

2588593

Stepping Stones Care Ltd

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately owned home registered with Ofsted on 4 May 2020. The home's statement of purpose states that it provides care and accommodation for up to four children who may be experiencing social and emotional difficulties.

The current manager registered with Ofsted on 3 February 2021.

At the time of the monitoring visit, four children lived at this home.

Inspection date: 24 February 2021

Information about this visit:

The visit was conducted at the time of the national lockdown and was entirely off site. The inspector had telephone conversations with three children, a relative of the other child, the registered manager and two staff members. The inspector corresponded with the social workers for two children. The inspector sampled some records, such as individual health plans, individual risk assessments, weekly menus, medication records and staff training.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

This monitoring visit

The visit focused on the quality of the support that children receive in relation to their health. Staff practices relating to children's behaviours and safety were also considered.

The home has managed COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic-related restrictions very well. Staff have implemented comprehensive procedures to minimise any potential impact of the pandemic on children's physical and mental health. Children were able

to continue having safe contact with their families with additional precautions in place.

Children have positive experiences, and these promote their sense of well-being. All children spoken to said that they felt well and were happy to be living at this home. They recently participated in a talent show and were preparing for a forthcoming quiz.

Staff are skilled at building positive relationships with children. All children spoken to said that the staff are nice. One child said that the staff were the best thing about this home. Another child said that the staff are funny and added that they have good times going for walks and just being together.

Children are encouraged to pursue healthy lifestyles. Staff ensure that the menus are healthy and include children's favourite food. Each child has their individual healthy snack box. One child said that eating more healthy food was the best thing that he has achieved in the recent months.

Staff enable children to raise and explore any issues, in an open and supportive atmosphere. One child said that the staff helped her a lot when she was experiencing mental health difficulties. This child said that she has got all the support she needs to feel better. Another child, who suffers with anxieties, said that staff always help him to feel more relaxed when he starts panicking. Another child described the home as a calm place.

The positive environment enables children to communicate more constructively. This leads to children having better self-awareness and regulation of emotions and behaviours. The reduction of incidents is an indication of children's better psychological health.

Both social workers provided positive feedback about the standard of care that children received. One social worker highlighted the team's caring, empathic and tolerant approach to children as the main strength of the home. The other social worker talked about the home's positive atmosphere, energy and the 'vibe', and how these have helped the child to settle quickly at this home.

The children said that they felt safe in the home and in the area. Staff work effectively with social workers and partner agencies to make sure that children have the support they need to keep safe and healthy. An example of this is that some children have regular contact with mental health services. Both social workers reported that the communication with the home is good.

The home's records do not always give justice to the staff's effective direct work with children. The weaknesses in record-keeping risk the inconsistency of support provided. The areas for improvement relate to health care plans, medication and assessment of the risks of child criminal exploitation (CCE).

The individual health plans are not always detailed and clear. For example, one child's health plan and her medication record provided inconsistent information about the allergies and medication. It is of an additional concern that not all staff who administer medication have the required training to carry out this task.

The assessment of the risk to a child of becoming involved in CCE is poor. The level of the CCE risk is not included in the risk-assessment form that staff use and is, therefore, not assessed. The CCE-related information is limited and fragmented.

Recent inspection history

Not previously inspected

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 health and well-being standard requires the registered person to ensure— that staff help each child to— achieve the health and well-being outcomes that are recorded in the child's relevant plans; understand the child's health and well-being needs and the options that are available in relation to the child's health and well-being, in a way that is appropriate to the child's age and understanding. (Regulation 10 (2)(a)(i)(ii)) Specifically, the registered person must ensure that children's individual health care plans are detailed, clear and accurate; and that they evidence the child's own contribution to these plans.	1 June 2021
The protection of children standard requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child; help each child to understand how to keep safe; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm. (Regulation 12 (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii))	1 May 2021

Specifically, the registered person must ensure that children's individual risk assessments include the assessment of the risk of them being criminally exploited. When the risk is identified, comprehensive protective measures must be recorded and implemented.	
The registered person must make arrangements for the handling, recording, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of medicines received into the children's home. (Regulation 23 (1)) Specifically, the registered person must ensure that accurate medication records are kept and that all staff who deal with medication receive appropriate training and have the skills necessary for carrying out this task effectively.	1 May 2021

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 2588593

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Stepping Stones Care Ltd

Registered provider address: Office 10, Apex House, Calthorpe Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham B15 1TR

Responsible individual: Paul Carr

Registered manager: Alison Macaulay

Inspector

Seka Graovac, Social Care Inspector

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