

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC005567
Inspector	Janine Shortman-Thomas
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Stepping Stones Children's Services Limited
Registered person address	Keys Attachment Centre, Hurstwood Court New Hall Hey Road ROSSENDALE Lancashire BB4 6HR
Responsible individual	Heather Ann Laffin
Registered manager	Simon Peter Bottomley
Date of last inspection	05/06/2014

Inspection date	20/01/2015
Previous inspection	good
Enforcement action since last inspection	There has been no enforcement action since the last inspection.

This inspection

This home was judged good at the last full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has **sustained effectiveness**.

At the full inspection in June 2014 the overall effectiveness of the home was judged to be good.

Young people continue to make progress and receive good quality care from a caring staff team who feel supported by the management team to carry out their role. Young people are maintaining high attendance rates and continue to achieve in most subjects. Staff are committed to ensuring young people access and maintain positive links with schools to ensure any barriers to learning are addressed quickly and efficiently to prevent any disruption in learning. Young people's holistic health needs continue to be met through primary health services and in-house therapeutic provision. Support provided by staff has assisted one young person in giving up smoking.

Young people continue to enjoy a range of regular long standing activities such as trampolining, horse riding, drumming, singing, piano lessons and going out on their scooters. They also volunteer at a local community animal sanctuary where they enjoy dog walking. Depending on their age and ability young people are encouraged and supported to increase their independence skills. This involves keeping their room and home tidy and preparing snacks. These activities enable young people to develop new skills, and meet new people. As a consequence young people's confidence and self-esteem has improved.

Interaction between staff and young people was seen to be positive with fair and firm boundaries in place in regards to managing behaviour. Staff and young people are aware of their individual behaviour management plans and young people report that these are fair. Staff consistently implement the plans that are in place and as a

consequence behaviour has improved resulting in a decline in physical intervention. There are adequate staffing levels in the home to ensure activities and individual appointments can be facilitated. Staff are positive about working at the home and said they feel very well supported by the management team. They receive regular support through supervision and annual appraisals and receive relevant training to ensure they can provide a good level of care.

The home is effectively and efficiently run by a dedicated and capable management team who provide and advocate high standards of care. Appropriate action is swiftly taken to address any issues or complaints as these arise. Good recruitment practices are followed. The provider understands the importance of following up any information identified within the application process as appropriate. This promotes a vigorous approach to the recruitment of staff and keeps young people safe from adults who may pose a risk to them. Effective internal and independent external monitoring systems, which routinely include views of the young people, analyse the quality of care and care plans. Any actions and recommendations which are identified within these are taken forward and incorporated into the development plan. This ensures the service continues to develop and improve. Reporting and recording are good and procedures for notifying partner agencies in the event of serious incidents, accidents and allegations are always followed. However a shortfall has been highlighted in regards to the safe storage of young people and staff confidential written records. The home is clean and tidy throughout and equipped to meet the young people's need. However, the furniture in the young people's bedroom requires updating as some items are broken and the window to a upstairs bedroom window requires replacing as this is not in good working order.

Two recommendations have been raised to ensure all written records kept by the home are kept safe and secured appropriately, and ensuring the home provides a comfortable and homely environment, specifically in relation to ensuring all the furniture in the young people's bedrooms are maintained to a good standard and the bedroom windows are in good working order. These shortfalls do not impact on the welfare of young people or the continued effectiveness of service delivery.

Information about this children's home

This is a private children's home that is part of a large national organisation. It provides care and accommodation for up to four young people with emotional and/or behaviour difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
05/06/2014	Full	good
03/02/2014	Interim	good progress
30/05/2013	Full	good
28/02/2013	Interim	satisfactory progress

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

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the service should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure the home provides a comfortable and homely environment, specifically in relation to ensuring all the furniture in the young people's bedroom is maintained to a good standard and the upstairs bedroom window is in good working order (NMS 10.3)
- ensure that all records, including historical records, which contain any information in regards to young people are kept and stored securely (NMS 22).

What inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspections we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service and to consider how well it complies with the relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the framework of inspection for children's homes.