

2598648

Registered provider: Footsteps to Futures Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is privately operated and provides care for up to three children who experience social and emotional difficulties.

At the time of this inspection, two children were living at the home, and their views were obtained. Since the last inspection, four children have moved out of the home.

The manager registered with Ofsted on 17 September 2024.

Inspection dates: 15 and 16 January 2025

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: 29 August 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
29/08/2023	Full	Good
03/05/2022	Full	Outstanding
28/04/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are happy with the care provided by staff. One child said that staff always fight their corner. They also said that staff give them opportunities to prove that they can be trusted, such as visiting places where they used to go missing. This child is making better choices and is determined to move forward positively with their life. Staff have helped to build the child's confidence, which has helped the child to feel proud. This is a significant achievement.

Staff recognise the importance of family connections for children. Staff show empathy with children's parents, recognising their starting points and how professional meetings can be intimidating. Staff have supported children to build and maintain family connections. They have also supported one child to manage their feelings of grief and the complex emotions that come with this process. This child's emotional well-being has been well promoted by staff.

Staff support children to make progress in their education. Both children have education placements that they attend. This is not easy for the children, and staff have worked tirelessly to find packages that can be adapted to meet each child's needs. One child attends an extra-curricular activity. Overall, both children do not yet have the necessary support to build and maintain meaningful friendships; this is a work in progress.

There is good consideration of children's health needs. For one child awaiting a health assessment, the manager has been proactive in arranging relevant training for staff so that their care can be adapted appropriately pending the assessment.

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

Placement stability for children has been mixed. This is because some children's risk-taking behaviours have been high, and staff have been unable to maintain their placement. For these children, the manager has supported positive endings even when circumstances have been challenging. Other children have been supported to move on to semi-independent provisions.

One child's social worker spoke highly of staff's commitment to their child. They described staff 'persevering', 'remaining in communication' and 'relaying safeguarding information' after the child had left their care.

Although the overall condition of the home is of a good standard, one child's bedroom is hazardous to health. Staff are proactive in trying to keep this child's bedroom hygienic; however, these attempts have not been successful.

Overall, staff have had many challenges caring for children who have experienced trauma. Some of these children have developed high-risk coping strategies, such as

suicide ideation. It is commendable that staff have persevered to offer children empathetic care even when they have been seriously hurt during incidents.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager's oversight of serious safeguarding incidents is good. Staff can contribute their ideas about what they have learned during children's behavioural incidents. They reflect on what they may wish to try next time to improve de-escalation strategies. The manager has supported staff through some challenging situations, she has shown compassion and is grateful to the staff for their commitment to the children.

Staff are positive about the support that they receive from the manager and the responsible individual. The manager and the responsible individual have excellent knowledge of each child's journey, and they understand how children's past trauma has affected their ability to cope with day-to-day life situations. They talk about the children with kindness, and they are supportive of their progress.

Although the home environment is welcoming and looks nice, staff carry a bunch of keys with them in the home when going between rooms. This does not seem necessary due to the layout and openness of the home. Bedroom door alarms are also set during the day when staff are with the children. This creates an unnecessarily institutionalised environment. The manager was receptive to feedback on this issue.

Stakeholder feedback is overwhelmingly positive. Education professionals have benefited from staff sharing their knowledge with them about how children are feeling each day. This is because it helps to support children with successful transitions into school.

The manager is transparent with children's social workers when the staff team is struggling to manage children's behaviour in a way that keeps everyone safe. For example, the manager advocated for additional staffing for one child after it was recognised that the original staffing ratios were not working. This open communication provides the local authority the necessary time to plan, and it reduces the risk of children's placements ending at a point of crisis.

The requirements raised at the last inspection in relation to Regulation 14 (the care planning standard) and Regulation 13 (the leadership and management standard) have been met.

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 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>The registered person must ensure that children's bedrooms are hygienic and free of environmental hazards.</p>	1 March 2025

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the home is a nurturing and supportive environment that meets children's needs. In most cases, children's homes should be homely, domestic environments. The home must comply with relevant health and safety legislations, such as alarms and food hygiene. However, in doing so, the home should seek as far as possible to maintain a domestic rather than 'institutional' impression. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should ensure that children are supported to understand how to build friendships with other children. They should be able to spend time with their friends in the local community, in their home area, and by having friends visit them at the home, in line with the child's plans, age and understanding. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 38, paragraph 8.7)

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: 2598648

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Footsteps to Futures Limited

Registered provider address: Unit 5, Riverbank Business Park, Whatton-in-the-Vale,
Nottingham NG13 9FX

Responsible individual: Victoria Lee

Registered manager: Rachael Crawford

Inspectors

Andi Lilley-Tams, Social Care Inspector
Tazim Akhtar, Social Care Inspector

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