

2680559

Registered provider: New Path Residential Ltd

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is run by a private provider. It provides support for up to four female children who experience emotional and behavioural difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in July 2022.

Inspection date: 26 July 2023

Date of last inspection: 3 April 2023

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Information about this inspection

At this inspection, the inspectors evaluated:

- the care of children
- the safety of children
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers.

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children, using the social care common inspection framework. This assurance 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'.

Findings from the inspection

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

The care of children

Four children were living at the home at the time of this inspection.

One child has moved to the home since the last inspection. Staff supported the child to visit the home on three occasions before their move. The child was able to meet the children already living in the home and join them and staff on a visit to a local theme park. The child's social worker reports that the support the child received from staff during the move has helped them settle in.

The home has been redecorated and new furniture has been purchased. There is no damage to the home and a handyman is employed to ensure that the home is maintained to a high level. Children's rooms are well decorated and furnished. Bedrooms feel homely and are personalised with pictures, posters and other personal items. One child told the inspector they had chosen the paint for their room and helped staff paint the walls.

There is a new system in place to record children's wishes and feelings. Children have wishes and feelings sheets, which they complete. Staff mark requests as completed when action is taken. For example, a child has a new television which they requested, and another child has a pet cat.

The safety of children

Staff understand children's risks and vulnerabilities. Plans and risk assessments are updated following significant incidents. The actions that staff need to follow to keep children safe are clearly identified.

Staff take appropriate action to safeguard children when they go missing. Missing from home incidents are followed up with children via debriefs and key-working sessions. This helps children to understand risks and increase their safety.

Issues of exploitation are managed via a multi-agency team. Staff take appropriate actions and follow relevant risk assessments and plans for children assessed as being at risk from exploitation. Staff are quick to raise their concerns with the local authority and police when risks escalate.

When children have moved into the home, this has been done with appropriate consideration of the needs of all the children. This has enabled managers to identify actions to mitigate predictable risks and increase the likelihood that children can safely live together.

Staff do not always record conversations with children clearly or accurately. This can lead to confusion around what children have or have not said to staff.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers

The manager and the deputy have a close working relationship. Both know the children and are ambitious for them to reach their full potentials.

Leaders and managers have taken action to address the shortfalls from the previous inspection via an action plan. This has resulted in improvements in the care and protection of children.

A company director is now the responsible individual. They are already familiar with the children, the staff and managers. This has helped provide stable and regular support for the manager, including good-quality supervision. The manager feels this consistency has been beneficial.

Staff report that they receive good training and are well supported by managers. Two new members of staff said that their induction has enabled them to understand children's experiences and behaviours, and how to support them. They report good levels of support from leaders and managers via supervisions, team meetings and daily discussions.

The manager has challenged a placing authority over the escalating risks of a child. She has consistently raised concerns and questioned decision-making that she feels has placed a child at increased risk of harm. This has led to several multi-agency meetings to consider safety planning for the child.

Leaders and managers have weekly meetings to discuss and review the needs and progress of children. The outcomes of these reviews are included in children's plans and risk assessments.

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

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

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that staff understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. Staff should record information on individual children in a way that distinguishes between fact, opinion and third-party information. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

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: Chelsea Hilder

Inspector

Tom McGhee, Social Care Inspector

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