

2600759

Registered provider: Next Stage 4Life Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home was registered with Ofsted in 2020 and is run by a private company. It offers care for up to 2 children who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

At the time of the inspection, no children were living at the home.

The manager registered with Ofsted in April 2022. He also manages another setting.

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 May 2026

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: 8 July 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
08/07/2025	Full	Good
02/07/2024	Full	Good
20/07/2023	Full	Good
04/07/2022	Full	Good

Summary of findings

There are no children currently living at the home. Two children have left the home in the past month. One child left in a planned move to return to their family. Staff take this child to school for part of the week and provide practical help to parents. Staff offer support and remain in contact with carers when children have left the home.

Staff are skilled in forming trusting relationships with children and the important people in children's lives. These relationships often endure after children have moved on to alternative homes.

The registered manager is considering referrals for children moving into the home. He is assessing whether staff can meet individual children's needs. Staff are consulted in decision-making about children moving into the home. This means that staff are confident that they can support children and keep them safe.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The home is undergoing some repairs and renovations while it is unoccupied. There are new doors and flooring throughout the building. The bedrooms have been redecorated, ready for children to move into. The home is spacious and welcoming.

Staff have had trusting relationships with children. Staff are skilled in working with children who find it hard to trust adults and who have had multiple carers in the past. Children's views are recorded in all the documents written about them. Children are open about their experiences and feel safe to disclose any worries they may have.

A therapist offers counselling sessions for children when they move into the home. Alternatively, staff make referrals to specialist mental health services when they are needed. One child who has left the home continues to receive counselling support from the therapist. Staff contact the therapy team for individual consultations and attendance at team meetings to discuss ways of working with children. As a result, children benefit from staff who are empathetic and trauma informed.

Leaders and managers plan a range of positive activities for children and encourage individual interests. Staff encourage children to spend less time unoccupied in the community or playing video games in their bedrooms. Staff recognise the importance of diverting children's attention away from negative influences from peers and preventing social isolation.

Children make progress from their starting points during their time at the home. For example, one child consistently attended school, and another began voluntary work.

Staff understand that children often have negative experiences of education that prevent their school attendance. Staff talk to children about tolerance and compromise. This has helped children to get along with fellow students and make friends. Staff advocate for children in meetings about their education attainment and attendance.

Staff care about what happens to children. Staff keep in touch with children and their carers when children have left the home. Children are given photo albums as mementos of their time. One child had a leaving party and wrote a thank-you speech to individual staff. The child's mother said that staff made a real difference to the child's life. The child was helped to return to their family home.

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

Staff manage children's behaviour appropriately. They give children the time and space to become calm. Following incidents, staff talk to children about their feelings and how they could act differently in the future. Leaders and managers offer staff opportunities to reflect on their practice. Leaders and managers call the police on rare occasions when there is a risk of harm to anyone in the home. Police have visited to inform children of the possible consequences of their actions. This helps to prevent children from being criminalised unnecessarily.

Leaders and managers ensure that staff complete regular safeguarding training. Staff access additional resources on any emerging risks to children. Staff are skilled in managing children's complex needs and vulnerabilities in the community.

Leaders and managers accept children into the home who may be at high risk of exploitation. Staff recognise the signs of criminal exploitation in children. Staff develop trusting relationships so that children are open about any worries they may have when they go out.

Leaders and managers have excellent communication with social workers and the police. This helps to keep children safe.

Children rarely make complaints. Leaders and managers listen to children and take their concerns very seriously. When an allegation was made about a member of staff, the correct procedures were followed. During the investigation, the child and the staff member were kept informed of the process. Leaders and managers prioritise children's safety.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is run by an experienced and skilled manager who cares about children. He is child-centred and a role model for staff. Staff say he is approachable and supportive. The manager is involved in children's lives, listening to their views and having important conversations with them about their plans.

Staff have regular supervision from leaders and managers. Staff share good practice and reflect on how they meet children's needs. Monthly team meetings and management discussions provide further opportunities for reflection and oversight. Leaders and managers promote a culture where respectful challenge is accepted.

The registered manager meets with staff to identify any learning needs when a child leaves the home. This identifies good practice and any improvements that are required. At one meeting, staff reflected on the plan for a child who recently entered the care system. There was little information available about the child's risks when they moved in. The manager accepts the need to more fully explore children's history when there is limited information available. This review of referrals is not yet demonstrated.

The registered manager completes a monthly check of records, including children's plans, staff files and health and safety in the home. This contributes to a 6-monthly report that describes the service. The manager does not include any feedback from children, staff, or partner agencies. This is a missed opportunity to evaluate the quality of the care provided and use the views of others to improve the home.

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, 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 complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ("a quality-of-care review") at least once every 6 months. In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing, and evaluating— the quality of care provided for children; the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities, and the quality of care they receive in it; and any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children. The system referred to in paragraph (2) must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff. (Regulation 45 (1) (2)(a)(b)(c) (5))	31 May 2026

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that they have an understanding of children's histories to assess the impact on children currently living in the home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 38, paragraph 8.3)

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: 2600759

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Next Stage 4Life Ltd

Registered provider address: 146 Bolton Road, Atherton, Manchester M46 9LF

Responsible individual: Jay Morgan

Registered manager: Andrew Funnell

Inspector

Sue Garner, Social Care Inspector

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