

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 have social and emotional difficulties.

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

The manager registered with Ofsted in November 2008.

Inspection dates: 20 and 21 February 2024

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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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: 28 June 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
28/06/2022	Full	Good
23/02/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
21/08/2019	Full	Good
20/06/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children receive excellent individualised care and support. Staff have high aspirations for all children, offering encouragement and support to enable them to achieve positive outcomes. All children are making significant progress since moving into the home.

Staff have developed positive relationships with children. Children all said they are happy and like living in the home. One child said, 'It's great living here and the staff are supportive. It is a lot better than the previous home I lived in. Staff are caring.' Children have a sense of belonging. Staff are proud of the progress children are making.

Children access education that meets their individual needs. Staff have high expectations of children engaging in their learning. For the older children, staff are working with colleges and alternative providers to identify appropriate ongoing learning opportunities. Children now have positive aspirations for the future.

There are good arrangements in place to meet the health needs of children. The manager ensures that children have access to specialist support to meet their needs when required. Children are also supported by an in-house therapist. This means that children are making progress in their physical and emotional development.

Staff understand the importance of children spending time with their family and those who are important to them. The manager sends out weekly updates to families about the achievements and progress their child is making. This means that families feel part of the day-to-day life of their child.

Children are developing age-appropriate independence skills. There is a self-contained fully functional flat connected to the main house for children to use to build their independence skills. One child is currently staying in the flat. While learning to be more independent, they continue to receive support from staff and have full access to the rest of the house if they wish.

Two of the older children are having regular individual and group-work sessions with an external organisation. This gives them further opportunities to learn skills in preparation for moving into a flat in the future. This ongoing support gives children the confidence, knowledge and skills to prepare for the future.

Children participate in activities in the home and in the community. They are given choices and their interests are considered. Children also spend time with friends. This means that they have age-appropriate social interactions and build skills to form and maintain relationships. This also gives them a sense of their own identity.

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

Children said they feel safe. This is due to the positive relationships they have developed with staff. Children have regular opportunities to share their views about the home and the care they receive. They are aware of the complaints procedure and would go to any staff member if they had a concern. There has not been any complaints since the last inspection.

Staff have a good understanding of children's risks. They respond appropriately to incidents and take action to protect children. They work proactively with other professionals. Risk assessments identify the vulnerabilities of children and are reviewed regularly. Through this support, children are learning how to keep themselves safe and their risks are reducing. However, alarms are used on children's bedroom doors without any identified risk.

Staff encourage children to take age-appropriate risks. This helps to develop children's confidence in the community, while also developing their independence.

When children go missing from home, staff follow clear and comprehensive plans. This includes searching the local area and working collaboratively with external professionals such as the police. This ensures that children are located quickly and returned to the home safely. Children then receive support from an independent advocate. Through ongoing support from staff and staff working closely with the missing-from-home team, the risk of children going missing has reduced.

Staff build positive relationships with children. This helps staff to de-escalate behaviours that may challenge at an early stage and prevents incidents from occurring. Children are developing coping strategies and as a result there have not been any physical interventions.

Children benefit from living in a spacious and welcoming home which has a relaxed atmosphere. Their bedrooms have been personalised and are decorated to reflect them as individuals. All health and safety checks have been completed. Overall, the house is well maintained, however, some wear and tear has not been repaired.

Recruitment and selection processes for staff are robust, which contributes to children being safe.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is managed by a qualified, enthusiastic and child-centred manager. She has high expectations for what all children can achieve. She is aspirational for children to lead fulfilling independent lives. She has a good understanding of children's individual needs and the progress they are making. The manager has developed positive relationships with other professionals and trusting relationships with parents, which help meet the needs of the children.

The manager has good oversight and ensures that staff are consistent in supporting children's plans. The progress made by children is recorded well. The manager is in the process of developing systems to help her monitor and identify any shortfalls. She is keen to learn from others and values the independent person's review each month as an opportunity to look at ways to improve the quality of care being provided.

There is an experienced and stable staff team who provide consistency and stability for children. Staff are child-centred and caring and share the same aspirations as the manager. Staff describe a settled and happy environment and they all feel supported by the manager.

There is a comprehensive training programme in place, from induction to ongoing training. All staff have completed their mandatory training courses and they have received additional training to support them in meeting the specific needs of children.

Staff are supported by a company therapist who trains staff and provides them with individual support. There is, however, no clear management oversight of the new training courses staff have completed. This is a missed opportunity to identify any gaps in staff's knowledge and their future training needs.

Staff receive regular supervision and new staff benefit from additional support sessions during their probation period. This gives staff the opportunity to reflect on their practice and identify any development needs. The manager also ensures that children are given an opportunity to have input into staff's annual appraisals by giving feedback on individual staff.

Team meetings take place regularly and the manager has ensured that all staff can attend by holding some virtually. This gives the staff an opportunity to share their knowledge and experiences. As a result, team-working is strong.

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 registered person may only use devices for the monitoring or surveillance of children if— the monitoring or surveillance is for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child concerned, or other children; the child's placing authority consents in writing to the monitoring or surveillance; so far as reasonably practicable in the light of the child's age and understanding, the child is informed in advance of the intention to do the monitoring or surveillance; and the monitoring or surveillance is no more intrusive than necessary, having regard to the child's need for privacy. (Regulation 24 (1)(a)(b)(c)(d)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that if bedroom door alarms are used, there is a clear identified risk, and that their use is kept under review.	20 March 2024

Recommendations

- The registered person should have a workforce plan which can fulfil the workforce-related requirements of regulation 16, schedule 1, paragraphs 19 and 20. The plan should include any new training completed by staff. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.8)
- The registered person should ensure that the home is maintained and that any hazards identified are quickly repaired, such as the damage to a child's bedroom door and the guttering outside the main door. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

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:

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

Simon Jones, Social Care Inspector

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