

1270297

Registered provider: Next Stage 4Life Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately run children's home provides care for two children who have social and emotional difficulties.

The registered manager has been in post since June 2022.

Inspection dates: 29 and 30 October 2024

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
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The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: 7 June 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
07/06/2023	Full	Good
03/05/2022	Full	Good
11/05/2021	Full	Good
05/11/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Since the last inspection, one child has left the home and one child has moved in. At the time of inspection, there were two children living in the home. Children benefit from stability in the home and generally live there for long periods of time.

Children make remarkable progress with their health and development, particularly with their mental health and social difficulties. Research is used to inform and change practice for emerging needs. The social difficulties and emotional health of both children have improved considerably since living in this home. Children's individual needs are continually assessed, and individual plans are reviewed with the assistance of the in-house therapist.

Relationships between staff and children are excellent. The manager and her team are aspirational for the children and collaborate with professionals, children and their families to ensure that all their needs are addressed. Discussions with children and observations of practice during the inspection showed that children who have concerns are comfortable speaking with the staff.

Both children attend education. Despite educational challenges, staff do everything they can to support educational attendance and attainment. Managers professionally challenge both the virtual school head and teachers to ensure the best possible outcomes for the children. Individual barriers to learning are understood by staff, and they are addressed swiftly to help children to achieve their full potential. Managers have on occasion purchased specialist equipment for individual children.

Children are supported to have relationships with people who are important to them. Their individual identities are recognised and embraced by the staff team. Managers and staff look for creative ways in which they can promote inclusivity and the feeling of belonging. One child has recently been supported on a trip abroad to meet family members. Staff actively research traditions and cultures and share information with children to support their learning.

Children's moves into the home are exceptionally well planned and include carefully managed introductions to other children and staff. Children move out of the home in a planned way with high levels of care and support. The manager works alongside professionals to ensure that the right support is in place for when the child moves on. One child who recently left is still in contact with the home and calls regularly to speak to the staff. The manager is supportive of children who move on from the home, remaining in contact for advice, help and support to help them to lead healthy lives into adulthood.

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

During the inspection, children said that they feel safe and are well cared for. Managers and staff understand their individual risks and vulnerabilities well. Staff respond appropriately and swiftly to emerging concerns, and managers have a clear oversight of safeguarding incidents. There is an up-to-date, comprehensive risk management plan that addresses each child's vulnerability and is clear and directive for staff.

Partnership and communication with professionals are exceptional. Managers and staff professionally challenge professionals to improve outcomes for children in relation to care planning, health and education. A social worker said of the managers that they 'often go above and beyond to improve the outcomes for children'.

Children benefit from building positive relationships with the staff team. Staff know the children extremely well, and children rarely go missing from home. Children who have gone missing from home experience a well-coordinated response, and staff follow the missing-from-care protocols effectively. Incidents are recorded accurately and in a timely fashion.

Children are treated with dignity and respect and know how to make a complaint and voice their opinions. Children are confident and comfortable in expressing their views about the staff and their home, and they continue to develop positive relationships. During the inspection, warm and humorous interactions between staff and children were seen.

The response to safeguarding incidents is excellent, with the primary concern always being about the safety and well-being of the children. Leaders and managers undertake detailed reviews and debriefs to understand any underlying causes and to identify any opportunities for learning and development for the staff.

Staff are aware of changes in children's behaviour and mood because they know them so well. Children have not been restrained. Staff help children to understand and manage their feelings and behaviours. Consequences are barely used, and when they are, they are balanced and appropriate. Children's successes are celebrated and rewarded by the staff team.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The manager and deputy manager have high expectations of staff and high aspirations for children. The manager has a strong working relationship with her deputy and excellent relationships with the staff team. As a management team, they are ambitious, enthusiastic and experienced, and they ensure that the home is managed efficiently and effectively.

Since the last inspection, the manager has transformed practice in the home. She challenges staff and encourages practice that allows children to take managed risks, supporting learning and development and creating a safe space for the children to make mistakes and learn from them. Managers consistently monitor the quality of care provided and have established effective systems to maintain oversight of the home, allowing them to identify strengths and weaknesses. They have a hands-on approach and lead staff by example to best support children.

Managers work diligently with professionals to support children to make substantial progress, concentrating on achieving positive outcomes for them. Feedback from both the staff team and external professionals has been overwhelmingly positive, particularly regarding advocacy for the children.

Staff have regular supervision with managers who are trained in delivering supervision. Supervision is practice related and staff receive inspiring yet adaptable support to deliver the highest quality of care to the children. Staff also participate in regular group supervision and team meetings, regularly working with the in-house therapist for research-informed training sessions to continually develop new ways of working.

An independent person visits the home monthly, and although they rarely make recommendations for improvements, when they do, the manager responds swiftly. The manager completes reviews of the care provided in the home, and these reviews are timely, evaluative and show the extensive progress that the children have made. The manager creates a clear and detailed action plan from these reviews to ensure that there is consistency in practice in the home.

No requirements or recommendations were raised at this inspection.

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: 1270297

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Next Stage 4Life Limited

Registered provider address: Regency House, 45-53 Chorley New Road, Bolton
BL1 4QR

Responsible individual: Richard Guy

Registered manager: Sandra Wild

Inspector

Nicola Jeffery, Social Care Inspector

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