

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC008490
Inspector	Ceri Evans
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	Sylvia Diane Eboigbe
Date of last inspection	30/07/2014

Inspection date	06/01/2015
Previous inspection	outstanding
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

This inspection

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

At the last full inspection in July 2014, the home was judged to be outstanding overall. Two good practice recommendations were made to promote ongoing improvement of the service. These have been fully met and are now embedded into practice.

Since the last inspection, the recording and documentation have improved and provide clear insight into young people's time at the home. Young people's risk assessments are now closely monitored and reviewed on a regular basis. Risk management and individual crisis management plans provide a comprehensive overview of potential triggers and behaviour and clearly identify strategies for staff to follow in order to minimise those risks. Structured routines and consistent boundaries also continue to assist young people in refining some of their more challenging behaviours. As a result, incidents of challenging or unsafe behaviour are rare. This demonstrates that these strategies are working and having a positive impact on young people's behaviour.

Staff are fully conversant with each young person's needs and these are consistently met in practice. Where young people have been admitted to the home very recently the staff are working well to encourage their engagement with routines, boundaries and expectations. The team demonstrate a flexible approach and consistently review the effectiveness of strategies in order to promote engagement. Professionals state, 'based on my observations staff offer high quality care to young people. Staff are particularly skilful in using a variety of strategies to effect positive change in young people's behaviour. As a result X has made good progress since living in this home'.

The home continues to provide young people with positive experiences which enable them to enjoy their childhood. Young people who have previously experienced very chaotic and disruptive backgrounds are now flourishing as a result of stability and

nurturing the staff provide. Young people benefit enormously from the support of an experienced and knowledgeable staff team who have consistently high expectations of them. Young people have been able to make and sustain good attachments with staff, which demonstrates that they trust the adults who care for them. Evidence gathered at this inspection demonstrates that young people's outcomes have significantly improved due to the support, guidance and positive regard they receive from staff and other professionals. Consequently, young people continue to develop a strong sense of self confidence.

Young people are well engaged with their education. All regularly attend school and are making significant progress with their studies. Some young people have clear aspirations for their future careers and are committed to undertaking additional opportunities, such as work experience to achieve their goals. The likelihood of young people having better prospects in adulthood has significantly improved due to their educational engagement and successes.

The manager runs the home effectively and efficiently in the best interests of young people. She is reflective, motivated and forward thinking and has strong monitoring systems to understand the strengths of the service, identify areas for development, and make necessary changes. Since the last inspection, the manager has successfully implemented improvement which include, the decoration to parts of the home, regular young people's newsletters and greater consultation with key professionals, such as community police officers. Young people have also created a 'journey through the home' scrap book which is shared with young people prior to placement. This helps prepare them for placements and enables them to settle quickly when they arrive.

Staff continue to encourage young people to have plenty of choice of activities and provide them with a chance to try new things. This has had a positive impact on young people's social development and they are becoming more sociable, are learning new social skills and appear happy and are less anxious.

The home demonstrates a strong focus on safeguarding. Staff undertake regular training to ensure that they fully understand their responsibilities in relation to child protection. They are vigilant to any signs which could suggest that a young person is at risk and know what action they would take. The team have now completed Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) training and are expected to demonstrate their learning in CSE workbooks. This ensures that young people's safety and protection have the highest priority at all times.

The manager maintains close liaison with Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for safeguarding matters and approaches the LADO for advice where appropriate. Allegations are referred to the LADO for investigation and the manager has taken appropriate actions and supported investigations well. Investigations are handled fairly and dealt with immediately. This demonstrates the manager's ability to work collaboratively and act upon arising matters to protect young people's safety.

To conclude, the home has demonstrated continued capacity to improve. Recommendations from the last inspection have been met and the home has continued to make some key improvements to the service. The leadership team is committed to ensuring that the quality of care is of a consistently good standard. Young people continue to make excellent progress and to live in a very stable, safe, caring, healthy and stimulating environment. Young people are growing in confidence, feel emotionally secure, and are becoming more able to build and maintain relationships. They are making significant and continuous improvements in their behaviour, education, independence and confidence to take part in a wider range of activities in the community. The home provides young people with a secure base which will help them to develop into well-rounded, confident and capable adults.

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
30/07/2014	Full	outstanding
10/03/2014	Interim	good progress
16/05/2013	Full	outstanding
14/02/2013	Interim	good progress

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.