

2749204

Registered provider: Step-A-Side Company Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned by a private provider and is registered to provide care for one child with learning disabilities and/or emotional and behavioural difficulties.

One child was living in the home at the time of the inspection having moved here in September 2023.

The home was registered in August 2023 and has not previously been inspected.

A suitably qualified and experienced registered manager oversees the home.

Inspection dates: 18 and 19 December 2023

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: not applicable

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The child living at this home has made good progress from a difficult starting point.

Staff provide good quality and consistent care and have built positive and trusting relationships with them. These relationships have contributed to the child feeling more settled and secure at home. As a result, there has been a significant decrease in incidents and waking night staff are no longer needed.

With support from staff the child is now consistently attending education. One educational professional said that they are now making better progress in their learning and that staff are helpful and encouraging.

One family member was very positive about the progress made by the child and the care provided to them. They reported that their relative's self-care skills have greatly improved and that they are now more able to manage difficult situations positively.

Staff have supported the child to make healthy food choices and take regular exercise. This has resulted in the child leading a much healthier lifestyle and making progress with their health as recommended by health professionals.

The home has been personalised throughout with the child's photographs and drawings of their on display. This makes the environment look more homely.

Due to the complexity of this child's needs, deprivation of liberty safeguards are in place. As result, some areas of the home have additional restrictions in place. For example, kitchen cupboards are locked and the television in the living room is behind a plastic screen. The manager advised that restrictions within the home remain under review and that if the child continues to make progress some of these could be removed or reduced in the near future.

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

The needs of the child living at this home are complex and prior to them moving here, multiple significant incidents were taking place daily. Since living at this home whilst incidents have taken place, there has been a reduction in the frequency and seriousness of these over time.

When incidents do take place, staff respond appropriately and support the child using the strategies identified in their care and support plans. Management oversight on records is clear. Staff are supported to reflect on events and their actions and lessons learned are used to inform future practice.

Staff have a good understanding of this child's needs and provide them with skilled and empathetic care. For example, staff can recognise signs that the child is

becoming upset and offer them appropriate support and reassurance to prevent a situation escalating.

Regular conversations take place with the child about appropriate behaviour and clear expectations and boundaries are in place. This has meant that the child is now more able to recognise when they are feeling upset and anxious and verbally express this to staff meaning incidents are lessening.

Due to the consistent and trusting relationships they have established with staff; the child has also more recently begun to speak openly about some of their past experiences. Staff and managers have responded appropriately to these discussions, report safeguarding concerns if necessary, and offer the child acceptance and reassurance.

Four incidents of restraint have taken place. When restraint is used this is in appropriate circumstances and to prevent significant harm or injury. Prior to any physical intervention being used staff attempt to de-escalate incidents and distract the child where possible.

Staff receive appropriate training in physical intervention techniques however, several staff have expressed that they do not feel confident using restraint. The manager is aware of this issue, and that behaviour management and staff training is an area that will continue to be reviewed.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home manager is passionate, child focused and has a good understanding of the needs and risks of the child living here. Professionals and family members were positive about the communication from the home manager and the care and support provided to children.

Management oversight is effective and is of good quality. Any issues around staff practice is identified and addressed. This supports staff to develop and ensure any areas of development are acted on swiftly.

Practice is underpinned by detailed care plans and risk assessments that provide staff with clear guidance about how best to support the child. However, information in some sections of plans is not always up to date.

Staff feel well supported by the home manager, deputy manager and senior managers within the wider organisation. Staff enjoy working at this home and are proud of the progress and achievements of the child living here.

Allegations against staff and concerns regarding staff practice are responded to appropriately with the relevant safeguarding procedures followed. Investigation reports are completed promptly with lessons learned recorded and, where appropriate, additional support and training provided for staff.

One medication error has taken place. This was identified quickly, and appropriate safeguarding procedures followed. Changes have since been made to the storage of medication to prevent future errors.

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that children are supported to lead a healthy lifestyle and to develop the knowledge and skills to keep themselves healthy and safe ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 35, paragraph 7.18).
- The registered person should ensure that children's care and support plans are kept up to date and that information is accurate ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.3).
- The registered person should ensure that behaviour management strategies including the use of physical intervention techniques is kept under review and that staff are confident in applying these ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.34).

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: 2749204

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Step-A-Side Company Ltd

Registered provider address: STEP-A-SIDE COMPANY LTD, 29 MARKET PLACE,
Coleford, Gloucestershire, GL16 8AA

Responsible individual: Rachel Carwardine

Registered manager: Charlotte Williams

Inspector

Janet Jauregui, Social Care Inspector

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