

2706013

Registered provider: Oaktree Childcare Limited.

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and managed by a private provider. It offers care for up to 3 children who may experience social and emotional difficulties and/or learning disabilities.

At the time of this inspection, one child was living at the home and they spoke with the inspector.

The home does not currently have a registered manager. A new manager is in post but has not yet applied to register with Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 9 and 10 June 2026

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

requires improvement to be good

How well children and young people are helped and protected

requires improvement to be good

The effectiveness of leaders and managers

requires improvement to be good

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.

Date of last inspection: 8 April 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
08/04/2025	Full	Good
16/04/2024	Full	Good
12/04/2023	Full	Good

Summary of findings

Several changes in the management of the home have impacted the quality of care provided to children. There has been a lack of consistency in management oversight of the day-to-day practice, which has led to some safeguarding issues and inconsistency in practice. A lack of robust pre-admission assessments has led to 2 children leaving the home prematurely.

In contrast, the child currently living at the home is settled and making progress. They feel safe and their health and education needs are being met. The management of significant incidents is good.

Leaders have identified the shortfalls, and a new, experienced manager has been appointed. Early signs indicate that this has had a positive impact, with improvements beginning to be made. Staff report feeling more supported and are accessing training, supervision and regular team meetings.

Inspection judgements

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

There have been significant changes since the last inspection, including several changes in the management and staffing. This has disrupted consistency for children. While staff are caring and nurturing in their approach, children's progress is inconsistent and not sustained.

Since the last inspection, 2 children have moved out of the home and one child has moved in. The pre-admission assessments for 2 children were not sufficiently robust and failed to fully identify their complexities and vulnerabilities. As a result, staff could not meet their needs safely and both children moved out of the home prematurely.

However, the manager implemented a well-planned and robust admission process for the child currently living at the home. Staff visited the child before they moved in, which reduced the child's anxiety. The child has settled well, developed trusting relationships with staff and is making good progress. The child said, 'It is the best home I have lived in; staff help me to do loads of fun activities and listen to me.'

Staff have successfully supported the child to improve their engagement in education. They are helping the child to re-engage with learning and have developed a clear transition plan to reduce the child's anxiety. On days when the child does not attend school, staff provide structured, formal and informal learning opportunities to build the child's confidence and maintain routine.

Staff meet the child's complex emotional and mental health needs effectively. They work closely with health professionals, including the in-house therapist, who provides

consistent support and guidance. This coordinated approach enables staff to respond to the child's emotional needs and promotes their emotional wellbeing.

Staff regularly provide the child with a range of positive activities to support and develop their interests and hobbies. These include visits to animal welfare centres, long walks, playing football and car drives, all of which the child enjoys and says help to support their emotional wellbeing.

Staff encourage the child to share their wishes and feelings through daily conversations, weekly meetings and planned discussions. The child is actively involved in choosing meals, planning activities and sharing ideas to improve the home environment, supporting their participation in day-to-day life.

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

Changes in the management have led to inconsistent oversight of staff practice. This has negatively impacted safeguarding, with some staff not consistently keeping children safe. Although staff have completed a range of training, leaders have not ensured that learning is embedded in practice. For example, staff failed to supervise the child effectively, resulting in the child having friends in their bedroom without staff knowledge.

Leaders have taken appropriate action to reduce the risk of further incidents. They have appointed an experienced manager who has introduced clearer systems to strengthen oversight of daily practice. In addition, they have installed door alarms and appropriate window restrictors to improve safety.

The child has complex needs and requires high levels of support. A deprivation of liberty order is in place, which permits increased supervision and restrictions. Staff adjust these restrictions according to the child's changing needs. They hold regular discussions with the child to help them understand why these measures are necessary to keep them safe.

The child reports that they feel safe living at the home. They can identify a trusted adult who they would approach with any worries and are confident that staff will listen and take action when concerns are raised. Staff advocate effectively for the child and follow up concerns with other professionals to ensure that appropriate action is taken.

Staff use clear risk management plans to understand and respond to the child's needs and vulnerabilities. The manager regularly reviews and updates these plans and monitors the child's behaviour to identify and respond to emerging risks and vulnerabilities.

Staff understand and follow procedures when the child goes missing from home. They use detailed risk assessments and care plans to guide their response, work with other safeguarding agencies and actively search for the child until they return safely. Records of missing-from-home incidents are detailed with good management oversight.

Staff promote positive behaviour through consistent and proactive approaches. They use incentives and supportive strategies to help the child manage frustration and anxiety, and the child responds well to this support. When physical intervention is necessary, it is used appropriately to prevent harm. The manager ensures that staff speak with the child after each incident to help them understand why the intervention was necessary.

