

# 1256660

Registered provider: Pathways Care Group

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

The home provides care for up to four children with learning disabilities and social and emotional needs. This is one of several children's homes operated by this private provider.

The manager registered with Ofsted in June 2022.

### Inspection dates: 18 and 19 October 2022

|                                                                                           |             |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| <b>Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account</b> | <b>good</b> |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|

|                                                             |      |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| 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:** 3 June 2021

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** requires improvement to be good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement            |
|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| 03/06/2021      | Full            | Requires improvement to be good |
| 21/04/2021      | Full            | Inadequate                      |
| 27/02/2020      | Interim         | Improved effectiveness          |
| 08/04/2019      | Full            | Good                            |

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good**

Since the last inspection, one child has moved on from the home in a planned way. Staff supported the child to prepare for moving to their new home. At the time of this inspection, two young people were living at the home. They have lived together for several years and have stayed on after their 18th birthdays. A child is due to move in and has visited the home.

Young people benefit from a nurturing and caring environment. Their confidence and ability to express their feelings improves.

Young people have fun. They are involved in a range of stimulating activities, such as swimming, bowling, arts and crafts, holidays, day trips, school trips and after-school clubs. Photo albums help the young people to recall happy occasions. Young people's families visit the home regularly.

Young people's progress at school improves and they achieve 100% attendance. They walk to school each day with staff. Staff go with the young people to all school meetings.

Staff support young people with their physical health and well-being appointments. Young people's overall health improves. A social worker said that the care and support that young people benefit from is excellent.

Staff and young people sing and dance together. Young people and staff have warm and trusting relationships. To complement verbal communication, some staff use pictures and symbols. However, the staff are not consistent in their approach to using pictures and symbols when seeking the views and wishes of young people with autism spectrum disorder. This does not ensure every young person's full participation in all aspects of their life.

The staff decorate the house impressively throughout the year, on themes such as American independence and Halloween. Abundant decoration and tactile resources such as a sensory tent help the young people to feel comfortable in their home. The staff use visual prompts for learning in topics such as black history. However, the staff do not go far enough to help young people to understand their background. This does not ensure that every young person develops a good understanding of who they are and where they come from.

A trampoline, home-made bird box and a chalk wall in the garden create a family feel. The young people take part in a range of tasks around the home such as housework and cooking. This helps them to practise practical skills and supports choice and independence.

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

Young people say that they feel safe and well cared for. The children's guide uses pictures to help young people to understand who to speak to if they are worried.

Some young people receive personal care. Waking night staff complement the day team. Staff retention is high and staff recruitment is thorough. Young people do not go missing. Incidents of concern have reduced to zero. There have been no physical interventions since the last inspection.

There have been no allegations. The manager responds appropriately to complaints and provides clear feedback to the complainant following internal investigation. Senior staff carry out regular medication and health and safety checks, reporting any concerns to the manager for action.

Each young person has a personal evacuation plan. Fire drills help staff and young people practise what to do in the event of an emergency. The manager is satisfied that the young people know how to exit the home safely. There is a fire exit in the dining room which leads out to the garden. This fire exit does not have a system to alert staff when the door is pushed open. This does not provide assurance that staff would know if young people have left the house.

Reward charts help the young people to work towards weekly goals. Support plans help staff to understand individual young people's anxieties and to implement a consistent routine. This provides continuity for the young people, who respond positively to the routine and the daily structure.

## **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good**

The manager registered with Ofsted in June 2022. Previously, he held the deputy manager role. He holds a level 5 diploma in leadership. Staff say that the manager has transformed the culture and approach to care for the better. The manager has met the requirements that were raised at the last full inspection and the subsequent monitoring visit. The responsible individual left in October 2022. The organisation has notified Ofsted of the appointment of a new responsible individual.

Some staff hold the required level 3 qualification. Some staff who have worked at the home for more than two years are yet to achieve this. This does not ensure that every member of staff who should be is suitably qualified.

Staff feel valued, well supported and included in decision-making. They say that the manager listens to their ideas about how best to help and support the young people. This approach inspires confidence and helps staff to take pride in their role and maintain a long-term commitment to the young people in their care.

Permanent staff have an annual appraisal and now routinely receive good-quality supervision. The use of agency staff has reduced. Agency staff do not have supervision. This does not ensure that every person working at the home discusses

their role with a supervisor. Staff access suitable training. Most of the staff training is online; this is enhanced with regular young person-centred discussions, team meetings and some face-to-face training on understanding autism spectrum disorder. This helps to raise standards of practice.

Staff prepare and plan for being out frequently in the community with the young people. Staff keep the young people safe and provide them with lots of reassurance. However, lanyards worn by staff while they are out detract from the family approach to care created by the manager and the staff when at the home.

Parents and external professionals provided positive feedback about the home. A development plan helps the manager to work through the areas identified for improvement. The manager has used feedback from the independent person and support from senior managers to make positive changes at the home. The content of young people's files has improved. The manager routinely monitors staff practice and audits written information. This monitoring and the manager's close relationship with the young people help him to maintain oversight of young people's progress and staff well-being.

## 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         |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| <p>The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who—</p> <p>understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children;</p> <p>use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to—</p> <p>meet the needs of each child.<br/>(Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c) (i))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that staff are alerted when the fire exit in the dining room is opened.</p> | 25 November 2022 |
| <p>The registered person may only—</p> <p>employ an individual to work at the children's home,</p> <p>if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3).</p> <p>The requirements are that—</p> <p>the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform.</p> <p>For the purposes of paragraph (3)(b), an individual who works in the home in a care role has the appropriate qualification if, by the relevant date, the individual has attained—</p>                                                                                                                                                                           | 31 March 2023    |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                         |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| <p>the Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare (England) ("the Level 3 Diploma"); or</p> <p>a qualification which the registered person considers to be equivalent to the Level 3 Diploma.</p> <p>The relevant date is—</p> <p>in the case of an individual who starts working in a care role in a home after 1st April 2014, the date which falls 2 years after the date on which the individual started working in a care role in a home.<br/>(Regulation 32 (2)(a) (3)(b) (4)(a)(b) (5)(a))</p> |                         |
| <p>The registered person must ensure that all employees—</p> <p>receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(b))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that agency staff receive supervision appropriate to the frequency of their shifts.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                            | <p>30 December 2022</p> |

## Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the home meets the children's needs. In particular, when staff take young people out, ensure that staff's identification badges are used discreetly. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should ensure that staff help young people to understand who they are and where they come from. In particular, provide support to young people from diverse cultural backgrounds. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 16, paragraph 3.14)
- The registered person should ensure that each child is provided with support to communicate their views, wishes and feelings and participate as fully as possible in all aspects of their care planning and daily care. In particular, ensure that staff are consistent in their use of pictures and symbols in conversations with young people who need help to process information. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 22, paragraph 4.6)

## **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:** 1256660

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** Pathways Care Group

**Registered provider address:** Minton Place, Victoria Street, Windsor SL4 1EG

**Responsible individual:** Post vacant

**Registered manager:** Piotr Dembowski

## Inspector

Rosie Davie, Social Care Inspector

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