



JUNE 2025

OAKDALE GROUP

Newsletter

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Facing the Cuts: Our Response to ASGSF Reductions

The last few months have been a very challenging time for the Adoption Support and Trauma Service within Oakdale.

Ten years ago the Government set up a specific fund for Therapeutic Support for Adoptive and Special Guardianship Families where the children have experienced developmental trauma and attachment difficulties as a result of neglectful or abusive early life experiences. The government has decided to make significant cuts to this funding which will have an enormous impact on families throughout the country as well as on Oakdale and other providers.

Oakdale has been delivering these services throughout the ten years of the fund's existence, is currently one of the largest providers in the country, and Oakdale and BUSS have an enviable reputation for the excellence of our services, the clinical outcomes we achieve and the client feedback.



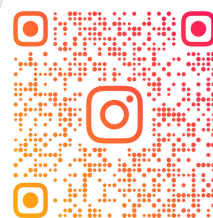
Click here to see a review of our services during the year 24/25

We marched to Downing Street

Various providers, families who have benefitted from this funding, and other advocates for adoptive families and kinship carers as well as some therapy training organisations contributed to a petition against these changes and held a peaceful protest march.

Three Oakdale and BUSS colleagues went to London to join the march on the 3rd May and hand in a petition to Downing Street with **over 13,000 signatures**.

[Click here](#) to visit the website for the protest against the cuts and for more information about the march.



POST SHARED ON 1 MAY
BY OAKDALE_GROUP

A visit from local MP, Tom Gordon

We invited our local MP, Tom Gordon (Harrogate and Knaresborough), to visit Oakdale as part of our protest against these cuts.

He joined a group of us, including Themis (one of our psychotherapists) and two adoptive parents that Themis has been working with, to discuss the funding cuts.

We were delighted to see how knowledgeable he was and that he was a keen advocate for reinstating proper funding support for these families.

He said he was very pleased to hear the views and perspectives of both the parents and Themis, and was looking forward to keeping in touch with Oakdale.

[Click here](#) to view the press release that followed his visit



Letters of appreciation from Tom Gordon MP

Following our recent meeting with MP Tom Gordon, we were delighted to each receive thoughtful letters from him, expressing his sincere appreciation. Describing his visit as a "really comprehensive and informative meeting," Mr. Gordon extended his thanks to the entire team and shared his enthusiasm about staying connected in the future. His kind words reflect the passion, professionalism, and positive impact of the Oakdale team—and we're proud to share them with you.



A WARM WELCOME

Oakdale is delighted to welcome the following people so far in 2025 and we look forward to working together with them

Senior Management Team

Lee Clewett -
Head of Clinical Governance

Kevin Bailey -
Director of Corporate Services

Neurodevelopment Team:

Cat Chadwick -
Clinical Lead - ADHD Medication Service

Paula Walker -
Neurodevelopment Clinical Lead

Emma Gill -
ADHD Nurse Prescriber

George Harness -
Apprentice Administrator

Eve Tempest -
Apprentice Administrator

Sally Eccles
Triage Support Worker

Hannah Murphy
Triage Support Worker

Zaynab Raza
Triage Support Worker

Heather Corbyn
ND Practitioner (SLT)

Rebecca Pearson
ND Practitioner (OT)

Rebecca Robertson - Bown
ND Practitioner (OT)

Gracie McArdle - Dalton
Apprentice Administrator

People Team:

Natasha Ogden -
People / HR Coordinator

Reception:

Holly Spann
Receptionist

TEAM UPDATES

We're pleased to share some recent internal role changes across Oakdale:

- Briony Osbourne has moved into the Neurodevelopmental Service as an Assistant Psychologist.
- Grace Russell is now the Harrogate Centre Manager.

Congratulations to Briony and Grace on their new roles! 🎉

Employee Benefits Brochure

We're proud to share our refreshed Employee Benefits Brochure, packed with the many ways we're investing in your wellbeing—both in and outside of work.

From enhanced sick pay to tech savings and our wellbeing initiative, there's something for everyone. Take a moment to explore what's available to you and make the most of your benefits.

👉 View the brochure [here](#)



Flexible Working Policy

We understand that flexibility can make a big difference to how we work and live. Our updated Flexible Working Policy outlines how requests can be made and considered, helping us to explore options that support both individual and service needs.

👉 [Read the policy here](#)



Now Available: Free On-Demand Webinar for World CBT Day

To celebrate this year's World CBT Day, Oakdale's own Yvonne Mountford has created a practical, engaging webinar packed with tools from CBT (Cognitive Behavioural Therapy) and ACT (Acceptance and Commitment Therapy).

Whether you're looking to manage stress, challenge unhelpful thoughts, or build emotional resilience – this session is full of strategies you can start using right away.

📺 The webinar is available in the Mental Health Champions section on the Intranet.

Take a moment for yourself, pop the kettle on, and enjoy at your own pace. You deserve it.



Vacancies

Use the QR code to check out current vacancies.

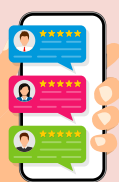


Don't forget to share them with your networks and on LinkedIn!

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.



Oakdale on the Airwaves

Having impressed as a guest on the Look North sofa back in April, Caroline Falconer returned to the BBC on Tuesday 3 June to talk about the rise in ADHD and autism diagnoses in adulthood. The segment explored why more adults are now being assessed and how a high-quality diagnosis can be life-changing.



