

1277045

Registered provider: Pathway Care Solutions Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a large, national provider. It can provide care for four children who have learning disabilities, emotional or social difficulties. At the time of inspection, two children were living at the home.

A registered manager of a local home was registered to manage this home until recently. They have cancelled their registration. The acting manager has submitted their application to register.

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 May 2025

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: 1 May 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection:

On 10 July 2024 Ofsted inspected this home and identified serious and widespread concerns in relation to the care and protection of the children. As a result, a compliance notice was issued under regulation 13 and a decision was made to restrict admissions to the home. The restriction was lifted on 18 December 2024 following close monitoring by Ofsted.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
01/05/2024	Full	Requires improvement to be good
21/08/2023	Full	Good
21/09/2022	Full	Good
12/10/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Significant improvements have been made to the physical home environment over the last year. New furniture, carpets and soft furnishings make the home feel much more like a family home. Photos of the children show that this is their home and attention to detail shows throughout the home. This has benefited both children and staff.

Children have close relationships with staff. Both children were seen to ask for staff by name and reach out to them for affection. Everyone spoken to spoke with real affection for the children; staff are invested in these children. This supports the children to feel settled and the atmosphere in the home is calmer.

Both children have fantastic attendance at school. Staff have worked hard to improve communication with teachers about the specific needs of one child.

Outside of school children have fun-filled days with regular trips out to parks, beaches and local attractions. Both children have enjoyed holidays this year, which one child recalled to the inspector with excitement.

Children's progress can be seen by the reduction of restrictions for each child. For example, at times, both children have been able to be supported by one member of staff rather than two. Leaders and managers have also given thought to other physical restrictions, such as window restrictors, and these have been removed where safe to do so.

Memory books are kept up to date and staff help children to capture important memories. They are also used by the children to help them to communicate an activity they want to repeat. Staff make good use of photos to enable children to make choices. They can choose photos of which meals they would like or which activities they would like to try.

The children have been supported to develop a positive relationship with each other. They now do some activities together and came together recently to enjoy a film night. However, they both have few friendships with peers outside of the home. Proactive support from staff to develop friendships is lacking.

The team's understanding of children's health needs has greatly improved. Input from wider professionals and the in-house clinical team has enabled staff to develop clear plans to support one child's health needs well. Children's communication methods are understood by staff, and both children's speech development has notably progressed.

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

Staff understand the risks to the children well. Clear plans are in place to support children in various situations. There is a proactive approach from the team to prevent incidents. Staff understand the children and can spot when the children need some time away from each other or need to be distracted with an activity for example. They are aware of the signs when children become upset or frustrated. Children are supported well to understand potential dangers. Staff help children to understand their emotions. There are lots of resources around the home which help the children to name feelings. Social stories are also used well to help children understand different situations.

The use of physical intervention has significantly reduced since the last inspection. This is because the staff team better understand the children. Staff have greater awareness of children's needs and how to meet them. Instead, there are occasions when staff guide or distract children to do other things. When physical interventions have been used, they have been proportionate and to keep children safe. Conversations take place with the children and staff involved. Learning from the incidents is shared with the team as a whole.

When concerns have been raised about staff practice, these have been investigated quickly and reported to safeguarding agencies. Safe actions have been put into place while investigations are ongoing. The learning from these incidents is considered and shared with the team.

When a medication error was realised, medical advice was sought quickly. There was no impact on the child and the labelling was updated in line with the child's age and weight.

Safer recruitment is in place to ensure appropriate individuals are employed. A risk assessment was completed when a historic offence was raised to ensure children's safety.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home now benefits from having a permanent manager in post, who has submitted their application to register. For a period of time a manager from a nearby home was dual registered for this home. This provided support to the acting manager and the team in the interim. The staff team has been stable for the last six months and is fully staffed for the current children.

Leaders and managers have good systems in place to review care. Monitoring incidents and regular reviews are in place and help the manager to see what is working well. Oversight of incidents is generally thorough. Consideration is given to what staff could do differently and whether staff action has been effective.

Staff say they feel supported and report improvements in the home. Supervision takes place regularly. However, the system in place which is used to monitor completion is not robust in terms of highlighting any missed supervisions to the manager.

Language used around the home and in records generally gives adults clear guidance. However, at times the use of words such as 'bedroom 5' or 'dysregulated' are functional but are not meaningful to children. Some records are written in first person, when the children have not used these words and so are not their accounts of events.

Learning opportunities are undertaken and shared with the team. Children benefit from the clinical input to the home, which takes place regularly. This supports the team to understand and feel more confident to meet the children's needs. Specific training has been provided to staff to help them know how to meet the children's needs. The manager has implemented champion roles for the staff. This helps staff to feel valued and distributes responsibilities.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Recommendations

- The registered person should seek to provide opportunities for children to develop themselves in accordance with their wishes. Opportunities to discover and develop friendships should be provided and children should be encouraged to try new activities, where appropriate. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 31, paragraph 6.4)
- The registered person should have systems in place so that all staff receive supervision. If the manager is not directly line-managing staff, they should be aware of any gaps in supervision. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)
- The registered person should ensure that children's records are 'living documents' and that staff are recording information in a way that is meaningful to children. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 58, paragraph 11.19)

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: 1277045

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Pathway Care Solutions Ltd

Registered provider address: Maybrook House, Third Floor, Queensway, Halesowen, B63 4AH

Responsible individual: Guy Mammatt

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Nickie Doney, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

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