improved from their starting points. One child said, 'I love my new school and friends. I can walk or go on my bike when the weather isn't too bad.'

Children make good progress with their life skills. There is a bespoke independent living programme to support children to develop skills that will aid them as they move on from the home. This programme includes practical targets that enable staff to evaluate children's progress.

Staff provide a good range of experiences that reflect children's interests and hobbies. One child's enthusiasm for football is encouraged and they have joined a local team. The other child was enjoying playing a fun game with staff around the home. These opportunities have enabled children to expand their social networks and form important relationships.

Children stay in touch with their families wherever possible. Staff support family visits and recognise the importance of these relationships. One family member told the inspector, 'staff are good at supporting and listening to them.'

Homely touches, such as photos of the children, help the children feel welcome. One child's bedroom was personalised with a hand-painted wall mural. However, the garden fence does not ensure privacy and safety due to its height. At the time of the inspection, one bathroom was locked, for staff use only, and this restricts children's access around their home.

Staff help to promote children's learning. One child attends school regularly and is making good progress from their starting point. The other child lacks motivation and requires constant encouragement to attend and engage. Despite this challenge, children have achieved qualifications. The manager does not always ensure that children's education meetings take place within timescales. This is a missed opportunity to review children's educational progress.

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

Managers and staff place a high priority on keeping children safe. They work in partnership with placing authorities to protect children and promote their safety. The effectiveness of these relationships helps children to feel safe and secure. Staff are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities, and they have a good knowledge of whistle-blowing procedures. The depth of staff's safeguarding knowledge is continually reflected on during team meetings and supervision sessions.

The registered manager ensures that appropriate actions are taken to safeguard staff and children when allegations or complaints are made. There is good communication between staff, social workers and local authority designated officers. Good oversight and scrutiny of allegations and complaints help to protect children from harm.

Staff understand risks for children and actively help to manage them. Well-planned and effective discussions with children cover important topics such as understanding the impact of substance misuse and internet safety.

Since the previous inspection, the use of restraints has gradually reduced. There have been no restraints used since May 2022. Staff use interventions proportionately and as a last resort. Staff know children well and are skilled at using de-escalation techniques to support children's emotional responses. During the inspection, staff were observed supporting one child in a nurturing way, easing any anxiety.

The manager ensures that staff who are recruited to work in the home are subject to all the necessary checks. Recruitment procedures are robust. As a result, children are kept safe.

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

The registered manager is child-focused and proactively sets clear standards of care. Her committed and determined approach continues to drive improvements in the home. Staff enjoy working at the home. One staff member told the inspector, 'The manager is supportive and approachable. I enjoy the environment that the manager and the team have created.'

Children know how to make a complaint. When children have complained, managers take their views seriously. Children receive a child-friendly and timely response from the registered manager.

Staff receive a range of core training to meet the needs of children. Managers have good systems to help them identify when training updates are due. This ensures that staff continue to improve their knowledge and skills. However, not all staff have received specialist training to meet the individual needs of the children.

The responsible individual recognises the limitations in his knowledge and experience. Because of this, he has commissioned an external professional to provide supervision for the manager'. However, in further recognising that his role requires more insight than he is able to offer, he is in the process of appointing a new responsible individual to oversee the home.

The registered manager has updated the home's statement of purpose. However, the statement of purpose does not include details on how the staff working in the home are trained in using restraint.

Children do not receive effectively planned care as managers do not have their most up-to-date plans from the local authority. Managers do not escalate requests effectively to the local authority for the children's most up-to-date plans. This does not help staff to meet children's needs.

Managers do not monitor, review and evaluate consequences given to children effectively. Managers lack professional curiosity and fail to identify shortfalls in staff recording and practice. Consequences given are not restorative in nature, or in line with the home's ethos and the children's ages and understanding.

The manager has not read important legal information relating to one child's care. As a result, she has not been aware of the child's right to increased staffing when required, and there have been delays in this being implemented. There have been missed opportunities for the manager and professionals to review the legal document and take a joint approach to the child's care. Although this shortfall is significant, this has not impacted on the child's welfare.

The manager ensures that the independent person visits every month. The independent person provides Ofsted with reports in a timely manner. However, the independent person visits when children are not at home, so children do not have an opportunity to share their views with them.

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 quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to— meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 6 (2)(c)(i)) This specifically relates to ensuring that the garden fence is an appropriate height to protect children.	30 October 2022
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. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c))	30 October 2022

This relates to staff receiving training specific to children's individual needs.	
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. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that arrangements are in place to— manage and review the placement of each child in the home; that the child's placing authority is contacted, and a review of that child's relevant plans is requested, if— the registered person considers that the child is at risk of harm or has concerns that the care provided for the child is inadequate to meet the child's needs; that each child's relevant plans are followed; that staff help each child to access and contribute to the records kept by the registered person in relation to the child. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(ii)(c)(f)) This specifically relates to ensuring that children receive education reviews every school term and that children receive care in line with the most current professional plan.	30 October 2022
The registered person must compile in relation to the children's home a statement ("the statement of purpose") which covers the matters listed in Schedule 1. The registered person must— keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16 (1) (3)(a)(b))	30 October 2022

The statement of purpose must include how the staff working in the home are trained in using restraint.	
No measure of control or discipline which is excessive, unreasonable or contrary to paragraph (2) may be used in relation to any child. The following measures may not be used to discipline any child— imposing a financial penalty, other than a requirement for the payment of a reasonable sum (which may be by instalments) by way of reparation. (Regulation 19 (1) (2)(c)(iii)(f)) This specifically relates to ensuring that consequences are restorative in nature, in line with the ethos of the home and with children's ages and understanding. It also relates to ensuring that children do not receive a consequence if they make an allegation.	30 October 2022
The registered person must ensure that— the privacy of children is appropriately protected; and children can access all appropriate areas of the children's home's premises. (Regulation 21 (1)(a)(b)) This specifically relates to managers ensuring that the fence is an appropriate height so that the garden is a safe place for children to play. This also relates to ensuring that children have access to all areas of the home.	30 October 2022
An individual may only carry on a children's home if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (5). A responsible individual must— have the capacity, experience and skills to supervise the management of the home, or the homes, in respect of which the responsible individual is nominated. (Regulation 26 (7)(b))	4 December 2022

In particular, the responsible individual should demonstrate that they have the capacity and experience to have oversight of the home.	
The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children's home at least once each month. When the independent person is carrying out a visit, the registered person must help the independent person— if they consent, to interview in private such of the children, their parents, relatives and persons working at the home as the independent person requires. (Regulation (44) (1) (2)(a)) This specifically relates to the independent person ensuring that children are consulted, by attending the home when children are likely to be there.	30 October 2022

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: 2626458

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Orchard Children Homes Ltd

Registered provider address: 2nd Floor, 118 Calais Road, Burton On Trent DE13 0UW

Responsible individual: Keren Iqbal

Registered manager: Rachael Nally

Inspectors

Marianne Grandfield, Social Care Inspector
Jodie Lewis, Social Care Inspector

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