Then on Friday 6 June Caroline joined BBC Radio Leeds with Rima Ahmed to discuss recognising and managing stress, particularly in young people during exam season. She shared practical tips on how to keep stress at a manageable level, including the importance of speaking to schools and pastoral care teams early. You can listen [here](#). Caroline's interview is at 07:12am.



GSAL Training

On 22 April, Caroline Falconer delivered her *Seeing Beyond the Behaviour* training at the Grammar School at Leeds. The session explored what sits beneath challenging behaviours in students, particularly those with emotional or psychological difficulties, and offered practical, relatable strategies for staff working in education.

Caroline shared ways that schools can better recognise behaviour as communication and respond in a way that builds trust, safety, and support. The session was designed to be reflective, realistic and useful and the feedback received shows it hit the mark:

- 💬 "Thank you, thoroughly enjoyed this."
- 💬 "Great session, learnt lots of new strategies. Thank you."
- 💬 "Pitched just right with lots of helpful examples."

This session was part of Oakdale's wider work in supporting emotional well-being in education, something which we are always glad to share with the people who shape young lives every day.



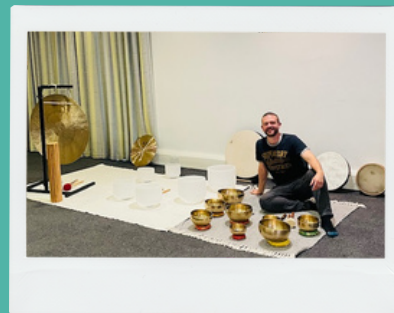
CPD Training Event: Exploring Contemporary Trauma Therapies

April's CPD session, led by Dr Rachel Swanick, offered a deep dive into modern approaches to trauma therapy covering topics such as identity, attunement, and Polyvagal Theory. Drawing on insights from Europe's largest trauma conference, the session also included a hands-on, arts-based workshop that gave attendees the chance to reflect, learn, and grow in their practice.

ND Away Day

Yesterday, our ND Service team came together for the annual Away Day. The morning sessions focused on service updates, strategy, and sharing feedback from the recent staff engagement survey, offering space for open conversation, collective reflection, and clear direction for the year ahead.

After lunch, staff had the chance to take part in well-being activities, including a calming yoga session, a restorative sound bath experience, or a quiet space for reflection and reading. It was a fantastic opportunity to pause, connect with colleagues, and re-energise as we continue to grow and evolve the service together.



Oakdale Summer Socials Are Back

We're thrilled to announce the return of our Oakdale Summer Socials for 2025! It's the perfect chance to unwind, catch up, and connect outside of work.

Here are the dates to pop in your diary:

- 📍 Harrogate – Wednesday 2nd July
- 📍 Horsforth – Friday 11th July
- 📍 Halifax – Friday 11th July

Each centre will host a relaxed get-together, feel free to join whichever one(s) suit you best!

With community as this year's Mental Health Awareness Week theme, there's no better time to come together and celebrate our amazing team.

Full details will be landing in your inboxes and around each centre soon!

ABOVE AND BEYOND AWARDS WINNERS ANNOUNCED

We're delighted to announce the winners of our Above and Beyond Awards!

With an incredible 18 nominations submitted, we had a truly strong field to choose from. Each one recognised a colleague who consistently goes the extra mile. Every nominee was a worthy contender, and we want to thank everyone who took the time to celebrate their peers.

The winners are:

Emma Lydon – Neurodevelopment Operational Lead

Bailey Wilson – IT Manager

Megan Pollard – BUSS Administrator

Here's what some of their colleagues had to say:

💬 "Emma's meticulous attention to detail ensures that every meeting is well-organised and runs smoothly, while her positive attitude, lighthearted humour, and inclusive approach make these sessions something our team looks forward to."

💬 "Bailey is one of the most hard working people I've ever met."

💬 "Megan contributes hugely to making the service run seamlessly."

These three colleagues embody Oakdale's values, being knowledgeable, collaborative, principled, inclusive, effective, flexible, and innovative. Their dedication and impact are felt not just by their teams but across the wider organisation.

Congratulations to Emma, Bailey, and Megan!

Your prizes will be with you shortly and thank you again to everyone who made a nomination.

If you'd like to nominate a colleague for an 'Above and Beyond Award' please use [this form](#)



Join the Newsletter Editorial Team

We're looking for enthusiastic team members to help create and shape our newsletter content. If you're interested in contributing ideas or have a knack for writing, we'd love to hear from you. Email: comms@oakdalecentre.org to learn more!



In the Spotlight

Name: Grace Russell

Role at Oakdale: Centre Manager

Describe yourself in 3 words:

Bubbly, reliable and entertaining

What would your perfect weekend look like?

My perfect day? It kicks off with a well-earned lie-in, followed by a scenic walk with a coffee in hand. Then it's time for a cosy pub lunch, and the day winds down with video games and TV on the sofa with my partner.

What do you enjoy most about working at Oakdale?

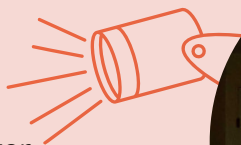
My colleagues. They're a genuinely brilliant bunch, each bringing their own unique mix of fun, warmth, and fascinating qualities. It's a joy to work alongside them.

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

Brennan Lee Mulligan — an exceptional Dungeons & Dragons Dungeon Master and comedian. He's one of the funniest and most intelligent people out there, and just an hour in his company would be an unforgettable mix of insight, wit, and tabletop storytelling brilliance.

What three things would you bring to a deserted island?

My PS5, my partner, and a high-factor SPF because sunburn and sand don't mix, and nobody likes crispy skin.



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.



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 Harriet Sheppard

ADHD Chatter

