

2680559

Registered provider: New Path Residential Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately owned home provides care for up to four female children with emotional and social difficulties.

The registered manager post has been vacant since April 2024.

Inspection dates: 23 and 24 April 2024

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: 3 April 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
03/04/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
09/01/2023	Full	Good
12/10/2022	Full	Inadequate

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

At the time of this inspection, four children were living at the home. The staff are committed to supporting children to achieve stability. Three children have lived at the home for 12 months or more. This stability has helped the children to feel secure.

The staff have provided a good introduction to the home for a child who recently moved in. This included supporting the child to personalise her bedroom. This has helped the staff to begin to build positive relationships with the child. The manager understands the plans for all children. Positive moves in and out of the home help children to feel valued and cared for.

Children have a high level of emotional and social difficulties, including past traumas. The manager supports staff to respond to these needs via a therapeutic approach to care. This includes the offer of weekly therapy and play sessions.

Staff know the children well and invest effort and time into building relationships with them. The staff are experienced and turnover of staff is low. Professionals and family members said that they are pleased with the quality of care provided by the staff. Children have positive and trusting relationships with staff.

Staff support and encourage children to attend education provisions. The staff provide extra tuition for two children, who are not in full-time education. When children are not in education provisions, staff advocate for them to be supported to return to school.

Leaders, managers and staff support and enable children's relationships with their families and friends. This includes supporting brothers and sisters to visit the home. Children receive risk-assessed support with friendships, including sleepovers. This helps to reduce stigma and isolation for children and helps them to develop their identity and make relationships.

Staff organise a wide range of individual activities and know which activities children do or do not enjoy. Group activities and trips out are also organised. Children can be rewarded with extra activities, for example if they have exceeded education attendance expectations. Children can receive a 'catch me being kind' reward when they do something particularly positive.

The home is welcoming, well maintained and well laid out. Children's rooms are decorated and furnished to each child's taste.

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

The staff are guided by detailed risk assessments and behaviour support plans. These are individualised and help to ensure that specific risks to children and their vulnerabilities are well understood by the staff team. Good-quality care plans reflect the information obtained from placing authorities.

Children who go missing from home are supported by staff who understand how to respond. Staff continue to look for children until they are located. A focus on 'hot spots' forms part of their individualised missing-from-care safety plan. When children return, they are welcomed home and cared for by the staff. This helps children to feel safe and valued.

There has been a low number of physical interventions since the last inspection. The experienced staff demonstrate a good understanding of reducing children's distress. They use trauma-informed responses to children who may be distressed. Debriefs are consistently held with children and staff.

Staff praise children when they have made positive choices. Staff use a range of rewards that help children to build self-esteem and confidence. Consequences focusing on a restorative approach are well considered by the manager. This helps children to learn from mistakes and make better choices.

A robust assessment of local risks in the vicinity of the home is in place. Free time in the local area is risk assessed in discussion with the placing authority. Staff remain curious and mindful of the risks to vulnerable children. The use of a mobile phone app is offered to children to use on free time.

When room searches take place, they do so with a clear rationale and items that may increase risks to children removed. Children are included in these searches when possible and helped to understand the decisions taken.

Safeguarding concerns are well recorded and appropriate input from the local authority designated officer was evident. However, leaders and managers did not notify Ofsted of these concerns promptly. This affects Ofsted's ability to oversee how concerns are managed.

On one occasion, members of staff failed to appropriately record an incident between two children. They did not provide sufficient detail to the manager at the time. As a result, the incident was not fully understood or considered.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager left the home in April 2024. The responsible individual has promoted the deputy to the manager's position, and they have made an application to Ofsted to register. They are suitably experienced and undertaking a relevant level 5

qualification. In this interim period, the responsible individual has provided suitable oversight and the statement of purpose reflects the changes to the staff team.

Staff demonstrate a deep resilience regardless of how challenging the situation or circumstances are. The staff team is a strong and committed. Staff know the children exceptionally well and good working relationships between the staff are evident. A culture of high aspiration and positivity led by the responsible individual and manager enables staff to manage during difficult times.

Staff said that they feel valued and expressed good levels of job satisfaction. They spoke with pride about how they are making a difference to children's lives. Regular welfare checks take place with staff when they have been involved in significant incidents. This has contributed to a stable staff team.

The manager provides staff with regular supervision sessions and detailed appraisals. These sessions help the staff to review and improve their childcare practice in a reflective and professionally curious way.

Oversight from the manager and responsible individual is strong. Weekly and monthly monitoring and reviewing using a variety of tools is in place. Safeguarding meetings to discuss each child's progress and plan are held regularly. This helps the staff to have a holistic view of each child and their needs.

Staff value good-quality comprehensive training. New staff benefit from core training modules delivered both online and face to face. Additional training modules such as behaviour that challenges, emotional and well-being competency, sexual health and racism and diversity training are also offered to the staff team. Specific external training linked to the children's needs is provided. For example, a local charity is delivering substance misuse training to give staff a deeper understanding of the impact of drugs on children. Staff who have passed their probation are working towards a relevant level 4 qualification within timescales.

Two reports by the independent person were not completed in the required time frame. This undermines Ofsted's ability to have effective oversight of the quality of care provided to 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, The 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; take effective action when there is concern about a child's welfare. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(v)(vi)) In particular, ensure that staff take effective action in response to incidents between children.	1 June 2024

Recommendations

- The registered person should notify Ofsted of a serious event without delay. (Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 63, paragraph 14.13)
- The registered person should ensure that the independent person carries out an on-site visit every month. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.5)

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 Ltd

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

Responsible individual: Saima Raja

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors:

Emily Stevens, Social Care Inspector
Daniel Rankin, Social Care Inspector

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