

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.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021.

Inspection dates: 16 and 17 February 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 **good**

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

Date of last inspection: not applicable

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: not applicable

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
Not previously inspected		

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Staff value children's education, and they successfully support children to reintegrate into education despite them having a history of poor school attendance. Staff also listen to children's wishes to remain at their existing school when they move into the home, despite the long distance away from the home. This ensures that children who experience significant change have stability in their education, and are able to maintain relationships with friends and teachers. This shows that staff care and listen to and act on children's views, wishes and feelings whenever possible.

Children are cared for by staff who understand their needs. Staff are attuned to children's needs and are always thinking of creative ways to best support them. This means that children are looked after by staff who know them well, and who are meeting their needs effectively.

Staff complete key-work sessions with children, which helps them to develop and reflect on their experiences. For example, staff have helped children to learn about diversity, and how to treat others with kindness and respect. This has encouraged children to start to develop an understanding and acceptance of differences in others. This means that direct work sessions with children are achieving their intended purpose.

Children are supported to access a wide range of activities in the local community. For example, one child has been encouraged to participate in activities that they enjoy, despite refusing to do so when they initially moved into the home. The child was a man of the match at a recent football game, and the staff celebrated this significant achievement with the child. Children are continuously praised in the home, which ensures that they continue to gain confidence and aspire to do well.

Children are supported to spend family time with people who are important to them, and staff work with families to ensure that this is a positive experience for children. Family members told the inspectors that staff keep them informed about their children. This practice means that children are able to maintain a sense of belonging within their families, and it promotes their sense of identity.

The home is nicely decorated. However, it does not feel homely. For example, the living room has a lockable door which staff have used to manage a child's behaviour in the past. This has not been rigorously assessed. The children's bedrooms are not all personalised to their interests. However, one child has declined for their room to be redecorated. This could impact on children having a sense of belonging within their home environment.

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

Children do not go missing from the home. Concerns about children who have previously gone missing from care have reduced, and there have been no missing incidents while they have lived at the home. One child told the inspector, 'I feel safe and happy here. Staff trust me and help me. This makes me want to do better.' This approach means that children are making progress, and serious incidents have reduced.

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

Staff ensure that there is good communication with partner agencies when risks to children increase. For example, staff ensure that regular meetings with partner agencies are convened to discuss any emerging concerns and how to respond to these concerns. Professionals involved with the children have shared with the inspector that communication from staff and the manager is very effective. This ensures that a joined-up approach is taken by all agencies to support children and to make them feel safer in their home.

Staff ensure that they use restraint as a last resort to manage children's behaviour. The manager's evaluation of restraints is good, and she supports staff to reflect on their actions during follow-up debriefs, and considers what staff could have done differently. Children are also supported to reflect on the restraint and how this made them feel. However, staff do not consistently describe the measure in a way that could be easily understood by children or others who are not trained in the home's physical intervention approach. This impacts on the monitoring of such incidents by others.

The quality of risk assessments is variable. Some risk assessments are very clear and sufficiently detailed. However, some lack pertinent information in relation to risks associated with children. For example, staff did not consider in their risk assessment how free time in the community is managed for a child who has historically been at risk of child sexual exploitation. The manager ensured that this was addressed immediately. However, this shortfall could have resulted in staff poorly managing the risks to this child.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is passionate about the home and has high expectations and aspirations for children. The staff share the manager's vision, and this is demonstrated through the culture and ethos of the home. This ensures that children receive good-quality care by a dedicated staff team, whose members are ambitious for them.

Staff and managers demonstrate a good understanding of the children's individual needs and care plans. Children's care plans are regularly reviewed, comprehensive and detailed. The staff work collaboratively with parents and families to ensure that plans are set out to achieve positive outcomes for children. This ensures that children's progress is monitored and that they continue to make good progress.

The manager escalates concerns when the responses from other services are not effective. For example, the manager has challenged mental health services to ensure that a child in the home receives the appropriate support, and this has resulted in an assessment being arranged for the child. This approach ensures that children's needs are advocated for, and that concerns are escalated effectively.

Staff speak positively about working at the home. The manager is well regarded, and she is nurturing towards staff. This means that staff work in an environment where they feel well supported. The manager also ensures that staff receive regular supervision. There is effective support and challenge, and the manager ensures that all actions are reviewed. This means that poor practice is addressed effectively, and that good practice is promoted.

The manager ensures that she takes proactive action when children are struggling to settle in the home. For example, she escalated concerns with the placing local authority when it was identified that the home was not suited to meet a child's needs. This enabled prompt decisions to be made to ensure that appropriate actions were taken for the child. Despite the unplanned ending, the child spoke positively of the staff and the time they spent at the home.

The responsible individual is supportive, but did not demonstrate a good understanding of the needs and trauma experienced by children and how this determines the care provided to them. This means that the responsible individual does not always have a good understanding of how to support the manager effectively.

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
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)) In particular, the responsible individual should demonstrate that they have the capacity and experience to have oversight of the home.	28 April 2022

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the environment is welcoming and homely. In particular, the registered person should ensure that children are able to access all communal areas, and that these are not used to manage children's behaviour unless this has been assessed. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.10)
- The registered person should ensure that children's risk assessments consider all relevant risks to them and how these will be managed by staff. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)
- The registered person should ensure that staff record the description of a physical restraint in sufficient detail and describe it in a manner that is easily understood by children and others. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 49, paragraph 9.59)

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: Imran Khan

Registered manager: Rachael Nally

Inspector

Mazviita Makiyi, Social Care Inspector

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