Significant incidents, allegations and concerns about staff practice are managed effectively. This includes removing staff from their shift responsibilities while investigations are ongoing and ensuring that relevant professionals are informed to safeguard the child. However, on 2 occasions, notifications to the regulator were not made within the required timescales.

The home environment is welcoming and bright. The manager is proactive in identifying areas for improvement, including plans to develop an art-and-craft room. However, some maintenance issues have been overlooked, such as a broken toilet seat in the child's bathroom and a stained mattress in a vacant bedroom. This distracts from the homely environment the manager is trying to create.

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

Frequent changes in management have reduced the consistency of oversight, support and guidance for staff. However, the responsible individual has appointed an interim manager to strengthen stability and improve day-to-day oversight of practice.

The newly appointed manager is experienced, enthusiastic and child centred, with high aspirations for the child. They have identified key areas for improvement and are committed to addressing shortfalls, including strengthening admission assessments and ensuring that staff have the skills, knowledge and support to meet children's needs safely and effectively.

The manager has now implemented a full staff team, which provides consistency for the child. There is a rota in place to ensure that there are sufficient staffing levels to meet the child's needs. However, the manager does not clearly record their own working hours on the rota, which means that staff are not always aware of when management support is available.

The staff are caring and committed to making a positive difference to children's lives. However, they are not yet delivering care in line with the aims and objectives as set out in the home's statement of purpose. As a result, the home has not achieved its intended outcomes and 2 of the 3 children have moved out prematurely.

Leaders have not established effective systems to ensure that the location risk assessment is regularly reviewed and updated when new risks emerge. This limits the manager's ability to make informed decisions about future referrals and to ensure that the home's location remains suitable to meet children's needs.

Leaders provide a comprehensive induction and training programme, and all staff have completed the company's mandatory training. Additional training has been provided to meet the child's specific needs. Staff report that they value this training and that it increases their confidence in carrying out their roles and responsibilities.

Staff morale is positive and staff report that they feel more supported by the new manager. Supervision now takes place regularly and provides opportunities for reflection and the identification of ongoing professional development needs.

Team meetings take place regularly and provide staff with opportunities to share their knowledge and experience. Staff contribute and reflect on their practice. This is giving staff shared ownership and supports the ongoing development of 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, The 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 protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child; help each child to understand how to keep safe; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(v)(vi)) In particular, the registered provider must ensure that staff understand their roles and responsibilities in protecting children and take effective action to reduce the risk of harm to children.	10 August 2026
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—	10 August 2026

lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose; ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications, and skills to meet the needs of each child; understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(c)(f)(h)) In particular, the registered provider must ensure that there is a suitably qualified and experienced manager in post to provide management oversight of the day-to-day practice.	
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 children are admitted to the home only if their needs are within the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home's statement of purpose; that arrangements are in place to— ensure the effective induction of each child into the home; plan for, and help, each child to prepare to leave the home or to move into adult care in a way that is consistent with arrangements agreed with the child's placing authority; and that each child's relevant plans are followed. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(i)(iii)(c))	10 August 2026

In particular, the registered provider must only accept placements for children where they are satisfied that the home can respond effectively to the children's needs.	
The registered person must review the appropriateness and suitability of the location of the premises used for the purposes of the children's home at least once in each calendar year taking into account the requirement in regulation 12(2)(c) (the protection of children standard). When conducting the review, the registered person must consult, and take into account the views of, each relevant person. (Regulation 46 (1) (2)) In particular, the registered provider must update the suitability of the location risk assessment when they are made aware of any new risks.	10 August 2026

Recommendations

- The registered provider should have a system in place so that all serious events are notified, within 24 hours, to the appropriate people. The system should cover the action that should be followed if the event arises at the weekend or on a public holiday. Notification must include details of the action taken by the home's staff in response to the event. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 63, paragraph 14.13)
- The registered provider should ensure that the home is maintained and that any hazards identified are quickly repaired, such as the damage to the toilet seat in the child's bathroom and change the stained mattress in the vacant child's bedroom. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should ensure that records detailed in regulation 35-39 are kept in children's homes. In particular, the registered manager should ensure that their presence at the home and their working hours are clearly recorded on the staffing rota. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.3)

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: 2706013

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Oaktree Childcare Limited

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

Responsible individual: James Whincup

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Simon Jones, Social Care Inspector
Jayne Lord, Social Care Inspector

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