

1263201

Registered provider: Pathway Care Solutions Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is a privately owned and run children's home. It is part of a large organisation that provides a range of services to children. It is registered to provide care for up to four children with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The home is committed to providing care to children on a long-, medium- and short-term basis, depending on the needs of the child.

The manager has recently been appointed and his application for registration is currently being processed.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020. We last visited this setting on 25 June 2021 to carry out a full inspection. The report is published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 October 2021

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

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: 25 June 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
25/06/2019	Full	Good
01/10/2018	Full	Good
06/02/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children benefit from and experience stability of care, having lived at the home for some time. Children can identify staff who are important to them and who they can talk to. This helps children to develop positive relationships with staff where they receive the support, guidance and attention they need.

Children who live at this home are doing well; they are making progress in many aspects of their lives. Children are comfortable in their surroundings. They live in a spacious and homely environment where they can spend time together. As one child said, 'I can just chill in my room.' Children are supported by staff to feel that they belong and to feel that this is their home.

Children's attendance at school is 100%. Children enjoy reading and acquiring new skills, and they are rewarded for their achievements. Staff embed a culture of learning and give the children new experiences ranging from a trip to Harry Potter World to celebrating Nigeria's Independence Day. Staff encourage the children to have aspirations for their future.

Staff support the children to attend routine health appointments. All the children are in good physical health and their emotional well-being and mental health is promoted through specialist intervention. This means that children get the help they need at the right time in their lives.

Spending time with family members and friends is both encouraged and facilitated in accordance with the child's wishes and feelings. It has helped to nurture and repair family relationships. Appropriate assessments are undertaken so that children can have overnight stays with their friends and invite them to their home. This approach brings a sense of normality for the children.

Staff clearly understand the children very well and children participate in day-to-day decisions about their lives. Plans for the children focus on the child, and staff promote engagement through key-work sessions. Recording information could be more child friendly and evidence input from the child. This would help the children to look back and reflect on their behaviour and in the progress they have made.

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

Risk assessments are individualised and identify each child's known risks and vulnerabilities. However, risk assessments would benefit from clearly identifying whether risks are current or historic, as this could impede staff practice. Equally, risk assessments lack the voice of the child and an acknowledgement that children understand what makes them vulnerable.

Staff address issues such as bullying and racism that have occurred from time to time between the children. Children are confident in telling staff when such issues have happened, with the certainty that they will be addressed. In addition, staff have engaged the children in learning about different cultures and celebrating Black History month.

All staff undergo training in a strength-based therapeutic model of care as part of their probationary period of employment. This helps staff to understand why children behave in a certain way, why they go into crisis and, just as important, how to communicate effectively with them. As a consequence, physical intervention to manage behaviour is very rarely needed.

Close working relationships with social workers and partner agencies inform good decision-making and care planning. Difficult decisions are not taken lightly and are taken in consultation with others when behaviours cannot be managed safely. This resulted in one child moving to a more suitable home where their needs could be better met.

The ability to balance children's need for free time and increasing independence, alongside appropriate levels of supervision, is managed well. A great deal of trust has been established between the staff and the children, and children very rarely go missing. Children's safety and well-being are given high importance and children respond well to the boundaries in place.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is new to the home and he has recently submitted his application to register. He has relevant experience and holds a level 5 diploma in leadership and management. The manager is ambitious for the home, the staff and the children.

The manager leads a staff team where morale has been low, and this has affected staff retention. The COVID-19 pandemic has had an impact, with staff feeling 'burnt out' and tired. To their credit and commitment, shifts have been covered without using agency staff. Recruitment of new staff has been a priority and the home is now beginning to see the benefits of a newly appointed management team that has brought stability and consistency to the home.

The manager and the interim deputy manager are beginning to provide the right level of support, training and supervision. However, there remain gaps in supervision that could hinder staff support and guidance. Newly appointed staff are, however, receiving a well-rounded induction programme.

Robust and safe referral processes that match the children and assess compatibility are in place. Young people are carefully transitioned in and out of the home, even when in crisis. This helps children to settle quickly in their new surroundings.

Team meetings have improved in quality and are well attended. The manager has introduced a range of topics that highlight relevant and up-to-date research and

good practice that he has disseminated amongst the staff team. This demonstrates the manager's commitment to improving the quality of care and outcomes for the children.

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
The registered person must ensure that all employees— receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience; and have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (4)(b)(c))	19 November 2021

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)

In particular, ensure that the risk assessments are amended to reflect the level of risk, emerging risks and whether risks have reduced or increased.

- The registered person should ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies on record keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective, and clear recording. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

In particular, ensure that care plans and key-work sessions are recorded in a way that is meaningful to the child and evidences the child's contribution.

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: 1263201

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Pathway Care Solutions Ltd

Registered provider address: Atria, Spa Road, Bolton BL1 4AG

Responsible individual: Darren Singh

Registered manager: Kristopher Noble

Inspector

Cath Sikakana, Social Care Inspector

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