

1271182

Registered provider: Step Up Children and Family Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is run by a private organisation. It provides care for up to five children with social and emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in July 2020.

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 July 2022

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 1 November 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
01/11/2021	Full	Good
04/12/2019	Full	Good
08/08/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

At the time of this inspection, two children were living at the home. The manager spends time with children before they move in. This helps children to feel able to ask questions and reduce any concerns that they may have. The manager uses this information to ensure that staff are prepared for the child's arrival and that children living together are suitably matched.

Children enjoy trusting relationships with staff. Staff know the children well and they engage with them in meaningful activities. Staff understand that children may find it difficult to trust adults. They provide reassurance which helps children to realise that they are cared for. Staff are consistent in this approach. One child has made significant progress in spending more time out of her bedroom and with staff. One child said, 'The best thing about living here is the staff.' Children and staff have positive relationships.

Children are making good progress. Each child has a bespoke learning programme that they help to create. Children choose areas in their life that they would like to improve. If children are unsure, staff help them to set targets. Children are rewarded when they make progress. They earn vouchers to spend on activities that they enjoy. Staff support children if they need additional help. One child has made progress in attending education. Another child has made progress in speaking with people. The staff empower children to make positive decisions about their lives.

Children are in education. One child attends personal tutoring at the home. One child attends school and has been accepted on a college placement. Staff help children to learn.

Staff offer children a range of activities. Children spend time together at theme parks and smaller activities at the home or in the local community. Children were involved in the queen's Jubilee celebrations in the village. Staff spend time with children on individual activities. One child went out for his first meal in a restaurant and learned about social etiquette. One child enjoys shopping trips and going to nail salons. Staff use this time to build relationships with children.

Staff help children to spend time with people who are important to them. Children talk to staff about their relationships. Children and families are supported by a dedicated family worker. One parent said, 'The family worker helped us a lot. It helped to build our relationship and keep us connected.' Children talk to the family worker about any issues that are concerning them. Staff help children to spend time with friends. One child has asked to spend overnights at his friend's house. Staff are working closely with the social worker to make certain that this can happen safely.

Children have access to a trained counsellor. The counsellor spends time at the home. This makes it easier for children to decide when they choose to talk. Children

are helped to talk about any concerns or worries in environments that they feel comfortable in.

Children live in a homely environment. There are photos of children and staff displayed around the hallway and lounge. The decoration is modern and personalised. However, the decking area in the garden requires attention. There are plans to improve this space, but at the time of inspection exposed nails were visible and wood damaged. This was raised at the last inspection and is restated.

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

The staff assess risks well. Staff understand how to help children. One child's risk of self-harm has reduced significantly because of staff's actions.

When children leave the home without permission, staff respond quickly and do all that they can to find them. They follow children and know the areas that they may go to. Staff ensure that other professionals are aware of children's vulnerabilities. The manager has made improvements to the recording of these incidents and makes certain that children are offered a meeting when they return. This has helped the manager to understand why children leave, and to make changes to practice.

Staff have a good understanding of children's potential triggers to incidents. Staff use the relationships that they have with children to help them to talk about their feelings. As a result, there have been no physical interventions since the last inspection.

Children are helped to lead healthy lifestyles. One child was helped to stop smoking and reduce substance misuse. Staff talk to children about their mental health. Staff use age-appropriate displays to encourage children to talk about mental and emotional well-being. One child was helped with their sexual health. Staff encourage children to take an active role in looking after their own health and well-being.

Staff are trained and familiar with the home's safeguarding policy. The manager uses safeguarding scenarios to ensure that staff understand how to raise concerns. There is a strong safeguarding culture at the home.

The manager has made improvements to the recruitment process. References and gaps in employment are checked. Staff have a thorough induction. The manager assesses staff's competence to work with children. Children are supported by staff who have been thoroughly considered for their role.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is qualified and experienced. She is complemented by an experienced and qualified deputy manager. Together, they have strong oversight of the home and are committed to improving outcomes for children.

The staff team is long-standing, stable and committed to children's care. Staff say that they feel supported by the managers. The staff work well together. Regular meetings help them to reflect on their work. Staff understand the aims of the home.

Staff receive good-quality, reflective supervision which is child focused. Safeguarding is discussed. Staff reflect on their knowledge and skills and the difference that they make to children's lives. Staff are supported by the home's trained counsellor. This helps them to discuss the impact that the work has on them.

When children are not receiving the services that they are entitled to, the manager advocates for change with local authorities. The manager challenges her social care colleagues to ensure that children's views, wishes and feelings are listened to. The manager helped one child to make a formal complaint about lack of education. Consequently, education was found for the child.

The independent person visits the home regularly but does not always consult with children. In eight months, the children have been spoken with on three occasions. This does not provide the additional layer of objectivity intended by the visits or give children a regular opportunity to raise concerns. This was raised at the last inspection and is restated.

The manager uses an audit tool to monitor the outcomes for children and staff's performance. However, the manager does not consult with children, parents, placing authorities and staff as part of the review of the quality of care. This limits the scope of the monitoring.

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to meet the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards'. The registered person(s) must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
<p>The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(d))</p> <p>In particular, remove exposed nails in the decking and make safe.</p> <p>This was raised at the last inspection and is restated.</p>	26 August 2022
<p>When the independent person is carrying out a visit, the registered person must help the independent person—</p> <p>if they consent, to interview in private such of the children, their parents, relatives and persons working at the home as the independent person requires. (Regulation 44 (2)(a))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that regular feedback from children is gathered and included in the report.</p> <p>This was raised at the last inspection and is restated.</p>	26 August 2022
<p>In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating—</p> <p>the quality of care provided for children;</p> <p>the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it; and</p>	26 August 2022

any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children. (Regulation 45 (2)(a)(b)(c))

In particular, consult with children, parents, placing authorities and staff as part of the review of the quality of care.

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: 1271182

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Step Up Children and Family Services Limited

Registered provider address: 742 New Hey Road, Huddersfield HD3 3YQ

Responsible individual: Stephen Graley

Registered manager: Megan Warden

Inspector

Mandy Start, Social Care Inspector

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