

## Children's homes inspection - Full

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|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Inspection date</b>           | <b>10/11/2015</b>                                                  |
| <b>Unique reference number</b>   | <b>SC069176</b>                                                    |
| <b>Type of inspection</b>        | <b>Full</b>                                                        |
| <b>Provision subtype</b>         | <b>Children's Home</b>                                             |
| <b>Registered person</b>         | <b>Oakfields Children's Care Limited</b>                           |
| <b>Registered person address</b> | <b>Library Chambers, 48 Union Street, Hyde, Cheshire, SK14 1ND</b> |

|                               |                               |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>Responsible individual</b> | <b>Mr Ben Greenough</b>       |
| <b>Registered manager</b>     | <b>Mrs Lisa Greenough</b>     |
| <b>Inspector</b>              | <b>Janine Shortman-Thomas</b> |

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|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Inspection date</b>                                                                          | <b>10/11/2015</b>              |
| <b>Previous inspection judgement</b>                                                            | <b>sustained effectiveness</b> |
| <b>Enforcement action since last inspection</b>                                                 | <b>None</b>                    |
| <b>This inspection</b>                                                                          |                                |
| <b>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</b> | <b>Good</b>                    |
| The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.            |                                |
| <b>how well children and young people are helped and protected</b>                              | <b>Good</b>                    |
| <b>the impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>                                     | <b>Good</b>                    |

**SC069176**

**Summary of findings**

**The children's home provision is good because:**

- Young people make good progress in all areas of their lives and enjoy the experiences the home has to offer.
- Staff deliver individual care to each young person demonstrating understanding, humour and appropriate affection to all.
- Young people are happy in their home and talk positively about the care and support they receive from staff. They acknowledge that they make good progress and attribute this success to the efforts of staff.
- Family members have confidence in the care that staff provide. They are positive about the relationships that staff forge with young people and are enthusiastic about the progress made.
- Staff understand their safeguarding roles and responsibilities and work effectively with partner agencies to promote young people's welfare. This is resulted in a reduction in risk taking behaviours.
- An experienced and suitably qualified management team effectively lead the a highly motivated and well trained team of staff in ensuring the known and emerging needs of young people are consistently met.
- A number of shortfalls were identified at this inspection. These relate to staff appraisals, responding to bullying concerns, parental consent, missing from home procedures and restraint records.

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

### Statutory Requirements

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person/s meets 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 with the given timescales.

| Requirement                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Due date   |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| The registered provider will ensure that all employees have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year (Regulation 33(4)(c))                                                                                                                                                    | 31/12/2015 |
| Ensure the manager uses the monitoring and reviewing systems to identify and address any behaviours and situations which make young people feel unsafe. This is with particular reference to evaluating the effectiveness of actions taken to address young people's feelings of being bullied. (Regulation 45 (2)(a)(b)(c)) | 31/12/2015 |

### Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the service should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- Ensure that each child's record include permission for staff to administer first aid and non- prescription medication from a person with parental responsibility for them. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 35, paragraph 7.14)
- Ensure any child who has been restrained is encouraged to add their views and comments to the record of restraint. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 49, paragraph 9.60)
- The registered person must specify the procedures to be followed and the roles and responsibilities of staff when a child is missing from care or away from the home without permission and how they should support the child on their return to the home. This is with specific reference to ensuring that the responsible local authority provides an opportunity for the child to have an independent return home interview and that the homes missing from care policy is updated to reflect this. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 45, paragraph 9.28 and 9.30)

## Full report

### Information about this children's home

This is a privately owned children's home that provides care and accommodation for up to four young people of either gender who may have behavioural and emotional difficulties. The home enlist the support of a clinical psychologist in their development and implementation for care planning.

### Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement    |
|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------------|
| 04/02/2015      | CH - Interim    | Sustained effectiveness |
| 02/07/2014      | CH - Full       | Good                    |
| 26/03/2014      | CH - Interim    | Satisfactory Progress   |
| 05/12/2013      | CH - Full       | Good                    |

## Inspection Judgements

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| <b>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <b>good</b>     |
| <p>This children's home is making a positive difference to young people's lives. They benefit from the care and support of a committed staff team who are motivated to develop positive and nurturing relationships with them. Most young people say that they feel safe and attribute their successes to the good support they receive from staff. One young person said, 'The staff always supported me and are really good. They taught me to grow up so I can live independently now. I am doing really well.'</p> <p>Staff have high aspirations for young people and are strong advocates for them. This ensures that they receive the correct level of support and services, particularly in regards to education, health and securing permanence.</p> <p>Staff value and promote a positive education experience for all young people. Young people attend school punctually and have extremely high attendance. They are making good progress against their own individual goals and have realistic and achievable aspirations for their futures.</p> <p>Staff recognise all young people's early life experiences and understand how these may impact on their thoughts, feelings, emotions and behaviours. They thoughtfully support and encourage young people to consider these experiences and feelings so that they can better understand and modify their behaviour. This is delivered through individual discussion, focused keyworking sessions and direct involvement of specialist support when required. As a result, young people have made progress from their starting points, in regards to their emotional well-being and reducing their risk taking behaviours.</p> <p>Young people's health is valued and promoted. Staff work effectively with a wide range of healthcare professionals and ensure they receive the support they need as and when required. All young people are registered with doctors, dentist and opticians and staff actively encourage and support them to attend routine health appointments. Staff talk to young people about the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyles and help them to consider things which may be damaging to their health. They enable young people to access specialist health support such as smoking cessation, which has proven particularly effective in helping one young person to stop smoking.</p> <p>Staff are competent in their management of medication and responding to minor</p> |                 |

accidents which require first aid treatment. This practice is underpinned by effective procedures which ensure these needs are met. Parental consent is usually acquired at the point of admission. However, consent to administer first aid and non-prescribed medication for one young person has not been sought.

Young people are supported and encouraged to share their views and opinions on all aspects of their care. They attend weekly resident meetings, have regular planned keyword sessions and are constantly engaged in informal discussions with staff. This provides young people with good opportunities to influence their care as well as the day to day running of the home. Young people fully understand and will confidently use the homes complaints process, including external advocacy services, when they are unhappy with decisions or actions that affect them. When complaints are made, the manager and staff will ensure that they are fully investigated. This has included supporting one young person to successfully challenge their placing authority who planned to end their placement against their wishes. The young person said, 'I am really glad that staff helped me. Now I know I am staying and I am really happy about it.'

Young people develop the knowledge and life skills associated with running a home through their regular participation in the day to day running of this house. They confirm that they are able to plan and prepare meals, budget their weekly allowances, complete household chores and use appliances. This goes some way to helping young people prepare adult living.

Staff thoughtfully support young people to maintain safe and positive contact with their families and friends. This is of particular significance in ensuring networks of support are in place when young people move on. Staff have worked closely with leaving care professionals in supporting young people to make the transition to semi-independent living. Staff continue to keep in touch with young people and ensure they are fully supported in their new home. One young person who has recently moved on from the home spoke about how staff ring or visit them almost daily and how they find this ongoing support to be of great benefit in helping them cope.

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|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Judgement grade |
| <b>How well children and young people are helped and protected</b>                                                                                                                                                                       | <b>good</b>     |
| Staff have a good understanding of young people's specific vulnerabilities. They are suitably trained in safeguarding and are clear about their roles and responsibilities in keeping young people safe. Well thought-out, risk assessed |                 |

interventions are effectively used to help young people manage their unsafe behaviour. These are thoroughly understood and consistently implemented by all staff. There is good evidence of multi-agency working involving the police, safeguarding professionals, social workers, education colleagues and health professionals. Collectively they provide young people with the right level of support and guidance which enables them to develop an understanding of their own behaviour. These extensive and cohesive working relationships, which have been fully embedded into practice, have assisted young people in making better choices about keeping themselves safe. One example of this is the reduction in incidents of missing from home.

Staff work well with all agencies to manage and support young people in times of crisis. They are aware of young people's triggers to some behaviours and respond to these in line with their individual risk management plans. Staff are acutely aware of the risks associated with young people being away from the home and make every effort to discourage this. When young people do go missing staff make every effort to locate them. When this has not been possible they will involve other parties including the police, parents and social workers. However, staff are unclear about their responsibility in ensuring young people are provided with an opportunity to speak with an independent person when they return after being missing. This is not outlined in the homes current policy and therefore the placing authority's failure to provide this service has gone unchallenged.

