

# SC069176

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

At the time of the inspection, five children were living at the home.

The manager registered with Ofsted in November 2008.

### Inspection dates: 5 and 6 March 2025

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| <b>Overall experiences and progress of children and young people,</b> taking into account | <b>good</b> |
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|                                                             |      |
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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:** 20 February 2024

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement            |
|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| 20/02/2024      | Full            | Good                            |
| 28/06/2022      | Full            | Good                            |
| 23/02/2022      | Full            | Requires improvement to be good |
| 21/08/2019      | Full            | Good                            |

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good**

The inspector spoke to four children living at the home.

Since the last inspection, two children have moved out of the home, and two children have moved in. Moves were well planned and managed in a child-centred way. One child has left the home in a planned way to move to independent living, and staff were proactive in preparing them for the move. The home has an annex that is used for older children who are preparing for adulthood. Staff support children in a measured way to prepare for independence in a manner that is consistent with their developmental needs.

The manager and staff support the children in making good progress. There are positive relationships between children and staff. The staff know the children well and are attuned to their needs. One child said, 'All the staff are nice. They listen to me and help me to get the things I need.'

Staff and the manager maintain positive working relationships with family members and others who are significant to children. Children are encouraged to spend time with their families and friends in a safe environment. Arrangements for time with family and friends are tailored to each child, and staff manage these effectively. Staff recognise the value of social relationships for children and provide them with the support they need to form and maintain friendships in the local area. Children can go out with friends in the community and have sleepovers, which promotes a sense of normalcy.

All children are attending an education provision that meets their needs. Staff and the manager are aspirational for the children and encourage them to succeed. There are good routines and boundaries in the home that promote school attendance and engagement with education. When concerns and difficulties arise, staff and the manager work with education professionals to secure positive outcomes.

Staff support children's individual health needs. Children are registered with relevant health services, and referrals are made to specialist services when required. Medication is managed safely. One child has a health condition that they are reluctant to address. Staff and the manager work with the child to help them understand the long-term benefits of taking care of their health. There has been strong multi-agency working around this concern, and referrals have been made to specialist services.

The home is large, and each child has their own space. Children's bedrooms have everything they need; however, not all bedrooms have been cleaned and maintained to a satisfactory standard. Additionally, several maintenance tasks, including cracks in the walls and ceilings and mould around the bath, have not been addressed in a timely manner.

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

Children are kept safe by staff who are knowledgeable about their needs and vulnerabilities. Staff are skilled at supporting children in regulating their emotions and can de-escalate situations effectively.

There have been some issues in the relationships between children. At these times, staff have responded swiftly and appropriately. Staff have then supported children to rebuild and repair their relationships, allowing them to continue living together and avoiding unwanted moves for children.

Staff and the manager recognise that moving home in an unplanned way is traumatic and not in children's best interests. A child had to move out of the home because the level of risk became unmanageable. There was a delay in the child being able to move to their new home. However, the manager took steps to ensure that the risks could be managed in the home on a short-term basis by implementing a robust safety plan to keep all children safe. The child was then able to move in a more planned and managed way.

Missing-from-home episodes are managed effectively. Staff actively search for children and work with other agencies and parents to locate them. The manager works proactively with safeguarding partners to develop strategies and implement safeguarding measures to prevent children from going missing from home. A missing-from-home officer said, 'Staff follow all procedures and do everything they should be doing. They deal with things in a professional way and safeguard children well. The manager runs a tight ship.'

Staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities and know how to escalate any safeguarding concerns. Staff recruitment has been carried out in a secure manner to ensure that only suitable individuals work with the children.

## **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good**

The manager is suitably experienced and qualified. Her practice is child centred, and she knows the children and their needs well. The manager has good oversight of the home and uses effective tools and systems to monitor performance and the care provided.

There is a stable and highly committed staff team with minimal use of bank staff, which ensures consistency for children. Staff say that they feel supported by the manager. They receive regular supervision sessions, which are of good quality. Staff appraisals are carried out to help staff reflect on their strengths and future areas for development.

Most staff are experienced and qualified in childcare. There are effective arrangements in place for the induction of new members of staff. Staff have access to a broad range of training opportunities, and they usually receive training in relation to children's emerging

needs in a timely manner. However, staff have not received training around substance misuse, despite some concerns regarding cannabis for children in the home.

The manager has excellent relationships with other professionals working with the children. She is a strong advocate for children and challenges other professionals when necessary. However, there has been a delay in receiving some local authority care plans and personal education plans for children. The manager has raised these issues with social workers but has not further escalated them in a timely manner.

## 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   |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| <p>The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who—</p> <p>understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children;</p> <p>use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to—</p> <p>meet the needs of each child; and</p> <p>enable each child to participate in the daily life of the home.<br/>(Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)(i)(ii))</p> <p>In particular, the registered person must ensure that the home is clean and that maintenance issues are promptly addressed.</p> | 7 May 2025 |
| <p>The care planning standard is that children—</p> <p>receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and</p> <p>have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that each child's relevant plans are followed.<br/>(Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c))</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 7 May 2025 |

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| In particular, the registered person must ensure that they receive children's most recent care plans and personal education plans from the local authority in a timely manner. |  |
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## Recommendation

- The registered person should support staff to acquire the knowledge and skills that will enable them to actively help each child to reach their full potential. This includes ensuring that staff receive ongoing training to meet children's emerging needs. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 52, paragraph 10.5)

## 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

## Inspector

Eve Ostridge, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
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