

2749204

Registered provider: Step-A-Side Company Limited

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned by a private provider and was registered by Ofsted in August 2023 to provide care and accommodation for one child who has experienced social and emotional difficulties and/or learning disabilities.

At the time of this monitoring visit, no children were living in the home.

Inspection date: 28 February 2025

This monitoring visit

Since registration, the home has provided care for two children on two separate occasions. However, the staff team struggled to meet the children's complex needs and found it difficult to help them to keep safe. This resulted in the children having to move out of the home. In response to the difficulties that were encountered, leaders and managers decided to temporarily suspend admissions to the home to allow for a period of reflection and learning.

Due to the home not accommodating children for more than a 3-month period, Ofsted served a notice of proposal to vary the conditions of registration under section 13 of the Care Standards Act 2000. Leaders and managers accepted Ofsted's proposal and on 6 December 2024 a condition was added to the home's registration. This stipulated that the registered person must inform the Chief Inspector of their intention to accommodate children at the home at least three months before any child is accommodated.

On 28 November 2024 the registered person informed Ofsted that they would like to accommodate children from 1 March 2025. This monitoring visit was completed to assess whether the condition imposed by Ofsted on the home's registration could be removed. Further, the provider also submitted a request to increase the home's

occupancy from the care and accommodation for one child, to the care and accommodation for up to two children.

Leaders and managers have reflected on their experience of caring for one child in the home. They have critically analysed the quality of care that was provided and have identified appropriate learning for themselves and the staff team.

Leaders and managers recognise that the skills and experience of staff are more suited to caring for children in a group setting, rather than meeting the complex needs of one child. Leaders and managers spoke confidently about providing staff with bespoke opportunities to develop their skills and knowledge to meet children's needs. Enough staff have been recruited to allow the provider to offer continuity of care for two children.

Since the initial registration of the home, the environment has been adapted to offer sufficient sleeping arrangements for two children and two members of staff. Children's bedrooms can comfortably accommodate double beds and plenty of storage for their belongings. The bedrooms are minimally decorated, although the registered manager spoke positively about supporting children to personalise their bedrooms in line with their interests and preferences.

The home also benefits from a lounge and a 'snug.' This allows children to choose when they would like to spend time together and when they would like to be alone. Although the kitchen-diner is relatively small, there is sufficient space for children and staff to sit together and share mealtimes.

Leaders and managers demonstrate a commitment to carefully assessing the needs of children and their associated risks before they move into the home. This includes an analysis of the skills and experience of the staff to ensure that they can meet children's needs and help them to keep safe effectively. Alongside this, leaders and managers have considered the risks associated with the home's location. Leaders and managers are clear that some of the risks associated with the home's location means that the home is unsuitable for some children to live in.

Leaders and managers have updated the home's statement of purpose and fire risk assessment to reflect the proposed change in the occupancy of the home.

The providers application to vary the home's conditions of registration from the care for one child to the care for up to two children has been approved. Further, it has been agreed that the condition that specifies that the provider should give at least three months' notice to the Chief Inspector before a child moves to the home can be removed, as the condition has been met.

No requirements or recommendations have been raised following this monitoring visit.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
18/12/2023	Full	Good

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this visit was to review the conditions of the home's registration.

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

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 2749204

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Step-A-Side Company Limited

Registered provider address: 29 Market Place, Coleford, Gloucestershire GL16 8AA

Responsible individual: Rachel Carwardine

Registered manager: Danielle Warren

Inspector

Martin Brown, Social Care Inspector

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