Most young people living at the home say they feel safe and secure. They say they are well supported to manage their feelings and behaviours more appropriately. This ensures they can maintain positive relationships with their peers. The majority of young people say that bullying is not an issue for them. However one young person has reported on a number of occasions that they feel unsafe when in the company of another resident. The manager has taken steps to address these concerns but this has had little impact on changing the way the young person feels.

Young people say the rules in the home are fair. They are fully involved in setting their own behaviour targets which they aspire to achieve. Achievements are rewarded with treats such as books, cosmetics or DVD's. This incentivised approach has been effective in helping most young people modify and improve their behaviour.

Staff are trained in the use of physical restraint and have had to use this one occasion. Records confirm that this action was necessary to keep the young person and others safe. They also confirm the methods used to be appropriate and in line with the homes approved techniques. Staff encourage young people to reflect on their experience following any incident of restraint. However, this discussion is not recorded within the restraint report.

Young people live in a large, safe, comfortable home. Safer recruitment practice is followed and visitors into the home are suitably checked. This approach ensures young people are kept safe from persons who may pose a risk to them.

Health and safety arrangements for the home are thorough and include weekly checks to ensure any hazards are detected and addressed swiftly. This practice ensure the physical environment is maintained to an acceptable standard and everyone's physical well-being is promoted.

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| <b>The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <b>good</b>     |
| <p>Young people live in a home that is effectively managed by an experienced and suitably qualified manager. She has been registered with Ofsted since November 2008. The manager is supported by three experienced and knowledgeable senior residential care staff who share her aspirations and motivation to deliver a good standard of care. She provides clear leadership and has an inclusive working style which enables staff to use their initiative and develop well in their roles.</p> <p>The manager has a clear understanding of the strengths and needs of the home. She shows good learning from monitoring and inspection activity ensuring any noted shortfalls are quickly addressed. For example, she has taken suitable action to address the requirement and recommendation from the previous inspection.</p> <p>There are sufficient staffing levels in the home to ensure each young person's individual needs can be met. During the inspection young people were seen to be happy in the home and had lots of conversation and interaction with staff. Staff who were spoken to talk positively about working at the home and said they feel well supported in their everyday roles. Regular team meetings, monthly supervisions and relevant training ensure staff knowledge is current and their understanding of young people's needs is up to date. However, not all staff have had their annual appraisal. This means that opportunities have been lost to formally evaluate staff performance and determine any further training needs.</p> <p>The manager and staff have positive working relationships with parents, carers and partner agencies. Social workers, education colleagues, and the police all speak very positively about the care and support the manager and staff provide to the young people. One family member said, 'I can definitely see a difference in (name). Their attitude has improved and they are not doing the things that they were before.' A police officer commented, 'This home is great, the staff are</p> |                 |

proactive and work with us very well. The home provides a lovely family atmosphere for all the young people. The staff go that extra mile.'

A number of quality assurance processes are used to monitor and review the quality of care. An independent person completes monthly monitoring visits and provides written feedback to the Registered Manager. The manager uses this information to address any identified shortfalls. Internal monitoring processes are in place to evaluate care practice and the experiences of young people, including those which have been raised by the independent visitor. However, the manager has failed to effectively evaluate the work that has been undertaken to improve the feelings for one young person who continues to feel that they are being bullied by another young person within the home.

The manager effectively responds to and monitors any serious incidents to ensure appropriate action is taken. All significant events relating to the welfare and protection of young people living in the home are notified to the appropriate authorities in a timely manner. This ensures young people receive the right input from the relevant person or agency.

Young people's records reflect their everyday lives and the work that is undertaken by the staff team. Information is stored securely and only shared with authorised persons which ensures young people's right to privacy is maintained.

## What the inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

An **outstanding** children's home provides highly effective services that contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help and protection and care. Their progress exceeds expectations and is sustained over time.

A **good** children's home provides effective services that help, protect and care for children and young people and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

In a children's home that **requires improvement**, there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. The welfare of looked after children is safeguarded and promoted. Minimum requirements are in place, however, the children's home is not yet delivering good protection, help and care for children and young people.

A children's home that is **inadequate** is providing services where there are widespread or serious failures that create or leave children and young people being harmed or at risk of harm or result in children looked after not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

## **Information about this inspection**

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people living in the children's home. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference adults make to the lives of children and young people. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with children, young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care given to children and young people. Wherever possible, they talked to children, young people and their families. In addition the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people who it is trying to help, protect and look after.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service 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*.

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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)  
W: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted)

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