

2651794

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 operated by a private provider. The home is registered to provide care for up to three children with social and emotional needs.

The home was registered on 18 September 2023. This is the first inspection of this home.

Two children have moved in to this home since it was registered. One child is currently being cared for.

There has been no registered manager since 19 October 2023.

Inspection dates: 29 and 30 November 2023

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.

Inspection judgements

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

Staff have not built meaningful relationships with all children. One child has positive relationships with staff and identifies specific staff who they would approach with a concern. Staff were unable to build positive relationships with another child. Therefore, not all children have been able to develop a sense of belonging in the home.

Children know how to complain. The manager and staff take children's complaints seriously and investigate them thoroughly. However, children are not provided with a response to their concerns, after complaints have been investigated. Children have been unaware of the outcome of their complaint or any actions taken.

One child did not have a positive experience moving out of the home. Their ending was abrupt and they have not spoken to anyone at the home since they moved out. Consequently, the child had limited opportunity to understand and process moving on from the home.

Children do not attend school. Staff have advocated for one child and assisted them to complete the assessments required to gain a school place. For another child, their attendance reduced and a suitable alternative education provision was not found. Staff do not complete daily educational activities with children who are not in school.

Staff encourage children to have a healthy routine. Staff provide nutritious food and ensure that there are regular mealtimes. They promote appropriate structure to the children's days. Staff encourage children to engage in physical activities, such as horse riding. For one child, this has led to notable progress in terms of their sleeping and eating routine.

The home is comfortable and well decorated. Staff have ensured that any required maintenance is attended to quickly. Staff help children to personalise their bedrooms according to their tastes and interests. There are photos of the children's important people and events throughout the home.

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

Children have not always felt safe or protected in the home. One child refused to return to the home during a missing-from-home episode due to another child being present. Staff were unable to promote a positive relationship between children and there were several incidents of damage in the home or missing-from-home episodes. Staff know the risks to children. Risk assessments address key areas for children and provide strategies for the staff to follow. However, the strategies have not always been effective in de-escalating situations in the home.

Staff understand the children's individual plans for when they are missing from the home. Staff update the plans for the children regularly with any relevant information. Staff use this information to locate children quickly and return them to the home. Staff seek to understand the reasons for missing-from-home episodes and try to identify activities to help children to engage in positive behaviour. However, staff were unable to engage the children in the identified activities, which resulted in children going missing from home on occasions.

Children are not held by staff. This promotes trust and respect between the child and those who care for them. However, staff do have training to use physical interventions in the event that this is necessary.

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

The home has had two managers since it was registered by Ofsted. Currently, there is an interim manager in post, who has not yet applied to be registered with Ofsted.

Monitoring in the home is not effective. Issues are not always identified through the manager's checks. On one occasion, the home did not have a member of staff who is qualified in first aid on shift. On other occasions, staff did not provide reports to the children's statutory reviews, although it is the internal policy to do so. Therefore, opportunities to improve practice and better engage with wider agencies are missed.

The interim manager has not ensured that they have a copy of the placing authority care plan for the child who lives in the home. Therefore, it is unclear for staff whether they are achieving the aims of the placement.

Some staff have not completed their qualifications within the required timescale. These staff have been employed within the organisation at other homes prior to joining the team. Therefore, the child's care is not being delivered by appropriately qualified staff.

The interim manager provides regular supervision to the staff team. The interim manager provided increased supervision for all staff in the initial weeks of the home being opened. Staff report that the interim manager is approachable, and they feel supported in their roles.

The interim manager identifies when children are not settling in the home. They share these concerns with the placing authority and contribute to multi-agency plans for the child. When appropriate, the interim manager ensures that additional staffing is put in place to support the children living in the home.

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 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))	29 December 2023
The education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— help a child who is excluded from school, or who is of compulsory school age but not attending school, to access educational and training support throughout the period of exclusion or non-attendance and to return to school as soon as possible. (Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(viii))	31 January 2024
The registered provider must appoint a person to manage the children's home if— there is no registered manager in respect of the home; and the registered provider— is an organisation or a partnership; does not satisfy regulation 28; or is not, or does not intend to be, in day-to-day charge of the home. (Regulation 27 (1)(a)(b)(i)(ii)(iii))	29 December 2023

Specifically, ensure that the interim manager applies to be registered for the home that he is managing.	
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)) Specifically, ensure that the manager's oversight identifies shortfalls in staffing or practice and addresses these.	31 January 2024
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The registered person may only— employ an individual to work at the children's home; or if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home, if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). The requirements are that— the individual is of integrity and good character; the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform; the individual is mentally and physically fit for the purposes of the work that the individual is to perform; and full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2.	29 February 2024

For the purposes of paragraph (3)(b), an individual who works in the home in a care role has the appropriate qualification if, by the relevant date, the individual has attained— the Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare (England) ("the Level 3 Diploma"); or a qualification which the registered person considers to be equivalent to the Level 3 Diploma. The relevant date is— in the case of an individual who starts working in a care role in a home after 1st April 2014, the date which falls 2 years after the date on which the individual started working in a care role in a home; or in the case of an individual who was working in a care role in a home on 1st April 2014, 1st April 2016. (Regulation 32 (1) (2)(a)(b) (3)(a)(b)(c)(d) (4)(a)(b) (5)(a)(b))	
The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which— include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)) Specifically, ensure that there is a copy of any plan for the care of the child prepared by the child's placing authority.	29 December 2023

Recommendation

- The registered person and staff should notice and respond to children who are expressing their views. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 22, paragraph 4.10)

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: 2651794

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: Post vacant

Inspector

Sarah Huntbatch, Social Care Inspector

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