

2680559

Registered provider: New Path Residential Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately owned home registered with Ofsted in July 2022. The home provides care for up to four children who may have experienced childhood trauma and have social and emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted at the time the home opened.

Inspection dates: 9 and 10 January 2023

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: 12 October 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: inadequate

Enforcement action since last inspection:

Following the full inspection in October 2022, Ofsted served two compliance notices regarding the protection of children, and leadership and management. Ofsted served a restriction notice on 14 October 2022. At the monitoring visit on 22 November 2022, Ofsted found that the provider had met the steps set out in both notices and had complied with the restriction of accommodation. The restriction was lifted on 24 November 2022.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/10/2022	Full	Inadequate

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

There were two children living at the home at the time of this inspection. One of these children has recently moved in. The home is settled. Children have warm and positive relationships with the manager and staff, who talk about them with enthusiasm.

Children are making good progress from their starting points. For one child, this meant a significant reduction in episodes of being missing from home. The child who recently moved to the home has established positive relationships with staff. There have been no behavioural incidents, which had been evident in previous placements.

One child has experienced long-term challenges in relation to their consistent attendance and engagement at school. However, with consistent support from the manager and staff, who advocate strongly for positive school support, attendance has improved. Staff work with both children to explore ideas for future employment or study. Staff have helped to secure work experience opportunities for one child and made promising links for volunteering opportunities with animal sanctuaries for the other child.

Children have engaged with the provider's programme of steps towards semi-independent living and preparing for adulthood. Staff support children to achieve rewards by engagement with planning for self-help and care, managing finances and identifying risks, among other topics. Children enjoy participating in a wide range of activities at home and in the community. This includes 'mocktail-making' nights and trips to the cinema and bowling alley.

Staff ensure that children have access to the health services that they need. One child has stopped smoking and drinking alcohol for several months, with support from staff. Children have access to a healthy diet. However, staff do not sufficiently encourage children to plan their menus with a focus on eating enough fruit and vegetables.

The home's therapeutic staff support children with their emotional well-being, providing counselling to overcome adverse experiences and traumas. There is a bespoke and creative approach to how this support is given, so that children find accessing it more comfortable. Children have chosen venues or settings that they really enjoy being in, with the psychologist arranging an activity there alongside therapeutic work.

Children receive high levels of support to help them maintain positive relationships with friends and relatives. This includes staff supporting children to visit their family homes. Relatives said that they are very well informed about children's well-being and progress. Staff have helped one child become involved in fundraising for a

charity that supports the needs of a family member. The child said that this has made them feel proud.

The home is well decorated and furnished. One child who enjoys interior design has been instrumental in planning and choosing a recent programme of decoration and changing furnishings.

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

Children said that they feel safe. Improvements have been made to assessing risks to children and to the plans for staff to follow to mitigate them. Staff have received extensive training to understand the vulnerabilities of the children to risks in their community and when accessing the internet.

Staff could explain the actions that they must take should a child be at risk of harm or if they have gone missing from care. Learning from a previous serious incident has been used candidly to make improvements to the oversight of children who are at risk of exploitation.

Staff enable children to take age-appropriate risks. This includes gaining trust to have time out of the home without staff supervision. Recent work between managers and a social worker to review expectations has improved children's adherence to those boundaries. Therefore, this has further helped the children to bond with staff and spend better quality time at the home, making them feel attached and settled.

Staff have all completed training in de-escalating situations that could result in verbal or physical altercations. There have been no incidents of restraint since the last inspection. Through detailed and sensitive key-working sessions, children understand the expectations for them to be responsible for managing their own safety.

Managers have improved communication and the exchange of essential information between staff teams, including during out of hours. Staff feel confident that any requests for advice or guidance will be readily responded to.

Children receive their medicines safely and on time. Records are completed accurately, with any anomalies quickly identified. However, improvements are needed to ensure that there are clear protocols to guide the staff in administering 'as and when required' medicines. Medicines that have been prescribed for children before they moved to the home, and are used infrequently, should be discussed with the child's GP as to whether they remain suitable.

There are some restrictive practices at the home. This includes monitoring exterior doors with an alarm. However, these measures have not been reviewed, since they were implemented, to ensure they remain necessary or proportionate as is required.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Since the last inspection, the manager and deputy manager have provided consistency and stability at the home to bring about the significant improvement that was required. A comprehensive development plan was started to help the staff team develop the skills and confidence that they require. Staff now feel well led and admire how the managers have quickly effected such positive change.

Senior managers have aspired to work together with transparency and cohesiveness. A newly appointed responsible individual has been welcomed to the team, and their views and ideas are valued. This has helped to deliver the improvement plan and stabilise the home.

Staff enjoy working at the home, which helps to provide a positive atmosphere for the children to live in. The manager knows the staff team well and knows individual staff members' strengths and areas for development. Staff are provided with a good-quality induction, which helps them to feel prepared for the role.

The manager works closely with social work professionals to ensure that moves into the home are well planned. This has resulted in a better-than-expected start for a child who has endured several placement breakdowns in the past. This in turn has brought back confidence to staff who experienced difficult challenges from a previous placement that was not well supported.

The manager and deputy manager are very child-centred and know children's needs very well. They value the input of children and the importance of their voices. Both children said that they feel valued by staff. One child said, 'I have a voice here.'

External monitoring of the home by the independent person continues to need improvement. It does not currently provide the provider or manager with a suitably detailed assessment of children's progress or how staff meet their needs.

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that there is a written policy and regular review of any monitoring devices used at the home. In particular, the registered person should ensure that the use of monitors on external doors used to alert staff of opening are assessed as proportionate, and regularly reviewed for their impact on each child. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 16, paragraph 3.16)
- The registered person should ensure that medicines are administered in line with a medically approved protocol. In particular, the registered person should ensure that protocols for administering 'as required' variable dose medicines are clear for staff to follow. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 35, paragraph 7.15)
- The registered person should ensure that staff help children to make positive choices in healthy eating and nutrition. In particular, the registered person should ensure that meal plans encourage children to eat fruit and vegetables. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 35, paragraph 7.18)
- The registered provider should ensure that the independent person they appoint has the skills and understanding to relate to children. The independent person should be able to assess all relevant information and form an impartial judgement about the quality of the home's care. In particular, the registered person should ensure that the independent person reviews records relating to children's care and progress at each visit. Any statements made about the progress that children are making should be based on clear and evaluated evidence. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.8)

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: 2680559

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: New Path Residential Limited

Registered provider address: Cumberland House, 24-28 Baxter Street,
Southend-on-Sea, Essex SS2 6HZ

Responsible individual: Steven Marklew

Registered manager: Chelsea Hilder

Inspector

Jamie Cousins, Social Care Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

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

© Crown copyright 2023