

1244493

Registered provider: Stepping Stones Childrens Homes Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is operated by a private organisation and is registered to provide care for up to four children who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

At the time of the inspection, three children were living at the home. The inspector spoke with all three children during the inspection.

The manager registered with Ofsted in November 2022.

Inspection dates: 20 and 21 August 2025

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: 2 July 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
02/07/2024	Full	Good
07/02/2024	Full	Good
02/11/2022	Full	Good
10/03/2022	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the last inspection, six children have had planned moves out of the home. This included moves to semi-independence and returning home to their families. One child moved out as the manager felt they could not meet their needs. However, the manager supported the child away from the home with staff who knew them well. This enabled a well-planned move to the child's new home. When children leave the home, they maintain contact with the manager and staff. This reflects strong and positive relationships.

The three children currently living at the home are happy. One child said, 'It's amazing how staff include you. Ten out of ten. It's like a dream living here.'

Not all children attend school. One child has only recently moved in, and the manager is working with other professionals to secure an education plan for the child. One child is not currently able to attend school. The manager has ensured good routines, staff support and a tutor. This has enabled the child to sit their mock examinations, which is important preparation. Another child attends school full time. They enjoy this and are doing well.

Staff enable children to see their families, in line with their plans and their wishes. In some cases, children benefit from increased time with their families or seeing family members who they have not met for some time.

Staff support children's health needs. Children who struggled to attend health appointments now attend. The manager ensures that referrals are made to specialist services. The manager advocates well to ensure that children receive the services they need.

Children's views, wishes and feelings are important to the manager and the staff. Children are aware of this, which encourages effective communication. Children are involved in their reviews. Their views are actively sought on all aspects of the care. This ensures that the children remain at the centre of their care planning.

The home is a terraced house with an enclosed garden. The decor is tired and needs attention. However, there are clear plans in place for refurbishment in the coming weeks.

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

Strong multi-agency work and positive staff relationships with the children underpin how well the children are helped and protected. The manager has formed strong relationships with professionals and is confident to raise and escalate any concerns. All the children said that they liked the staff and could speak to them if they had any worries.

Safeguarding incidents with the children living in the home are rare. Staff talk with children after any incidents with the aim of finding out the reasons and offering their support. One parent said, 'It's a fresh start every day. Nothing is held against them. They accept mistakes and speak to them in a lovely manner.'

Positive behaviour is promoted. Staff talk to children about making positive choices, and the children are praised and rewarded when they have done well. Staff provide consistent rules and boundaries to the children. One parent said, 'They set realistic targets that have allowed them to achieve. It is lovely to see a smile on their face.'

Negative consequences are not routinely used. When negative consequences are used, the child is involved in the decision. This supports children to accept responsibility with an improved effectiveness.

There has been a significant decrease in one child going missing from the home and not returning. This is a positive achievement. However, staff are not completely clear on the current guidelines regarding the time that children have in the community alone.

An allegation against a staff member had been appropriately managed and shared with the relevant professionals. The child was kept up to date with the progress and outcome of the investigation.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is suitably qualified and experienced. The responsible individual, deputy manager and team leader provide additional managerial support.

The manager ensures that staff understand the ethos of the home. The manager is a positive role model and professionally develops staff through training sessions and learning opportunities. Staff receive regular supervision sessions and say that these are helpful. The staff feel listened to and professionally supported.

The manager has a good understanding of the home's strengths and areas for development and has a plan for further improvements over the coming months. Feedback from professionals and families is positive.

The independent visitor's assessment of the home also provides a valuable oversight of the home's operations. The manager uses these visits to learn and identify areas for improvement.

The staff team has been stable, which provides consistency for the children. The manager does not use agency staff. Thorough recruitment processes reduce the risk of unsuitable people working with the children.

There have been some incidents that have not been notified to Ofsted or have been delayed. This impacts the regulator's oversight of the management of safeguarding issues and subsequent actions.

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

Statutory requirement

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 must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(e))	3 October 2025

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that all staff are aware of information about children's independent time out of the home and when staff may need to initiate the child's missing-from-home protocol. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 45, paragraph 9.28)

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: 1244493

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Stepping Stones Childrens Homes Limited

Registered provider address: Suite 6, Earl Mill Business Centre, Dowry Street,
Oldham OL8 2PF

Responsible individual: Claire Fitten

Registered manager: Dil Khan

Inspector

Kerri Lynch, Social Care Inspector

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