

Children's homes – Interim inspection

Inspection date	15/02/2017
Unique reference number	SC069176
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	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	Janine Shortman-Thomas

Inspection date	15/02/2017
Previous inspection judgement	Good
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection This home was judged good at the full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has sustained effectiveness. Some young people have made good progress relative to their starting points, particularly in relation to their emotional well-being and education. Following the requirement raised at the last inspection, the manager has improved her links with education providers. This ensures that all young people are now supported by the staff to access a suitable education provision which meets their individual learning needs. Effective links with education providers now ensures that a cohesive package of support is provided to all young people. Any barriers to young people's learning are appropriately raised, challenged and addressed by the manager to ensure young people's goals are achieved. That said, despite the best efforts of the staff, two young people have been reluctant to fully engage with their educational placements which may impact negatively on them achieving their longer term goals and ambitions. Positive behaviour is promoted and supported well by staff. Staff use sanctions appropriately in response to young people's poor behaviour, equally staff offer rewards and encouragement for positive behaviour. The young people are clear about the rules and the expectations placed upon them, and confirm that the household rules are fair. One young person said, 'They only ask three things from me. That I go to school, come in on time and that I behave myself.' This approach has supported some young people to improve their behaviour as they have a clear understanding of what is expected of them. Improved placement planning and clearer risk assessments support the staff in providing good quality care and enhances young people's safety and welfare. Risk assessments have improved and they now plainly identify young people's known and perceived risks. These assessments which clearly identify the specific strategies the staff will use to support young people at these times aids in keeping young people safe. The manager makes good use of the additional services that are available to her. The psychologist, who supports the staff and young people within the home, contributes well to the formulation of young people's risk assessments and placement plans. The psychologist supports and enables those young people who	

are willing, to identify more suitable strategies to address their emotional responses during their individual sessions and feedback from these sessions is used to review and update young people's plans. The psychologist also supports and works effectively with the staff team. This ensures that the staff are equipped with the skills and knowledge to enable them to maintain a high level of individual care which supports them to deliver good quality care to all young people. As recommended at the last inspection, the psychologist now provides regular input and training to the staff on pertinent issues such as, supporting young people who self-harm. This enables staff to better support young people at times of crisis as the staff have a better understanding of why some young people may respond in certain situations and how best that they can support them.

Keeping young people safe is central to the manager and staff. Staff complete individual work sessions with young people to develop their knowledge and understanding about keeping themselves safe. Regular key working sessions give young people the chance to think about their actions and consequences and the impact that this has on themselves as well as others. This, alongside offering young people a range of interesting activities to keep them engaged and involved in the home has supported some young people to modify their risk-taking behaviour. Consequently, behaviours such as, going missing from the home have reduced for one young person. That said, this approach and good multi-agency working has not been effective in supporting another young person to reduce their prolonged and prolific missing from home behaviour. As such, this young person's placement has now been ended prematurely.

Good, effective management arrangements support young people with their ongoing progress and development. The manager has a detailed knowledge and understanding of each young person's individual needs, strengths, and areas for development. The manager clearly articulates the progress that young people make and her good management oversight ensures that young people continue to make progress in achieving their individual targets and goals. In addition, the manager ensures that there are a suitable number of competent staff to address the needs of each young person. A stable staff team who are qualified, trained, supported and experienced, deliver a good standard of care to young people. As raised as a recommendation within the previous inspection, the manager and staff now receive regular supervision and annual appraisals. This, which staff confirmed throughout the inspection, supports them to reflect and develop their care practice, which in turn enables them to support and enable young people with their progression.

Physical interventions are rarely used in this home as staff use their positive relationships with young people to deescalate any situations prior to this becoming necessary. On the one occasion that the staff have been required to physically restrain a young person to safeguard them from significant harm, this was used appropriately by suitably trained staff. The manager ensured that the staff and young person were sufficiently supported following the incident. This practice ensures that the young people and staff are given the time, space and support to

consider and reflect on the behaviour and subsequent actions to minimise any further incidents. A recommendation was raised at the last inspection regarding monitoring of restraints. Although the manager now ensures that any incident of physical restraint is reviewed quickly by herself, the present system for reviewing and evaluating physical interventions is not sufficiently robust or transparent. For example, the registered manager is presently reviewing and evaluating the physical interventions that she herself has been involved in. Consequently, there is no independent oversight offering additional scrutiny, monitoring and evaluation to these physical interventions to ensure that young people's safety and welfare is promoted.

The manager is making good steps forward in developing the service for young people by using the findings from previous inspections and from the feedback she receives from her external independent visitor. In addition to meeting those requirements and recommendations already identified above, the manager has sufficiently met the one further requirement and recommendation. As such, young people's care file's now include all the required local authority documentation to ensure that the staff can provide the correct level of care and support to young people, and young people receive a copy of the welcome pack on their arrival. This ensures that young people know what to expect and from whom, when they arrive into the home.

Information about this children's home

This children's home is owned and managed by a private company. It provides care and accommodation for no more than four children and young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. This company enlists the support of a clinical psychologist in the care planning for children and young people.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/05/2016	Full	Good
12/02/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
10/11/2015	Full	Good
04/02/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

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 within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
12: The protection of children standard (1) In order to meet the protection of children standard the registered person must ensure that children are protected from harm. (2) In particular, the standard requires the registered person to ensure that– (b) the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. This is in particular reference to ensuring that the responsible person identifies an authorised and independent person to monitor and evaluate any physical interventions that the registered manager has been actively involved in.	31/03/2017
The registered person must keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate revise it. The Registered person must 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)).	31/03/2017

What the inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspection we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the 'Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection'.

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 that 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 focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

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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