



JAN 2025

OAKDALE GROUP

# Newsletter

[WWW.OAKDALEGROUP.ORG](http://WWW.OAKDALEGROUP.ORG)



## A WARM WELCOME

Oakdale is delighted to have welcomed the following people since November 2024 and we look forward to working together

### Neurodevelopment Team:

Gabrielle Murphy  
Neurodevelopmental Practitioner

Kate Webber  
Neurodevelopmental Practitioner

Laura Padgett - Nicholson  
Admin Team Leader for the ADHD  
Medication Service

Sarah Lord  
Neurodevelopmental Practitioner

Sinead Prendergast  
Neurodevelopmental Practitioner

## An introduction from our Clinical Director - Dr. Caroline Falconer

Welcome to the latest edition of the Oakdale Newsletter! I hope this finds you well as we embark on an exciting year ahead.

On the 22nd of January we held our Leadership Away Day—a fantastic opportunity for the Leadership Team to come together, reconnect after the festive period, and focus on our Strategic Plan for 2025. Each division shared their vision and priorities for the year, highlighting the steps we'll take to continue delivering excellence in all of our services. It was inspiring to see the passion and commitment across the team as we aligned on our goals and priorities.

We also took time to reflect on our leadership journeys during various exercises that focused on building trust through exploring our vulnerabilities. Each of us shared moments when we felt vulnerable in our roles, how it impacted us as leaders, and how we've learned to navigate those challenges. For me, this was an incredibly powerful exercise, reinforcing the importance of trust, empathy, and courage in leadership. It also reminded us that by reflecting on and 'owning' our vulnerabilities, often seen as a weakness, can actually be one of our greatest strengths.

A key part of this discussion was referencing Brené Brown's famous TED Talk on vulnerability, which explores how embracing vulnerability opens the door to stronger relationships, authentic leadership, and personal growth. So it gave us a sense of permission to not shy away from those moments of vulnerability but instead to lean into them and see them as opportunities to learn, grow, and support one another.

If you haven't watched Brené's TED Talk, I highly recommend taking some time to do so—it's both thought-provoking and empowering. You can find it here :

[The power of vulnerability | Brené Brown | TED](#)

I'd also like to take a moment to thank everyone for their ongoing dedication and hard work. It's the collective effort, passion, and resilience of each individual that truly drives us forward. Every idea, every action, and every moment of vulnerability shared last week has set the stage for what I'm confident will be an extraordinary year. Thank you for your commitment to excellence and for making Oakdale such a remarkable place to work and grow!

Caroline





# Introducing “Above & Beyond” Recognition!

Following your feedback in our recent survey, we’re excited to launch our new colleague recognition initiative.

These quarterly nominations are your chance to celebrate a colleague who has gone “Above and Beyond”, has demonstrated our values and made a positive impact.

Each quarter, we’ll honour one of our colleagues from Oakdale or BUSS for their outstanding contributions, as well as recognising two additional colleagues who also went “Above and Beyond”.

## We need your input!

Send us your nominations, using this [nomination form](#), winners will be selected by a panel and announced in the next quarter’s newsletter.

Let’s shine a light on the incredible work happening across Oakdale and BUSS.

### Vacancies

Use the QR code to check out current vacancies.



Don’t forget to share them with your networks and on LinkedIn!

### Can you help?

Do you know someone who has had a positive experience with Oakdale?

Please reach out and ask them if they would be willing to leave us a Google Review!

There are business sized cards available in front offices (with QR codes for both the NHS and Google) which you can collect and give to clients.



## The Price of Care: Talking About Money as a Therapist

Blog by Caroline Falconer and Helen Tait

If you work in private practice and your clients self-fund their therapy, this one’s for you!

Caroline and Helen explore the challenges of talking about money as a therapist in this thoughtful piece.

[Click here to read](#)



## ADHD Medication Service

We’re thrilled to share the positive impact of our newly launched ADHD Meds Service, which has already made a real difference to the lives of our clients.

This milestone marks a significant step in enhancing the support and care we offer.

Donna Easton, our dedicated Healthcare Support Assistant, provided valuable insight into the journey of getting this service up and running. While the process took longer than anticipated, the results are worth celebrating. Highlights include seeing the first client face-to-face for a health check, offering ECGs, and significantly reducing waiting times for prescribing appointments.

Donna reflected on the rewarding nature of the service, saying, **“Being part of something that makes such a difference to people’s lives is truly special.”** This service is a testament to our commitment to improving access to care and ensuring clients receive the support they need, when they need it.

## Client Compliments Corkboard

**Now on the intranet dashboard  
and updated quarterly!**

View compliments received by yourself, your team, or other Oakdale colleagues from the last quarter. To add direct client feedback, copy and paste it into the feedback log form on the intranet. If possible, it would be great if you could use exact quotes.

