

2779744

Registered provider: Step Forward Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a private company. It provides care for one child who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in March 2026.

One child was living in the home at the time of this inspection, and they were spoken with during the inspection. No children have left the home during this inspection cycle.

Inspection dates: 22 and 23 April 2026

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
---	-------------

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
---	------

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 9 June 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/06/2025	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Summary of findings

The child is making progress in all areas of their life. Staff are committed to building positive relationships with the child and their family. This has helped the child to develop trust in staff. Staff and the child's family commented on the family type atmosphere in the home.

Staff have a good understanding of risks that the child faces, and any safeguarding concerns are responded to robustly. This ensures that staff are effective in keeping the child safe.

Staff are provided with good levels of support and training. This gives staff the confidence and skills to carry out their roles in supporting the child to a high level.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The child says that they are listened to, feel safe and happy and have good relationships with all the staff. Complaints, although rare, are dealt with promptly and the child is provided with a clear response. This helps the child to know that their views and concerns are taken seriously.

The child receives consistent care that is warm and nurturing. The home is personalised and family orientated. The child's family members visit the home regularly. They participate in activities with the child and staff and are included appropriately in decisions about the child's care. A parent said, 'Progress made for my child is due to the support from staff; this is the big family that we have always wanted'. The warm and welcoming environment that staff create helps the child to feel valued and loved.

The child is helped to develop positive and trusting relationships with staff. The strength of these relationships has a direct impact on the child's engagement with their care plan. In addition, they are now able to enjoy a range of new and exciting activities with staff.

Children receive advice and encouragement from staff to engage with services that are important for their health and development. As a result, the child is now attending health appointments, taking medication regularly and engaging with their education tutor.

Staff and the home's psychologist work together closely. This helps staff to understand the child and their experiences and be able to quickly adapt the care they provide to the child's presenting needs. Care plans and risk assessments are regularly reviewed and include clear strategies to support the child. There is strong communication and collaboration with the child, their family and wider professionals. This helps the child to feel safe in knowing that staff are invested in them and has been the foundation to the child's progress since they moved into the home.

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

Staff understand risks well and are effective in safeguarding the child. Risks are identified and responded to quickly because staff know the child well. Staff work with the child, as well as their family, in ways that are child focused to help them understand risks. This helps the child to recognise the risks they face and seek help from staff when they feel worried.

The child benefits from clear and consistent boundaries. Staff use praise, recognition and incentives to help the child make positive choices. Consequences to manage unwanted behaviours are rare, but when they occur, they are proportionate and explained to the child. This helps the child to understand expectations of behaviour. These clear responses to the child support positive behaviour. Staff manage any incidents that do occur effectively.

Allegations against staff members are dealt with quickly and appropriately. The child is supported impartially and concerns are taken seriously. Steps are taken to ensure that the child is kept safe and appropriate investigations are undertaken promptly. These responses help the child to develop trust and confidence in staff.

The manager is tenacious in advocating for the child. They explore any concerns that the child raises and escalate concerns with the local authority if they are unsatisfied with the response. This helps to keep the child safe and supports them to feel valued and heard.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is highly committed to the child, always focusing on their wishes, meeting their needs and reducing risk. This is reflected in her effective management oversight and regular reviews of the quality of care offered to the child.

The manager's enthusiastic and hands on approach means that she is available to both the child and staff. Her high expectations and practical support help to upskill staff. This contributes to the child receiving consistent, high-quality care and staff understanding how to respond to the child's needs.

The manager leads with praise and recognition for all. This helps to develop a stable and consistent team with high morale. Staff say that they enjoy working in the home and feel supported by each other and managers. One staff member said, 'The manager has been the driving force in my confidence and progression. Without her I wouldn't have believed in myself. I have learnt a lot'.

Supervision sessions and team meetings are regular and high in quality. Discussions focus on the child's needs and the professional development of staff. The manager is

quick to address any shortfalls in practice when they arise. She completes detailed investigations and shares any lessons learned, both individually and as a team.

Safer recruitment is embedded into practice and regular, ongoing checks on staff take place to help ensure that they remain suitable for their roles. A wide range of training and development opportunities are provided to staff. This includes training about risks that are not currently present for the child. This ensures that the staff know how to respond should new risks arise.

There were no requirements or recommendations made at this inspection.

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: 2779744

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Step Forward Care Limited

Registered provider address: 91-93 Crockwell and Co, Fowler Street, South Shields, Tyne and Wear NE33 1NU

Responsible individual: Sharon Hastings

Registered manager: Jo Lambe

Inspector

Amey Henry, Social Care Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2026