

1277045

Assurance visit

Information about this children's home

This children's home is part of a large national company. Up to four children can live here at any one time. Children who live here may have some behavioural and/or emotional difficulties. The registered manager has been in post for several months.

Visit dates: 28 to 29 October 2020

Previous inspection date: 7 November 2019

Previous inspection judgement: Improved effectiveness

Information about this visit

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), Ofsted suspended all routine inspections in March 2020. As part of a phased return to routine inspection, we are undertaking assurance visits to children's social care services that are inspected under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF).

At these visits, inspectors evaluate the extent to which:

- children are well cared for
- children are safe
- leaders and managers are exercising strong leadership.

This visit was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000, following the published guidance for assurance visits.

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills is leading Ofsted's work into how England's social care system has delivered child-centred practice and care within the context of the restrictions placed on society during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Findings from the visit

We did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance visit.

The care of children

Children have positive and strong relationships with staff. Relationships are built on mutual trust, honesty and respect. Children talk to staff about their worries and concerns and staff act to support them and keep them safe. Children say this helps them feel valued and cared for.

Meaningful discussions take place between staff and children on a regular basis. These provoke thoughts about how things can impact on the children and others. For example, when shared items are damaged. Specialist support is accessed quickly for children when they need it. This helps children make sense of their feelings and manage them better.

Children are making progress in all aspects of their lives. For example, one child who struggled to attend school has not missed a day since schools reopened in September. Another is now able to sit and talk to adults, which was once impossible.

The safety of children

Appropriate risk assessments are in place to reduce the risk of COVID-19. Visitors have their temperature taken on arrival at the home. Appropriate discussions take place with children to support them to keep safe.

Incidents within the home have reduced. This is because the care the children receive is nurturing and child focused. When children are struggling to manage their feelings, staff support them well. As a result, emotional distress for children has reduced.

When children go missing, staff do not respond consistently. Some are confused about expectations of them. The registered manager has not accessed independent return home interviews to inform future practice. She acted to rectify this shortfall during this assurance visit.

Leaders and managers

The registered manager has been in post for several months. She has worked tirelessly to rectify significant shortfalls identified at previous inspections. With the support of the responsible individual, previous concerns have been addressed. As a result, experiences and outcomes for the children have significantly improved.

The registered manager is dedicated and passionate about her role. Children are at the heart of her practice and she wants to achieve the best she can for them. She is a good role model and leads with determination.

The registered manager is reflective, thoughtful and seeks to improve her practice. There is a willingness to accept that things may not work, but also a real desire to

get it right for children. As a result, children are receiving care that meets their current and emerging needs.

The registered manager advocates well for children. For example, one child is not receiving their legal educational entitlement. The registered manager has continued to challenge others. She has ensured interim measures are in place to reduce the impact on the child.

Staff stated that they are very well supported by their managers. They feel valued and a part of a collaborative team. Managers are available and approachable, and staff appreciate this.

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 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 understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(a)(v)) In particular, ensure that the systems in place when children go missing are robust and children receive a consistent response from staff.	30/11/2020

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 1277045

Registered provider: Pathway Care Solutions Ltd

Registered provider address: 1 Merchants Place, River Street, Bolton, Lancashire BL2 1BX

Responsible individual: Jon Edgecombe

Registered manager: Claire Wallace

Inspector

Tracey Ledder, Social Care Inspector

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