We also love seeing you recognise a colleague going above and beyond in their work. Going forwards, if you notice a colleague going that extra mile, we encourage you to tell them directly or perhaps share with their case manager/line manager/head of service - or of course nominate them for our "Above and Beyond" award.



**Click  
here to  
view**

## Virtual Backgrounds

We're excited to announce that our Oakdale virtual backgrounds are now available for use in all virtual meetings!

These backgrounds have been designed to create a professional and cohesive look across the team, whether you're on Google Meet or Zoom.

Not sure how to set yours up? Don't worry! A step-by-step guide has been shared to help you add the background to your platform of choice.

For Zoom users, the guide also includes instructions on mirroring your background so it appears correctly to others.

We kindly ask everyone to start using these backgrounds going forward to maintain consistency and professionalism.

If you need assistance, please reach out to the IT team.

**[Click here for your step-by-step user guide](#)**



## Practitioner Portal Launch!

We're thrilled to announce the launch of the new Practitioner Portal, which has been rolled out across three services: Neurodevelopmental (ND), Adoption Support and Trauma service, and Private Client work.

This innovation is a version of Acorn for our associate practitioners and has been designed to streamline workflows, enhance communication, and provide practitioners with the tools they need to deliver care more efficiently.

So far, 25 associate practitioners have been onboarded, and we're working closely with the services to ensure our remaining associates can start using the portal over the next few weeks.

The Practitioner Portal represents a significant step forward in our modernisation agenda which includes state of the art developments of our systems to further enhance the support we offer our teams with effective, user-friendly technology.

A huge shout out to Di and Bailey, who have worked tirelessly to bring this project to life. We're excited to see how the Practitioner Portal will continue to help us to be more efficient. Keep an eye out for more updates on this and other tech projects soon to be rolled out.

# EMPLOYEE SURVEY RESULTS

A big thank you to everyone who took part in this year's employee survey - **50 colleagues** shared their thoughts, and we really appreciate your time and insights. It's great to see some positive trends and successes coming through.

## Here's the good news:

- 83% of you feel aligned with Oakdale's core values.
- 72% continue to appreciate the company culture.
- 75% would recommend Oakdale as a workplace and are planning to stay at Oakdale in the coming year.

It's also encouraging to see high satisfaction in areas like role satisfaction, team collaboration, and training opportunities, which shows we're creating a supportive, growth-focused environment together.

Of course, there are always areas to improve, and your feedback gives us clear direction on where to focus next:

- Communication is something we know we need to work on - only 42.86% rated it as effective
- While feedback is generally seen as helpful, more regular group events could further improve team morale and contribute towards increased satisfaction
- There are also opportunities to improve wellbeing initiatives, career development, benefits, workload management, and cross-department collaboration.

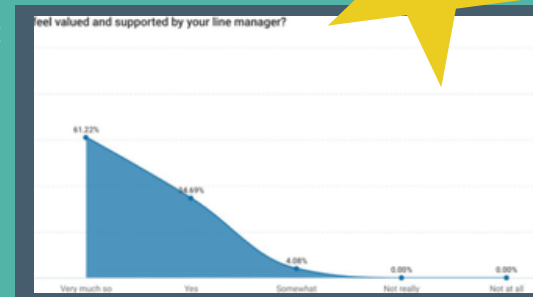
The Leadership Team is fully committed to reviewing your feedback and taking action. We'll keep you updated on progress and any new initiatives in future newsletters.

For more details, take a look at the full presentation [here](#). This survey has given us a good snapshot of both our successes and areas where we can grow.

You may notice that my job title (below) has changed, please look out for a piece in the next quarter's newsletter where I will outline future goals for the People Ops (previously HR) department.

Thank you again for your contribution, it's invaluable to hear directly from all our colleagues.

Shannon McGlinchey  
Head of People Operations



## A MESSAGE FROM OUR MENTAL HEALTH CHAMPIONS

Thank you to our Mental Health Champions for hosting two half-hour get-togethers on Monday 20th January for Brew Monday.

These sessions provided a great opportunity to connect, chat and take a well-deserved break.

We would also like to take this opportunity to remind you about our Colleague Wellbeing Initiative that we launched at the beginning of December. This policy can be found on the Intranet (link below). Your wellbeing matters to us and we are committed to supporting you.

Access the Colleague Wellbeing Initiative here ➡







# CPD Training Event: "Dealing with Disclosure"

On Friday 24th January, we held our quarterly CPD Training event, titled "Dealing with Disclosure: Domestic Abuse, the Law, and Next Steps."

The session was led by Georgia Griffiths, an experienced practitioner and Art Therapist with six years of work in domestic abuse services supporting adults and children in both one-to-one and group settings.

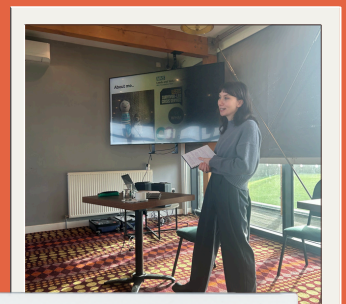
The training offered valuable insights into domestic abuse and coercive control, sparking important and illuminating discussions among attendees.

