

SC028868

Registered provider: Step-A-Side Company Ltd

Assurance 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 offer care for up to four children.

At the time of the inspection, one child was living in the home, having moved here in March 2023. A second child lived at the home between July 2021 and September 2023.

A suitably qualified registered manager oversees the home.

Inspection date: 6 February 2024

Date of last inspection: 15 August 2023

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Information about this inspection

At this inspection, the inspector evaluated:

- the care of children
- the safety of children
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers.

The inspector has looked closely at the experiences and progress of children, using the social care common inspection framework. This assurance 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'.

Findings from the inspection

We did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance inspection.

The child living at this home has trusting and secure relationships with staff. Staff have a good understanding of the child's needs and provide them with warm and attuned care.

Through these positive relationships, staff have been able to support the child well with their education. This support has had a positive outcome as the child is now attending college regularly.

The child enjoys the varied activities that staff help to engage them in. For example, they have recently built a shed with support from the organisation's maintenance team and have been given a space in one of the outbuildings to work on an engine from a quad bike. Staff are proud of the child's achievements and progress and speak about this enthusiastically.

When children make complaints, these are taken seriously and responded to in a thorough and timely manner. Children are updated about the process of any investigation; the outcomes are shared with them and their views are clearly recorded.

Significant incidents are infrequent and staff have helped the child to feel settled. Restraint has not been needed in this home and there have been no missing-from-home episodes since the previous inspection. Staff are suitably trained to support children if these incidents do happen.

When any incidents do take place, these are generally managed appropriately by staff. Following incidents, children and staff involved are spoken to and their views recorded. Children are also offered the opportunity to speak to an advocate or their social worker. Management oversight is effective, where care is reflected on and lessons learned.

When safeguarding concerns are raised these are responded to robustly and in line with relevant procedures. The manager and staff work well with external professionals to share information and develop multi-agency plans to safeguard children.

One allegation has been made against staff since the previous inspection. This was responded to appropriately by staff and managers. An investigation report was completed in a timely manner and prompt action taken to safeguard both children and staff. Children were kept updated about the process of the investigation and the outcome. Their views were clearly recorded as part of this process.

The manager has taken action to address the shortfalls identified at the previous inspection.

Since this period, one child has moved out of the home. Managers and staff have reflected on this ending, and the learning from this period has been used to inform practice and development.

The manager has advocated strongly for the child living in the home, and there are multiple examples of her effectively challenging external professionals.

She has been effective at developing working relationships with external agencies and sourcing additional specialist support and training for herself and the staff team.

Training and the development of knowledge within the home around exploitation has been a focus. As a result, recent concerns regarding exploitation, with respect to the child living here, have been identified promptly and robust action taken to address concerns.

Management oversight is evident across records and effective systems for monitoring patterns and concerns are in place.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
15/08/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
06/12/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
03/08/2021	Full	Good
06/08/2019	Full	Good

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC028868

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: Jenny Davis

Inspector

Janet Jauregui, Social Care Inspector

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