

1241897

Registered provider: Pathways Care Group Limited

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. The registered manager left in June 2025. An interim manager was appointed in January 2025 and will apply to register with Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 24 and 25 June 2025

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 4 June 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection:

A monitoring visit was carried out on the 21 January 2025 following specific concerns or allegations received by Ofsted. A notice restricting accommodation and a compliance notice were served regarding the leadership and management of the home. Ofsted carried out a monitoring visit on 4 March 2025. At this visit, the compliance notice was met and the notice restricting accommodation was lifted.

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

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

At the time of inspection, three children were living at the home. One child moved into the home during the inspection. One child was staying away from the home. Two children were spoken to by the inspector.

Since the last inspection, six children have moved in, and six children have moved out. Although the children's moves to the home have been planned, these were not all managed well. The moves out have not all been in a planned way. One child was told they were moving due to the care plan being changed by the local authority. The multi-agency plan to move them from the home was not well coordinated or sensitive to the child's needs. This resulted in a significant incident for the child. This incident was witnessed by the other children in the home, causing distress.

The home is not welcoming, because several areas need attention. The internal doors do not have closing handles. The provider is addressing this. The heavy-duty hinges on the doors as well as the signage throughout the home provide a clinical and institutional feel. This does not lend itself well to a nurturing home for children. The managers gave assurances that improvements are planned.

Managers and staff understand the value of education. One child is in full-time education. Managers are advocating for one child to access a suitable education plan. One child has refused to engage in education and has sourced employment independently.

Independence skills are encouraged for children in an age-appropriate way. Children are supported to carry out a variety of tasks, such as cooking, shopping and budgeting.

Hobbies and interests that children enjoy are encouraged. One child said they enjoy going to the driving range and using their scooter at a local skate park. This increases children's sense of self-worth.

Managers and staff encourage and support time with family. The children all have consistent time with loved ones, which maintains important relationships. This offers children stability and consistency.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

One child's care plan was not followed by staff. This left the child vulnerable to harm. Concerns regarding the practice of these staff members have led to formal actions by managers.

One child regularly goes missing from the home for prolonged periods of time. The managers have worked collaboratively with other agencies to understand the reasons for these incidents. Managers have advocated for the child to be moved to a home more aligned to meet their needs. In the meantime, managers and staff offer daily phone support to the child who continues to be away from the home. The contextual risk for the child remains. Another child was frequently going missing from the home. The manager understood the child's need to build relationships with peers. The child has been supported to have friends to the home. As a result, the number of missing-from-care events for this child has reduced.

Staff have important discussions with children to help them understand risks, including online safety and relationships. Staff use key-worker sessions to encourage children to make safer life choices.

Staff received training in safeguarding matters. They know how to escalate safeguarding concerns, including to external agencies.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The registered manager was away from the home for a prolonged period. Her long-term absence from the home was not shared with Ofsted in the required way. This does not support Ofsted to have good oversight.

The deputy manager stepped into the manager's post and has been appointed as manager. She is suitably qualified and will apply to Ofsted to be registered.

The children have experienced some staff changes over this inspection period. Some staff have left, and there have been changes in shift patterns, which has impacted on staff morale. New staff have been recruited and are currently undergoing their induction programme. The multiple changes have increased instability and inconsistency at the home.

Managers do not ensure that Ofsted is notified of all significant events that occur in the home. This compromises external oversight of safeguarding practices in the home.

Leaders and managers have reviewed the risks in the local area. Due to the identified local risks, they have adapted the home's statement of purpose to offer care for younger children. Staff have been provided training to ensure they have the knowledge and skills to adapt and provide the appropriate and necessary care.

The managers communicate well with other professionals. One social worker said that they work collaboratively with other professionals and always consider the best interests of the child.

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
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— 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. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i))	25 Sept 2025
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. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a))	25 Sept 2025
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there; and there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(c)(e))	25 Sept 2025

The registered person must give notice in writing to HMCI, as soon as it is reasonably practicable to do so, if any of the following events take place or are expected by the registered person to take place—

a person other than the registered person carries on or manages the children's home;

a person ceases to carry on or manage the home.
(Regulation 49 (a)(b))

25 Sept 2025

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that the children's home is a nurturing and supportive environment that meets the needs of the children. In particular, the registered person should prevent doors from slamming shut and ensure refurbishment plans 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 inspector has 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 Limited

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

Responsible individual: Benjamin Harper

Registered manager: Paulina Saczewska

Inspector

Sarah Cooper, Social Care Inspector

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