We asked Amelia Jepson, Higher Assistant Psychologist in the Adoption Support and Trauma Service, to reflect on the day for us and this is what she had to say,

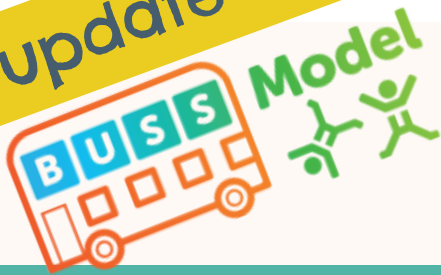
**"It was really interesting to learn about domestic abuse and coercive control so early in my career as I feel it's still something people avoid talking about. It was difficult to hear some of the realities and led to a lot of reflections on the system; how it is improving to support victims, but also considerations for what can still be done."**

Amelia's reflections underline the importance of open conversations about domestic abuse and the need to address the gaps that still exist in supporting victims. The session not only highlighted current progress but also inspired attendees to think critically about their roles in creating positive change.

Thank you to Georgia for delivering such a powerful and thought-provoking session.



An update from



# An overview of LEAPlets<sup>®</sup>

LEAPlets<sup>®</sup> is the BUSS<sup>®</sup> in Early Years groupwork programme, originally designed for preschool children and their foster carers or new adoptive parents, and later developed to be suitable for a range of children where there has been disruption to the earliest part of their lives.

As well as the friendships that can develop from groups, the group itself focuses on helping parents and carers to understand and support the development of their children's foundation sensorimotor systems, within those attuned, nurturing relationships. The activities used in the group are fun, simple and engaging and parents and carers are encouraged to continue the games between sessions.

## Our community of LEAPlets<sup>®</sup> Practitioners is growing!

Teams from Fostering, Adoption and Education around England, Wales and the Republic of Ireland (ROI) have trained and are supervised by BUSS<sup>®</sup> to deliver LEAPlets<sup>®</sup> in their local areas.

As shown on the map, a total of 39 teams completed the LEAPlets<sup>®</sup> Groupwork training across 2023-2024. Looking back at the delivery of groups in 2024, typically 14 groups were running each week across England, Wales and ROI. As more groups run, we're focusing on gathering more quantitative and qualitative data to build our evidence base and inform research into the efficacy of the group. We've got a big dream to have enough groups running for all children in foster and adoptive families to be able to attend a local group.



**39 teams trained!**



Hot off  
the press!



## Read our latest article published in the Adoption; Fostering Journal:

Lloyd, S., Jones, N., & Smith, D. (2024). Two service evaluations of LEAPlets – An early years programme for children in foster care and adoption, based on the BUSS<sup>®</sup> (Building Underdeveloped Sensorimotor Systems) Model. *Adoption & Fostering*, 48(3-4), 471-493.

[Click here to read](#)

**Congratulations**

to Sarah and the  
BUSS team

## ID Badges

We're pleased to announce that ID badges are being rolled out across Oakdale.

These badges are an important step in enhancing our professional image and ensuring a consistent identity for our team.

Rollout is happening gradually, and everyone will have their ID badge soon.

If you haven't received yours yet, don't worry - it's on its way!

Thank you for your patience as we complete this process. If you have any

questions, please contact  
[sam.lewis@oakdalecentre.org](mailto:sam.lewis@oakdalecentre.org)



## Social Pages

We'd love your help to keep Oakdale's social pages thriving!

Don't forget to like, comment, and share our posts to spread the word about the amazing work we're doing together.

### We want you to get involved!

If you have ideas for content or would like to highlight something special, email Sam at

[sam.lewis@oakdalecentre.org](mailto:sam.lewis@oakdalecentre.org).



## In the Spotlight

Name: Grace Windle

Role at Oakdale: Adoption & Trauma Service Coordinator

Describe yourself in 3 words: Happy, Caring and Friendly

What would your perfect weekend look like?

Spending quality time with my family and a nice long walk. Also a glass of wine with friends never goes amiss of course.

What do you enjoy most about working at Oakdale?

The people! I'm lucky enough to have built great relationships with both our clients and my colleagues. We always check in and look after one another and I have found this way of working is really unique to Oakdale.

If you could meet a well known person (dead or alive), who would they be and why?

Tom Hardy. For no other reason than he is a brilliant actor...honest!

What three things would you bring to a deserted island?

My daughter, my husband & a beach ball...hours of fun :)



**Many thanks for reading this newsletter. It would be so helpful to have your feedback for future editions. Please click [here](#) to complete a short questionnaire!**



### Pod-Picks

Our podcast pick of the quarter as picked by Yvonne Mountford

You Need To Hear This - Nedra Tawwab