

2525774

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 home is owned by a private company. It provides care for up to four children who may have social and emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in March 2024.

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 March 2024

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

Date of last inspection: 1 February 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
01/02/2023	Full	Good
16/03/2022	Full	Good
24/09/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children enjoy living at the home and benefit from warm and secure relationships with staff. Staff provide children with highly individualised, well-planned care that promotes their needs effectively. A child said, 'I really like it here. Everyone's really nice.' A parent said, 'They cater for his needs and support him anyway they can.'

A stable staff team provides children with consistent and reliable care. This ensures that children have stability in their lives. Staff promote family time so that children sustain their important relationships with the people that matter most to them. A child said, 'They helped me to have contact with my family. I got to stay overnight which was really nice.'

Staff ensure that children attend their health appointments and encourage them to lead a healthy lifestyle. They are positive role models for children. As a result, children benefit from adults that they can talk to and learn from. Staff provide children with carefully planned support that helps children make positive decisions.

Staff work closely with the providers of children's education to support their learning and educational progress. However, one child's care plan and personal education plan are not up to date. The manager has requested these documents from the placing authority. A teacher reported, 'I have to say that staff have been amazing in working with school.'

Staff provide a friendly, warm and caring environment for children. They provide children with effective support that encourages their sense of belonging. Staff provide positive activities for children to encourage their interests and hobbies.

Staff maintain highly effective partnerships with social workers to ensure that children benefit from the best possible support. A social worker said, 'Staff have a positive relationship between them, which helps them work together to provide the best care possible.'

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

Children benefit from staff who are resilient and creative when presented with any challenge. Staff provide support that helps children work through their difficulties. As a result, children learn to approach life's challenges with optimism. They develop improved resilience to bounce back from any setbacks in their lives. A social worker said, 'They work with me before any presenting difficulties.'

The actions of staff promote the safety of children. Staff manage behaviours safely and follow guidance in children's risk management plans effectively. In the event of children going missing from the home, staff actively search for them and work closely with the police to secure children's safe return. Leaders and managers hold

accountable any professionals who fail to act swiftly to protect children. Staff take their safeguarding roles and responsibilities seriously.

Children are making positive choices. There has been a decrease in incidents at the home. Staff are skilled in managing conflict and take action to prevent incidents from escalating. There have been no restraints since the last inspection.

Significant incidents relating to the safety of children are reported to the appropriate authorities. This ensures that there is a well-planned and co-ordinated response from professionals. Staff work closely with the police and other safeguarding agencies to establish effective partnerships to secure the safety of children.

Children know how to make a complaint and have good relationships with leaders and managers to raise concerns. The opinions of children are actively sought, and this creates an environment where children feel engaged and heard. A child said, 'The people here are well better than my last home. This home is just way better.'

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

Following the last inspection, the former manager of the home was promoted to the role of the responsible individual. The deputy manager was promoted to the manager's post. A seamless transition occurred to ensure that these changes did not affect the children who still benefit from strong and excellent relationships with both individuals.

Staff aspire to make a real difference to the lives of children and are dedicated and committed. A social worker said, 'Staff have one goal which they all share. The goal is to give the young people the best possible opportunities to succeed in life.'

A team of consistent staff are employed to care for children safely. Leaders and managers lead staff, by example, and direct their efforts and enthusiasm effectively to supporting children to make progress. The manager has high expectations of staff and creates a culture of positivity that includes high ambition for all children.

The manager ensures that staff benefit from regular practice related supervision and holds child focused team meetings with them. This support staff to perform their duties to the best of their abilities. Staff work well together as a team and are consistently supportive of each other. A new staff member said, 'Staff are polite and welcoming. There are great relationships between staff and young people.'

Staff benefit from high quality training that enables them to have the right knowledge and skills to meet the specific needs of children. Staff are empowered by leaders and managers to undertake further qualifications and training. This enables staff to consistently deliver a high-quality service for children.

Leaders and managers are strong and effective advocates for children. They establish strong partnerships with parents and professionals to ensure that children

receive the best possible help and all-round support. Leaders and managers are influential in shaping and improving the lives of children.

Leaders and managers take account of the views of children, staff, parents and professionals. They make excellent use of the monitoring activities to improve practice and ensure continuing improvement.

Staff provide children with a cosy, comfortable and homely living environment. Health and safety matters are addressed effectively to promote a safe environment for children. Leaders and managers have addressed the requirements and recommendations from the last inspection.

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

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that care plans and personal education plans contain sufficient information about children that is current and relevant and that helps staff to meet their specific needs. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 56, paragraph 11.2)

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: 2525774

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Stepping Stones Children's Homes Limited

Registered provider address: 34 Church Street, Hyde SK14 1JJ

Responsible individual: Douglas Loney

Registered manager: Samantha Lewis

Inspector

Anthony Kyem, Social Care Inspector

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