

SC069176

Registered provider: Oakfields Children's Care 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 company. It provides care for up to 5 children who may have social and emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in November 2008.

Since the last inspection, 7 children have lived at the home. At the time of this inspection, 4 children were living in the home. The inspectors spoke to all of them.

Inspection dates: 4 and 5 March 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: 5 March 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
05/03/2025	Full	Good
20/02/2024	Full	Good
28/06/2022	Full	Good
23/02/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

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

Children have mixed experiences of living in this home. Many say they are happy and the atmosphere is generally relaxed and calm. One child enjoys spending time boxing or playing football, while others prefer console games, reflecting the home's ability to support a range of interests. However, some children have expressed a desire to live elsewhere at times. In a few cases, children have had to move out suddenly, with staff involving the police. These unplanned endings have not provided a positive experience for the children affected and have impacted their sense of stability and security.

Children's progress varies. Some children have made progress, such as developing their independence skills and going missing less often. One child has continued living in a self-contained flat within the home and is doing well. They said that they would love to remain living in the home into adulthood if possible. However, they do not yet have a confirmed independence plan despite being close to needing this.

Other children have not made good progress. Two children left the home following incidents that staff were unable to prevent. The manager accepted a child in an emergency, despite their placing authority seeking a different kind of home. They were exposed to an increasing level of risk in the community and moved out as a result. Another child has become more withdrawn, and their school attendance has declined.

The home environment does not feel like a comfortable family home in all areas. There are security bars on some windows and a lack of internal door handles. Leaders have not addressed several examples of damage and disrepair in good time. Some areas of the décor are tired and in need of refurbishment.

The use of monitoring devices such as door alarms is inappropriate in some cases. Some doors are also kept locked without sufficient justification.

Staff promote children spending time with their family or friends. Staff support these relationships to develop in a more positive way over time.

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

Staff responses to safeguarding concerns are not always effective. Staff are not always proactive in trying to address potential issues. For example, staff know that a child has experienced sexual activity whilst underage. Despite their vulnerability, staff have not addressed their needs through discussions with the child to help to educate them.

Staff rely on police intervention to manage higher level of risks. Staff cannot always help children remain calm and manage their emotions in crisis. Staff use consequences that

are ineffective or inappropriate for the circumstances. This includes asking a child to pay for a taxi to get to school when they got up late.

Staff do not always use a trauma-informed approach as set out in the home's statement of purpose. Staff talk to children on a regular basis to offer them support but the recordings of these are not of a good quality. Records are often brief, lack detail and are not child friendly. If children raise concerns, staff do not respond with enough sensitivity. Once these concerns are investigated, staff do not complete further work to explore children's feelings.

Staff carry out room searches without the knowledge or permission of children. This includes when a child was in the bath and another occasion when they were out of the home. Staff do not record a clear justification for the need to do this. This results in children feeling their privacy has been infringed.

Staff know the children well and they generally have positive relationships with them. A clinical psychologist supports staff in completing assessments of children's needs. Although these inform children's plans, they are not always used to good effect.

Staff know how to respond when a child goes missing. They use detailed risk assessments and plans to guide their response. Staff work with multi-agency partners and family members to look for the child. Records of missing episodes are detailed with good management oversight.

Staff work in partnership with other professionals supporting the children. Staff provide regular updates and are quick to escalate concerns when needed. Other professionals were positive about the home, and several said it felt 'welcoming.'

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

The manager has not met the previous requirements. They have made an effort to address these, but the pace and extent of improvement is not quick enough. For example, they have not challenged and escalated a lack of documentation from placing authorities.

The oversight of the responsible individual is not evident. This includes an incident where the child raised concerns about the manager. This has resulted in a lack of monitoring of the quality of care and leadership provided.

The manager has failed to notify Ofsted of serious events that have occurred within the home. This includes allegations against staff. It also includes an incident where a child allegedly threatened someone with a knife.

The home's statement of purpose contains several outdated references. The manager acknowledged that they have not reviewed this in detail for some time. The document gives an inaccurate impression of the home, which is crucial for the placing authority when they are looking at whether the home is suitable for a child.

Staff meetings and supervision lack depth in their record of discussion. The manager does not help staff to reflect upon children's needs and risks in a critical way. Staff have not received an appraisal in the timescale outlined in regulations. The manager does not review actions agreed with staff. This results in the potential for drift and delay for children.

Children enjoy a stable, experienced, and qualified staff team. Staff report that they enjoy working in the home. They feel that they can raise any issues of concern if needed. Staff and professionals speak highly of the manager. The manager is approachable and present within the home.

The manager accepts the need for some improvements. They recognise that the home must evolve in line with updates to current practice.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person 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 must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
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— 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; and use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13(1) (2)(a)(c)(f)(h))	5 June 2026
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.	5 June 2026

In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— understand and apply the home’s statement of purpose; ensure that staff— understand and apply the home’s statement of purpose; make decisions about the day-to-day arrangements for each child, in accordance with the child’s relevant plans, which give the child an appropriate degree of freedom and choice; and ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to— meet the needs of each child; and enable each child to participate in the daily life of the home. (Regulation 6(1) (2)(a)(b)(i)(ix)(c)(i)(ii)) In particular, the registered person should ensure that the home is clean and that maintenance issues are promptly addressed. This requirement has not been met and is restated.	
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation; an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious; there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there; and there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40(4)(a)(b)(c)(e))	5 May 2026
The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and	5 May 2026

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 each child's relevant plans are followed.

(Regulation 14(1) (2)(c))

In addition, the registered person should ensure that they receive all relevant documents relating to children from the local authority in a timely manner.

This requirement has not been met and is restated.

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that they agree with their local police force, procedures and guidance on police involvement with the home to reduce unnecessary police involvement in managing behaviour and criminalisation of behaviours. Children should not be charged with offences resulting from behaviour within a children's home that would not similarly lead to police involvement if it occurred in a family home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 47, paragraph 9.40)
- The registered person should ensure that staff do not generally enter a child's bedroom without their permission, though it may be necessary to establish routines to allow for rooms to be cleaned regularly. Rooms should only be searched if the child has been informed or asked for their permission. Immediate searching may be necessary where there are reasonable grounds for believing that there is a risk to the child's or another person's safety or well-being. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 16, paragraph 3.20)
- The registered person should ensure that, in line with their individual plans and the ethos of the home, children are offered advice, support and guidance on health and wellbeing. Staff should have the skills and knowledge to be able to help children understand, and work to help them in key areas such as, but not limited to, mental health, sexual health and relationships, and use of drugs or alcohol. This includes ensuring that discussions with children are conducted and recorded in a way that is helpful to the child. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 35, paragraph 7.18)

- The registered person should ensure that they keep the home's Statement of Purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it. The home's Statement of Purpose should be child-focused, indicating how the home provides individualised care to meet the Quality Standards for the children in their care. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 14, paragraph 3.5)

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: SC069176

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Oakfields Children's Care Limited

Registered provider address: Library Chambers, 48 Union Street, Hyde, Cheshire, SK14 1ND

Responsible individual: Ben Greenough

Registered manager: Lisa Greenough

Inspectors

Sam Saxby-Brown, Social Care Regulatory Inspector (Lead)
Amy Groom, Social Care Regulatory Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2026