

2671486

Registered provider: Oak House Childrens Home Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

An independent provider runs this home. It offers care for up to four children aged between 10 and 18 who experience social and emotional difficulties.

There is a registered school on the same site as the home. The inspectors only inspected the social care provision at this site.

The manager registered with Ofsted in November 2023.

Inspection dates: 24 and 25 April 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: 28 June 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
28/06/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
31/01/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

At the time of this inspection, one child was living at the home.

A whistle-blowing concern was reported to Ofsted in April 2024. The concerns were explored during this inspection and there was no evidence found to substantiate these.

The child has trusting and positive relationships with the staff. The child said, 'Staff are fun and stuff.' The child was seen laughing with staff, who responded with genuine enjoyment and interest. This helps the child to feel valued and included.

The child continues to make good progress. Staff have supported the child to find their own identity and practice self-care. Staff use patience, guidance and language that the child understands. The child likes fashion and clothes, takes pride in their hair, nails and make-up. The staff support has helped the child to build a sense of self-worth and self-confidence.

The child benefits from a personal trainer and nutritionist who visit each week. The child enjoys Yoga and dance. These structured sessions help the child to engage positively in physical exercise. Personal training has identified positive changes in the child's physical and mental health.

Staff have helped the child to manage responsibilities. Staff organised a zookeeper experience for the child. They worked closely with a rescue hen charity who provided an incubator and fertilised eggs. The child reared the chicks and now looks after the chickens with pride. The child has their own wildlife plan for the garden. Staff help the child to make positive choices and develop their interests.

The child is in education and has received an award for high attendance and engagement. The child sometimes chooses to stay later at school and enjoys learning. Staff help the child with projects and homework. They understand the importance of the child's educational progress.

Staff help the child to stay in touch with family. They work closely with the child's relatives and let them know how the child is doing. One relative said, 'The staff are good, they look after her well. They are very friendly.'

On one occasion the child received a consequence. However, this was not restorative in approach. This did not give the child opportunity to learn, and reduce the likelihood of a reoccurrence.

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

The child said that they feel safe and identifies staff to talk to if they feel worried. Since the last inspection, there have been no physical interventions or incidents when the child has left the home without permission. The staff provide an enjoyable, stable environment and this helps the child to feel safe.

Staff are trained and skilled in helping the child to understand and recognise their own feelings. Staff know the child well and can identify changes in their behaviour that may put them at risk of harm. When necessary the staff intervene without delay.

The child's plans and assessments identify their individual strengths and vulnerabilities. Strategies for staff to manage any concerns are personalised to the child. This helps the child to feel reassured. The registered manager and staff regularly review the child's plans. This ensures that the child's plans accurately reflect their needs.

The home is well organised. There are clear routines and boundaries in place for the child. This helps to provide a predictable routine. The staff reinforce positive behaviour through role modelling, regular praise and incentives.

Since the last inspection, closed circuit television has been installed in the staff offices. However, the child spends time in this area with the registered manager. The installation of the audio and visual surveillance undermines the child's rights to privacy.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is experienced and qualified to manage the home. She has recently resigned. A new deputy manager has been appointed to act as the home's manager. The responsible individual plans to support the deputy manager until a permanent manager is found.

There have been changes to the staff team. Although this has led to a change in faces for the child, staff have remained consistent in their approach and the child has not been affected. The child said that they have enjoyed meeting new people.

The registered manager follows safer recruitment processes. All staff move through a detailed induction which is tailored to child's needs. The registered manager has made improvements to the induction to encourage staff reflection. This helps staff to develop their skills and identify areas for improvement.

Staff are trained to meet the needs of the child. Additional training has been provided which ensures staff can support the child with their changing needs. All staff are either qualified or working towards the relevant level 3 qualification in the required timescales.

The registered manager understands the home's strengths and areas for development. Action is taken without delay to remedy any shortfalls identified. The external monitoring

undertaken by the independent visitor is valued. The registered manager actively drives improvements through a detailed action plan.

Most staff receive regular supervision sessions from their line manager. However, although the registered manager has supervision from an external professional, they have no record of these meetings. Therefore the registered manager was unable to evidence how her development has been encouraged or the regularity of her supervision sessions.

The registered manager keeps the home's statement of purpose and children's guide under review. However, neither of these includes the introduction of the use of closed circuit television. This weakens transparency and oversight of how children are being monitored by staff.

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 registered person may only use devices for the monitoring or surveillance of children if— the monitoring or surveillance is for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child concerned, or other children; so far as reasonably practicable in the light of the child's age and understanding, the child is informed in advance of the intention to do the monitoring or surveillance; and the monitoring or surveillance is no more intrusive than necessary, having regard to the child's need for privacy. (Regulation 24 (1)(a)(c)(d)) In particular, remove the closed circuit television in the areas of the home used by the child.	27 May 2024
The registered person must ensure that— children can access all appropriate areas of the children's home's premises; and any limitation placed on a child's privacy or access to any area of the home's premises— is intended to safeguard each child accommodated in the home; is necessary and proportionate; is kept under review and, if necessary, revised; and allows children as much freedom as is possible when balanced against the need to protect them and keep them safe. (Regulation 21 (b)(c)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv))	27 May 2024

In particular, ensure the child can access all areas of the home. Any limitations on the child's access is necessary, proportionate and kept under review.	
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 (3)(a)(b)) In particular, include any information about the use of closed-circuit television and the child's right to access all areas of the home.	27 May 2024

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that any consequences used to address behaviours are restorative in nature, to help children recognise the impact of their behaviour on themselves, other children, the staff caring for them and the wider community. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.38)
- The registered person should ensure that the children's guide explains the home's procedures and policies for respecting children's confidentiality and also when it will not be possible to preserve this. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 22, paragraph 4.12)
- The registered person should ensure that a record of supervision is kept for staff, including the manager. The record should provide evidence that supervision is being delivered in line with regulation 33(4)(b). ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.3)

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: 2671486

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Oak House Childrens Home Limited

Registered provider address: A B C Care Solutions, 249 Cranbrook Road, Ilford IG1 4TG

Responsible individual: Saheena Saeed

Registered manager: Fiona Hyde

Inspectors

Mandy Start, Social Care Inspector

Natalie Day, Social Care Inspector

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