

2733923

Registered provider: Stoney Knolls Children's Home Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is privately owned and provides care for up to three children of the same gender. The children will experience social and emotional difficulties.

The home is led by a registered manager.

At the time of the inspection, three children were living at the home.

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 October 2023

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: not previously inspected

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: not applicable

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

Leaders and managers do not ensure that when children move into the home in an emergency, the needs of other children in the home are fully considered. Children's social workers say that communication, at times, has been ineffective. Consequently, children who have come to live together within a short period of time are yet to settle and develop the relationships needed to support group living.

Children who have specific cultural and linguistic care needs have moved into the home. The manager and staff meet these needs very well. Children attend prayer in line with their faith. Barriers to language have been removed and other children with the same language have been identified for peer support. Staff use available technology to have conversations with children and to understand their views, wishes and feelings. Meeting the cultural needs of children is a strength at this home.

Children who live at this home have come with poor experiences of formal education. Some children have been out of school for a considerable period. However, leaders and managers have ensured that interim measures are quickly established. This includes tutoring for some children and informal learning provided by the staff team for others.

Children know how to make complaints. When they do, managers have good oversight of these. Managers investigate children's concerns, which includes speaking with the child to fully understand their views. Managers offer feedback to children. This helps children to feel listened to and taken seriously.

Children are encouraged to meet regularly and to share their views about living at the home. They make plans to do activities, as a group. They discuss and plan meals for the week. However, managers have yet to formalise this during children's meetings and ensure that the children's views are adequately recorded.

Children live in a large, detached house. They have their own bedrooms and share bathrooms. The interior is very homely, comfortable, and warm. Rooms are tidy and uncluttered. Although the communal living spaces are small for the number of children, children say they have what they need. Children are comfortable in their surroundings.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

Staff delayed in sharing a safeguarding concern with managers. Consequently, the managers have not shared the concern quickly enough with the placing local

authority. Additionally, recording of this safeguarding concern has limited detail to share with external safeguarding agencies. This can obstruct a full review of any concerns and the actions taken to keep children safe.

Arrangements for the safe administration and recording of medication are not yet effective. Medication is not always secured. There are not always staff on each shift who are trained in the administration of medication. Managers have not provided a good enough overview of this procedure to determine staff competence. For those staff who have had training, this has not been fully effective.

Managers have not ensured that all staff have received robust safer recruitment checks. Staff have worked with the children without adequate scrutiny of past employment. However, this is improving. More staff have now been recruited through a more effective process.

Children who go missing experience a coordinated and effective response. Staff, when required, have requested help from the police to locate children and return them home safely. The placing authority carries out return home interviews with children soon after they return. This means that information about where children have been and who they have been with is gathered to help prevent future incidents.

Managers and staff have not yet fully understood all risks to children associated with accessing games that are inappropriate for their age. Children have been allowed to access online games that depict violence and are meant for adults.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

Managers are enthusiastic and have an ambitious vision for the home. They lead a motivated team of staff who say that they love their jobs. Managers and staff are new and are developing. They acknowledge and recognise areas for ongoing improvement.

Leaders and managers have not yet developed effective processes to maintain oversight of all aspects of the children's care. They have not ensured that a system is in place for staff to record children's progress and development. Currently, this means that there are limited records to evidence conversations with children, meetings with staff and robust oversight of the home.

There is not always a qualified member of care staff on each shift. This has meant that the staff team, some of whom are new to the care of children, have not been adequately supported by staff who are more experienced and qualified. However, managers are available and visible in the home. They are very much part of the care team, including direct work with children, and are role models for less-experienced staff.

Leaders and managers have not ensured that all staff, including newer members of staff, have had regular opportunities for formal supervision. This is a missed opportunity for leaders and managers to check staff performance, competence, and provide support in navigating the complex care needs of children living in a new home.

Staff can access a wide range of training courses. Learning and development begin at induction stage with safeguarding training and how to manage challenging behaviours. After induction, staff continue with their learning by way of a blended approach of online and face-to-face training courses.

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 care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b)) This relates to the impact of emergency placements on all children and ensuring that admissions consider the needs of children already living in the home.	1 December 2023
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(h)) This relates to ensuring that staff and the registered manager receive an appropriate level of formal supervision.	1 December 2023
The registered person must make arrangements for the handling, recording, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of medicines received into the children's home. In particular the registered person must ensure that—	10 November 2023

medicines kept in the home are stored in a secure place so as to prevent any child from having unsupervised access to them; a record is kept of the administration of medicine to each child. (Regulation 23 (1) (2)(a)(c)) This relates to the storage and recording of the administration of medication.	
The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) 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; manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child’s welfare; are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home’s child protection policies. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)) This relates to ensuring that safeguarding concerns about children are promptly shared with stakeholders and that appropriate records are made.	10 November 2023

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them on a day-to-day basis. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)
- The registered person should have systems in place so that all staff, including the manager, receive supervision of their practice from an appropriately qualified and experienced professional, which allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children assigned to their care. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)
- The registered person should ensure that good employment practice is maintained, as set out in regulations 31 to 33. They must ensure that recruitment, supervision and performance management of staff safeguard children and minimise potential risks to them. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1)

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: 2733923

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Stoney Knolls Children's Home Limited

Responsible individual: Susan Sabine

Registered manager: Kamran Anjum

Inspector

Simon Hunter, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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