

1241897

Registered provider: Pathways Care Group Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately owned home provides care for up to five children with social, emotional and/or mental health difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in August 2023.

Inspection dates: 4 and 5 June 2024

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: 3 April 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
03/04/2023	Full	Good
05/05/2022	Full	Good
05/01/2022	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
22/07/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

There are currently three children living at the home. Four children have moved out since the last inspection. The staff continue to stay in contact with several children who have moved out. This support has helped the children to feel confident in their new settings and future plans.

Four children have moved to the home. The planning for each child's move was thorough and supported a smooth introduction to the home. Consequently, the children have settled quickly.

Children build positive relationships with staff. Staff know the children well and have a good understanding of their needs. Interactions between staff and children are compassionate and reassuring. This approach helps the children to develop a sense of security and stability that they need to make progress.

Children's relationships with their families are supported. Regular time spent with families increases the potential for children to build and maintain positive relationships with the people who are important to them.

Children have good attendance at school. For some children there has been a marked improvement in their engagement with education. Staff understand the barriers that children face when attending school full time. They have worked creatively with school and alternative education providers to set up bespoke packages for the children.

Staff encourage children to talk about issues that are important to them. However, the children do not have access to independent advocacy support, and therefore do not have an independent trusted person to confide in should they need to.

Children's hobbies and personal interests are supported. This includes having pets. Risk assessments have been developed, however the welfare and living environment of one pet are not adequate. A lack of understanding and poor handling and care could cause distress to the pet and potential illness to the handler.

Several fire doors do not close fully, in addition other fire doors were wedged open. This reduces the effectiveness of fire safety measures. Internal doors slam loudly when they close, which detract from an otherwise homely environment.

The garden is very sloped and limits accessibility and use for the children. There are plans to make this a more usable space. This problem was noted at the last two inspections and remains unresolved despite reassurances from the provider.

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

The children are safe. Staff are well trained and understand effective safeguarding practice. They are clear about their roles and responsibilities to safeguard the children. Professionals, including social workers and the local authority designated officer (LADO) provided consistently strong feedback about the staff's response to safeguarding concerns. Professionals describe the staff's approach as 'child focused, measured and proportionate'.

Children's support plans are detailed and provide staff with strategies to follow to ensure that they are consistent in the responses and approach to children. Children's risk assessments are thorough and regularly updated. They refer to appropriate control measures to reduce risks posed to children.

Physical intervention is rarely used. There has been one restraint since the last inspection. The records are detailed and include the views of the child and the member of staff involved. The manager's oversight confirms that the restraint was proportionate and necessary to protect the child and those around them.

Children are supported to take age-appropriate risks. Staff support children with their understanding of how to become increasingly safer when using the internet or accessing the community on their own. One child is now going to the local gym, and another has started to travel home from school independently.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is suitably experienced and qualified for the role. She has high aspirations to provide children with high-quality care.

The management team have a detailed knowledge and good understanding of the children's needs. Professionals are regularly updated and informed of areas of concern. Communication between managers and professionals is exceptionally good. Children benefit from the manager's approach to close, multi-agency working.

The staff team is experienced and resilient. Staff are supported well by the managers. There are regular staff meetings and staff benefit from reflective supervision sessions. The team has undertaken several relevant training courses since the last inspection. The learning from these courses has led to a better understanding of children's needs.

Safe recruitment processes are comprehensively carried out to ensure that staff are suitable to work with children. New staff receive a thorough induction which includes a range of mandatory training and shadow shifts with experienced staff. Good induction, support and training help staff to meet children's needs and provide continuity of care.

The manager has ensured that the independent visitor's reports and notifications have been sent to Ofsted promptly. This enables Ofsted to have an in-depth overview of incidents and serious events and how they have been managed.

Monitoring, internally and externally, is good. The quality of monitoring drives improvement.

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
If the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005(1) applies to the home— the registered person must ensure that the requirements of that Order and any regulations made under it, except for article 23 (duties of employees), are complied with in respect of the home. (Regulation 25 (2)(b)) In particular, ensure that all fire doors close fully, and door wedges are removed from use.	11 July 2024
The enjoyment and achievement standard is that children take part in and benefit from a variety of activities that meet their needs and develop and reflect their creative, cultural, intellectual, physical and social interests and skills. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff help each child to— develop the child's interests and hobbies; participate in activities that the child enjoys and which meet and expand the child's interests and preferences. (Regulation 9 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)) In particular, ensure that staff support the children to care for pets appropriately.	11 July 2024
In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to— meet the needs of each child (Regulation 6 (2)(c)(i))	11 July 2024

In particular, ensure that the garden is levelled to provide children with accessible use of the outdoor area.	
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Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the children's home is a nurturing and supportive environment that meets the needs of the children. It should be homely. In particular, prevent doors from slamming closed. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should ensure that all children have access to appropriate advocacy support, and when possible this should be provided by a person that the child chooses. Looked-after children are entitled to an independent advocate to advise them and ensure they have the support needed to express their views, wishes and feelings about their care and lives. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 22, paragraph 4.16)

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: 1241897

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Pathways Care Group Ltd

Registered provider address: Pathways Care Group, Minton Place, Victoria Street, Windsor SL4 1EG

Responsible individual: Benjamin Harper

Registered manager: Paulina Saczewska

Inspector

Rachel Watkinson, Social Care Inspector

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