

2629230

Registered provider: Stepping Stones Care (Midlands 1) 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 two children who experience social and emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in October 2023.

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 December 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: 20 June 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
20/06/2023	Full	Good
26/04/2023	Full	Inadequate
26/05/2022	Full	Good
11/01/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Two children were living in the home at the time of the inspection. One child has moved out of the home since the last inspection, and one has moved in. The child who left the home was well supported by staff to understand their care plan, which was to move to live with foster carers. There was a detailed, multi-agency and child-focused plan to support the child, and staff worked hard to ensure that this move was a positive experience.

The home environment is well maintained and feels like a family home. There are many personal touches that help children to feel comfortable and at ease in their surroundings. Children's bedrooms are personalised and reflect their personalities.

The manager and the staff know the children well and actively promote their welfare. Staff build warm and trusting relationships with the children, and as a result, the children have been able to develop a sense of belonging.

Children receive good-quality care and nurture from a committed staff team. Children's emotional and mental health is supported by a multi-disciplinary team. Staff encourage children to attend and engage in regular therapy. As a result of this support, children's emotional and mental health steadily improves from their starting points.

Staff prioritise children's education. When children are not in regular education, they are encouraged to re-engage in it. Any barriers to this are professionally challenged by the manager. All children have an educational provision and improved attendance. Effective support for children's education is helping them make good progress in this area.

Staff support children to gain independence skills. This includes children cooking healthy meals and spending time in the community when safe to do so. This provides children with the skills that they need for adulthood.

The children's relationships with family and friends are promoted. Staff support one of the children to spend regular time with their family. This time has increased as a result of the positive support provided by staff. They have built positive working relationships with family members, one of whom described the home as being 'the best one [name of child] has ever been to'.

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

Children's risk assessments and safety plans are regularly updated, and they are individualised to each child's presenting risks. Staff have a good understanding of risks and manage these well. For one child, this has helped to significantly reduce risk factors, and their self-harming has been reduced.

Staff increasingly understand the triggers to children's behaviours. This understanding helps staff de-escalate situations before they reach crisis point. The use of physical intervention is low and has only been used to immediately safeguard a child. Staff are adept at using empathy and nurture to help children articulate their emotions better, and as a result, incidents have been reduced.

Children rarely go missing from home, with only one incident since the last inspection. On this occasion staff took appropriate steps to locate the child and support them to return safely. The child was given the opportunity to speak to an independent person when they returned.

Staff ensure that children benefit from a safe living environment. All health and safety checks have been carried out. When an issue was recently identified in relation to the home environment by the home's independent visitor, the manager addressed this immediately. This ensures that the home is safe for the children.

Recruitment practice is safe. The manager ensures that all necessary checks are completed before staff start work at the home. This helps to ensure that adults working with the child are safe to do so.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The manager has high expectations of staff and consistently high aspirations for all of the children. She is a visible presence in the home and is accessible to children and staff. Spending lots of time with children means she knows them very well. The manager is ambitious, enthusiastic and creative, and she manages the home efficiently and effectively. She leads by example and ensures that the staff have a clear sense of purpose and direction.

The manager has been instrumental in embedding a child-centred culture in the home. Children receive regular praise and positive affirmation. This is strengthening children's emotional well-being and helping them to develop a positive view of themselves.

The manager has undertaken training in a new model of care and is embedding this with the staff team. She is working with the staff in small group sessions to support them in feeling confident in understanding the principles of working with children in line with this model. This is helping to give staff a more in-depth understanding of children's needs.

Regular team meetings include detailed discussion about children's needs and staff dynamics. This increases consistency of practice among the staff and enables them to work cohesively to ensure positive outcomes for children. Alongside this, staff receive regular, effective supervision. This supports them to reflect on their practice and identify any areas for development.

The care provided to children is scrutinised effectively. The manager consults with the children's families, social workers and independent reviewing officers to review how they feel about the service and how the needs of children are being met. The manager makes

effective use of the home's internal and external monitoring activities to understand the strengths and weaknesses of the home. She recently made changes to weekly monitoring systems to ensure that they are more user-friendly. As a result, the manager is able to effectively address any shortfalls identified.

The home has a stable, consistent team of staff who communicate with each other very effectively. Staff trust the manager and feel secure in their role. This helps ensure they provide consistently good levels of care to children. Children know the staff who are caring for them extremely well and are aware of who is going to be there for them all of the time. The stable staffing arrangements help ensure that children's care is consistent and help children feel safe and secure.

There are no requirements or recommendations.

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: 2629230

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Stepping Stones Care (Midlands 1) Limited

Registered provider address: Camomile House, 6 Embassy Drive, Edgbaston, Birmingham B15 1TP

Responsible individual: Nikita Tidswell

Registered manager: Kirsty Johnson-Green

Inspector

Kate Savage, Social Care Inspector
Mandy Wake, Social Care Inspector

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