

2593651

Registered provider: Pathway Care Solutions Group Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is privately owned. It provides care for up to four children who require care and support to deal with their emotional difficulties.

The interim manager came into post in May 2022. He is in the process of registering with Ofsted. He is suitably qualified and experienced for this role.

Inspection dates: 24 and 25 August 2022

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: 23 November 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
23/11/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children have established positive relationships with the staff who care for them. These strong relationships help children to feel more secure and safe, and achieve good outcomes.

The children's progress is evident to all those who care for and support them. Children routinely attend school, and this has increased their level of learning. When there are barriers to education, staff work with other professionals and the child to overcome these difficulties. For some children, this has resulted in staff identifying a new school or helping the child to attend further education. As a result, the children have increased their academic achievements, which will help them to gain future employment.

Great attention and assistance are given to children's emotional and physical well-being. Children see health professionals, receive routine health check-ups and access mental health services, if required. Children also respond well to the staff's therapeutic approach and, over time, have become more able to emotionally regulate their feelings.

Children's feelings, views and opinions are actively sought by staff. These are taken on board wherever possible to influence the care that children receive and the decisions made about their future. This has increased the children's self-esteem and confidence. For example, some children are more able to attend meetings to represent themselves. Other children are more able to vocalise to adults what is important to them.

The children's daily life is enhanced by living in a really constructive home environment. The house is spacious and, in the main, well decorated and furnished. Most areas have some personalisation, such as photos and ornaments. However, the decoration and furnishing in a few rooms are suffering from some wear and tear issues. This detracts from the otherwise positive home environment provided to the children.

The children spoke about the fun they have had on a number of activities during the summer, particularly going on holiday to Skegness, meeting with friends and going on trips. Two children have pet hamsters, and they love taking care of them. Children's interests are very much supported by staff. This means that every effort is made to ensure children have positive experiences that they will remember forever.

Staff support the children to maintain and rebuild relationships with their families. Children said that they see family members more than once a week in addition to keeping in touch by telephone. This ensures the children understand their own identity and family history.

Staff work tirelessly to support and prepare older children to be ready to move on to semi-independence. The children receive guidance and advice, and learn practical skills such as how to budget money, complete house chores and cook meals. A child said, 'The staff have helped me so much. They even helped decorate my new flat. I still keep in touch with them, and I visit for tea sometimes. I still speak to staff when I need advice. When I visit, it feels like I've returned home.'

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

The staff focus on keeping children safe. The staff use a therapeutic approach to care and support the children. The staff receive training in therapeutic parenting and understanding trauma, and they are guided by health professionals. This training and understanding of trauma help the staff to identify better ways to support and care for the children.

The staff use a restorative approach to support the children's presenting behaviour. Consequences are not punitive, and the children respond well to receiving lots of praise and incentives for positive behaviour and achievements. The number of serious incidents has reduced, and children remain settled.

The staff understand each child's vulnerabilities and associated risks. Staff follow the clear and updated written risk assessments, and care and safety plans. The staff evidently know the children very well. The staff can easily identify what may upset individual children. As such, they are quick to respond, which helps to ensure that children feel supported.

Since the last inspection, children have only been physically held on four occasions for a short interval, when they have been at risk of harm. Staff state that they only physically hold a child as a last resort or when all other approaches and strategies tried have not worked. This approach ensures that the children are protected from harm within a supportive ethos.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The new manager has set to work immediately to support the staff and children, providing clear direction and leading by example. He has assessed the areas that require development and improvement. In turn, he has swiftly taken action to make the necessary changes to improve the quality of care provided to the children.

The requirements and recommendations made at the last inspection have all been addressed. These include upskilling the workforce and addressing shortfalls in case records.

All new staff have completed their induction in full. There has been a strong focus on progressing care staff qualifications at levels 4 and 5. All mandatory training is up to date, and the manager carefully monitors what training staff have attended. This ensures that the staff have the knowledge and skills to fully undertake their role and duties to a very good standard.

The staff spoke with commitment and pride about the care they provide to the children. They state that staff morale has improved. This is well supported by monthly formal supervisions, staff meetings and reflective discussions with the clinician. Detailed daily shift handovers provide everyone with a good overview of the children, planned activities and appointments and tasks required for completion. These good communication mechanisms make certain the children are provided with consistent care.

Strong partnership working with other professionals exist to ensure the best outcomes for the children. Social workers confirm that there is good collaborative working between themselves and the staff. A social worker said, 'The staff keep me up to date about [name of child]. I really like the weekly updates. They have been positive about [name of child]. The child's care plan is followed, and it's so good to see that [name of child] is making progress.'

The internal monitoring systems of the home are now more comprehensive. These complement the external monitoring undertaken by an independent person. This better assists the manager to detect deficits and make prompt changes to improve and maintain good standards of care for the children.

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

Recommendation

- The registered person should make sure that the children's home provide a nurturing and supportive environment that meets the needs of their children. They will, in most cases, be homely, domestic environments. In particular, the home should be decorated and furnished throughout to a high standard, with additional personalisation. This will ensure that high standards exist throughout the home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 15, paragraph 3.9)

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: 2593651

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Pathway Care Solutions Group Limited

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

Responsible individual: Rebecca Maltby

Registered manager: Kristopher Noble

Inspector

Debbie Foster, Social Care Inspector

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