

1241897

Registered provider: Pathways Care Group Ltd

Monitoring visit

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. At the time of the visit, four children were living at the home.

The manager registered with Ofsted in August 2023. The registered manager was absent during this visit.

The inspector was aware during this visit that serious child protection allegations were being investigated by the appropriate authorities. While Ofsted does not have the power to investigate allegations of this kind, actions taken by the setting in response to the allegations were considered, where appropriate, alongside other evidence available at the time of the visit.

Inspection date: 21 January 2025

This monitoring visit

This visit was undertaken to address specific concerns or allegations received by Ofsted.

Two of the four children contributed to this visit. One child raised concerns about their well-being and safety. Another child, who was not present at the time of the visit, has previously reported concerns that they no longer feel safe at the home.

The home has been extremely unsettled. There has been a recent increase in safety concerns and high-risk incidents for children. Staff have been unable to de-escalate incidents successfully without police intervention.

Several incidents between children have occurred. Staff respond to conflicts to ensure that children's immediate safety is maintained. However, reparation and restorative work is limited and ineffective. There is a failure to address the impact

that children's actions have had on each other. As a result, opportunities to resolve differences and improve relationships have not been possible. This has contributed to children feeling unsafe.

Two children recently moved into the home in quick succession. The depth and quality of the planning arrangements for these two children were poor. Leaders and managers have not ensured that all available information about the risks for both children was suitably assessed to support effective decision-making on their moves into the home. Leaders and managers have not shown enough professional curiosity to explore gaps in information that was provided by a placing authority for one child. Consequently, these children have not settled well into the home and unmanageable group dynamics between children have followed.

Leaders and managers have failed to identify and address staff training gaps. Not all the staff have the necessary skills and experience to meet the individual needs of children and provide safe and effective care.

Staff use consequences with children as part of a wider approach to behaviour management. However, the recording and monitoring of these measures are ineffective. Several consequences involve financial reparations over a long time. Children's views are not always gained or considered, and there is a lack of independent oversight on the effectiveness of these measures when the manager has imposed them. Therefore, the intended safeguards of ensuring fairness, consistency and proportionality are not fully realised for children.

Children's risk management plans are detailed and updated regularly. However, leaders and managers have failed to ensure that the guidance set out in children's risk management plans is effective in responding to the risks of children having electronic cigarettes. The risks are therefore increasing for children in this area.

Leaders and managers have failed to monitor and review incidents when children seek to go missing from the home. Potential learning in relation to staff practice has not been identified or addressed.

The responsible individual has responded to allegations against staff appropriately. Protective measures and external oversight are in place while investigations are being undertaken.

Three requirements from the last inspection have been met.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/06/2024	Full	Good
03/04/2023	Full	Good
05/05/2022	Full	Good
05/01/2022	Interim	Declined in effectiveness

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 with the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
*The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose; ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(c)(f)(h)) In particular: leaders and managers must source and ensure that staff attend training in positive behaviour support in accordance with the home's model of support. Leaders and managers must also ensure that staff attend training in responding to risks of suicide ideation, risks of criminal exploitation and risks of substance misuse for children;	28 February 2025

leaders and managers must thoroughly review and ensure that staff follow guidance and risk-reduction strategies in relation to supporting appropriate boundaries for children in possession of electronic cigarettes; leaders and managers must review the approach of imposing consequences on children. Leaders and managers must ensure that strong levels of scrutiny are in place to provide assurance that these measures are justified and effective; and leaders and managers must thoroughly review records in relation to incidents of children going missing to ensure that any issues relating to staff's practice can be identified and followed up with the staff concerned.	
The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(iv))	28 February 2025
The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b)) In particular: leaders and managers must ensure that all relevant information about children is monitored, assessed and reviewed before they move into the home; and leaders and managers must implement an effective system to understand the combined risks of children living together.	14 March 2025

*This requirement is subject of a compliance notice.

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that the identified plans to revamp and level the garden continue at an appropriate pace. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this visit was to monitor the home following concerns raised to Ofsted.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

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

Mark Anderton, Social Care Inspector

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