

1244493

Registered provider: Stepping Stones Children's Homes Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is a private children's home registered for up to four children who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since February 2018.

Inspection dates: 27 to 28 November 2019

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 31 July 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
31/07/2018	Full	Good
20/02/2018	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
19/07/2017	Full	Good

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, 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))	10/01/2020

Recommendations

- Children should be in full-time education while they are of compulsory school age, unless their personal education plan contained within the care plan or other relevant plan states otherwise. The home must aim to support full-time attendance at school unless the child's relevant plan indicates this is not in their best interests. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 28, paragraph 5.14)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Young people benefit from good, individualised care and support from a hard-working staff team. Most young people enjoy a stable placement and are making steady progress from their initial starting points. A young person said, 'I really like being here, the staff are supportive, and I can talk to staff when I am upset.' A parent commented, 'He has come on leaps and bounds, a lot more calmer and seems a lot happier.'

Young people develop positive relationships with staff, who invest time in them and listen to them. Staff talk to young people about those things that are important to them. Regular house meetings ensure that the young people can contribute their views on the day-to-day running of the home.

All young people are engaged in some form of education, but their experiences are mixed. Staff work well with educational professionals to support young people's attendance and participation. However, one young person is still not accessing full-time education, and this has the potential to impact on their future life chances.

Staff ensure that young people have access to the health services they need, such as the child and adolescent mental health services and the looked after children's nurse. This has led to improvements in young people's general health. For example, a young person has successfully overcome their fear of needles.

At the time of the last inspection, the home had very recently commissioned the services of a clinical psychologist. Staff have benefited from regular consultations and training with the clinician. This has helped staff to develop the skills they need in order to support young people's emotional well-being effectively.

All young people have the opportunity to develop practical skills that will assist them when they move on to independent living. Consequently, one young person has successfully moved on to semi-independent living.

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

Young people's risks are clearly identified from their initial starting points and effective strategies are in place to protect them from harm. A young person spoken to confirmed that they feel safe and are confident that any concerns will be immediately addressed. They also said that they get on well with their peers.

Staff take appropriate action to promote the safety of young people who go missing. That said, the incidents of young people going missing from the home are relatively low.

Positive behaviour management strategies reduce the level of challenging behaviour effectively. Restraint is used infrequently and only to prevent harm to the young person or others. Staff help young people to learn self-control and find more appropriate ways of expressing themselves. As a result, incidents of challenging behaviour have considerably reduced for young people coming to live at the home.

At the last inspection, a recommendation was made to improve the home's location risk assessment. The risk assessment now includes the actions staff should take to minimise the risk of the motorway bridge.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is very well managed by an experienced and suitably qualified manager. He has created a culture of high aspiration and positivity that is improving the lives of young people. A member of staff spoke about the manager's strong leadership and how she had learned so much from him.

Young people are cared for by a highly motivated staff team that is well supported. The team works collaboratively to bring consistency and stability to young people's lives. Staff receive regular supervision and training that supports them to promote positive outcomes for young people.

Staff have built effective working relationships with partner agencies. This ensures that young people receive the right help and support to meet their individual needs. Placing social workers spoke highly of the home.

The manager has a good understanding of the home's strengths and areas for development. The manager takes into account the independent person's monthly visits to help maintain the quality of care. Since the last inspection, the manager has met the previous requirements and recommendations.

The home uses closed-circuit television (CCTV) to monitor the outside of the home, as well as the staff office and entrance hall. The reason for its use is to protect against threats to the safety of young people, staff and visitors, to safeguard staff against allegations, and to protect against theft from the home or break-ins. However, it is not acceptable to operate the CCTV on a 'just in case' basis. The manager should undertake a review to ensure that its use remains justified.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and 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 whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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 Children's Homes Ltd

Responsible individual: Ahtesham-UI Haque

Registered manager: Ali Sajjad

Inspector

Michelle Bacon: social care inspector

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