

1185828

Registered provider: Next Stage 4Life Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and managed by a private provider. The home provides care for up to two children with emotional and social difficulties.

At the time of this inspection, two children were living in the home.

The manager registered with Ofsted in April 2022.

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 November 2024

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: 19 March 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
19/03/2024	Full	Good
07/03/2023	Full	Good
01/03/2022	Full	Good
13/11/2019	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children new to the home are welcomed sensitively. The manager carefully considers their needs against the needs of children already living in the home. Children develop strong, trusting relationships with staff, and the home is filled with laughter. Children's photos are displayed throughout the home, which helps children to develop a sense of permanence and belonging. When children move out in an unplanned way, managers review and revise processes to ensure that any learning is considered.

Staff place children at the centre of their practice.

A social work manager said, '[Name of child] is the most settled they've been. They have developed trusting relationships with staff and can speak with them about any worries. Previous behaviours are no longer present due to the consistent staff team and structured boundaries in place. They are now attending at school; this is significant progress.'

Staff understand the importance of family to children, and they support them to spend time with them. Friendships are also supported, and there are opportunities for children to spend time with friends in the community. Arrangements are safe because staff supervise and support this in line with local authority plans.

Children are rewarded when they have done well. Children have clear plans in place that set out what is expected of them. When this has been achieved, they are rewarded. This supports children to feel valued.

Children have opportunities to experience a range of activities in line with their interests, such as attending a football club. Children are encouraged to spend time together and have developed positive relationships. Staff ensure that memories are captured and recorded. This is important for children and allows them to understand their journey into adulthood.

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

Clear plans in place identify the risks for the individual children. Plans are completed with children and professionals. The plans set out clear guidance and ways of working with children for staff to follow. However, staff do not always follow the plans in relation to self-harm, and this potentially leaves children at risk.

There are clear records of when children have needed to be held to keep them safe, and management oversight is in place. Children are supported to understand why this has happened. However, staff debriefs have not consistently taken place. This is a missed opportunity to evaluate practice and identify any learning.

Children understand how to make a complaint, and when they do, they are taken seriously. Staff have listened to and acted on complaints to ensure that children feel safe.

Children have access to mobile devices. Staff have taken effective action in response to concerns that children may be at risk of child sexual exploitation. This was shared with relevant professionals, including social workers and the police. Children understand that staff will regularly check their devices to ensure they are not at risk or communicating with individuals who may pose a risk to them. This supports children to stay safe online.

Children are supported to manage their feelings safely. Children can speak to staff about any worries they may have. Staff understand children's preferred methods of communication, such as writing down how they feel. This is then used to put in place support from the internal therapist. When children do not wish to speak, staff seek advice and guidance so that they can revise their approach to ensure children are safe.

Children have clear missing-from-home plans that detail the actions staff should take if children go missing. Staff understand children's plans and use supervision as an opportunity to discuss any changes. One child who was missing on a regular basis before moving to this home has not been missing.

Careful recruitment processes ensure that staff are suitable and safe to work with children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is managed effectively by a permanent and suitably experienced and qualified manager. They are supported by an experienced and qualified assistant manager. The staff team is ambitious for children.

There have been some changes to the staff team since the last inspection. Staff new to the home are provided with an induction and have opportunities to shadow experienced members of staff to support this process. Training is provided to ensure that staff have the necessary skills to support children's needs, such as self-harm and ligature training.

Children are cared for by a consistent and stable staff team. Staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities and are provided with opportunities to develop their knowledge and skills. Staff are encouraged to consider alternative ways of working with children so that practice improves.

The manager has a monthly audit process in place. This enables him to have sufficient oversight of children's progress. Audits identify themes and patterns, which are reviewed with the head of care and a therapist and then shared at team meetings. This ensures a shared understanding of practice and how this can be improved.

The manager has used learning from practice, such as learning from placement breakdowns. The manager has identified strengths and weaknesses and has changed the moving-in process for children. As a result of this, children's experiences of moving into the home have improved. However, there were identified shortfalls in the home environment, specifically in relation to a bedroom and some communal areas.

Staff receive support in their role and are provided with a good induction programme, regular training and practice-related supervision. Supervision is an opportunity for staff to discuss children's experiences and progress and reflect on any incidents to identify any training and development needs.

Staff are aspirational for children and provide a consistent approach that supports children to make progress.

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, The 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 registered person must prepare and implement a policy ("the behaviour management policy") which sets out—</p> <p>how appropriate behaviour is to be promoted in the children’s home; and</p> <p>the measures of control, discipline and restraint which may be used in relation to children in the home.</p> <p>The registered person must ensure that—</p> <p>within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")—</p> <p>has spoken to the user about the measure; and</p> <p>has signed the record to confirm it is accurate. (Regulation 35 (1)(a)(b) (3)(b)(i)(ii))</p> <p>In particular, the registered person must ensure that staff are spoken with about the measure.</p>	<p>21 February 2025</p>
<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 staff—</p> <p>assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child’s relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child;</p>	<p>21 February 2025</p>

<p>have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm. ((Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(iii))</p> <p>In particular, the registered person must ensure that staff follow children’s risk management plans.</p>	
--	--

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that the home is maintained to a high standard, including redecoration, replacement of bedroom furniture and ensuring children’s bedrooms are maintained to a high standard and personalised. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 15, paragraph 3.9)

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: 1185828

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Next Stage 4Life Limited

Registered provider address: Regency House, 45-53 Chorley New Road, Bolton BL1 4QR

Responsible individual: post vacant

Registered manager: Andrew Funnell

Inspector

Nicola Forrester, 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 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 2024