

2696825

Registered provider: Pathway Children's Services Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is registered to provide care for up to four children with learning disabilities. The home is part of a private organisation that has other registered homes for children and adults. Four children were living at the home at the time of the inspection.

The manager registered with Ofsted in June 2024.

Inspection dates: 25 and 26 June 2025

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: 17 September 2024

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
17/09/2024	Full	Requires improvement to be good
16/08/2023	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children make progress through the particularly warm and nurturing relationships they have with the staff in the home. The staff are committed to the children, talking enthusiastically about the progress they have seen children make, be it from being able to dress themselves to improved communication and being able to express themselves.

There has been a particular focus on improving children's participation and communication since the last inspection. This has led to children's views being held central to all that happens in the home. Staff are keen to promote the child's voice through the monthly 'you said, we did' meetings which have recently started. This has led to children picking from a wide range of activities, and picking out any specialised and specific pieces of clothing that they want. Additionally, one-to-one sessions and ad hoc discussions lead to children making a variety of choices throughout the day. They have also shared their ideas in other areas, such as how their bedrooms have been decorated and the new equipment for the garden.

The children are supported to become as independent as possible, ready for their next move to an adult provision or semi-independence. Staff support and guide children to develop independence skills as well as providing emotional support as needed. Children are now carrying their own money when they are in the community and are learning how to use payment cards and understand the value of money. They also learn through other activities, for example one child is developing their business and budgeting skills through their pastime of buying items to fix and reselling them at boot fairs.

All children have regular education in either specialist schools or alternative provisions. Children are supported to be up and ready for the school day, and if they are struggling to attend, they are helped to explore why this is to try to overcome their barriers to learning. Alternative packages of education include work experience, which one child loves, being enormously proud to wear their uniform. Their enthusiasm means they are a valued member of the workforce and are learning new skills to be able to work there post-18.

Children engage in a wide range of socially and emotionally stimulating activities. Activity planners are clear and show a wide range of regular activities and activities for the upcoming summer holidays, including trips to local parks and coastal resorts and a stay at a holiday camp. In addition, children attend other clubs and activities that they enjoy, such as trampolining and a specialist music group. Children's particular interests are embraced, and staff help them to develop their skills, be it music or fixing electronic items.

Joint working with partner agencies is a particular strength in the home. Regular meetings with the wider network of professionals mean that there is consistency in approach, and specialist services can become involved when needed. Joint working with

the organisation's positive behaviour support team, occupational therapists, speech and language therapists from school and child and adolescent mental health services means the children have a full range of dedicated support to meet their needs.

Children access medical help as needed. When children struggle to attend routine appointments, they are supported through staff being sensitive to the child's apprehension and seeking out specialist services that can provide dentistry and optician appointments. The looked after children's nurse visits the home, providing welcome support and assessment of the children's health. Children who are anxious about attending the health assessment are sensitively supported and engage fully with the nurse after reassurance.

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

Children's actions and demeanour show that they feel safe and confident in their home. They genuinely view the house as their own, confidently entering the home from school, choosing their own snacks and sitting with their preferred staff. They are developing respect for each other's space and differences, feeling free to wander the home to enjoy the sensory room, activity room and garden, or to sit and relax watching TV in the lounge or in their rooms.

Staff have an in-depth understanding of each child's needs and vulnerabilities, confidently supporting children when they are distressed, and following the clear and specific plans in place. Staff know what to do should they be worried for a child's safety or welfare. Safeguarding practices in the home, including joint working with partner agencies, are strong.

Joint working with the wider professional network has led to more nuanced plans, meeting the specific individual needs of the children for them to be able to make greater progress. Staff are consistent in their approach with the children, so that they know what is expected of them. This means the children are happy and content, able to develop their skills in a settled and consistent environment.

The atmosphere is of a genuine family home where everybody is settled and benefiting from familiar routines. Staff recognise that all behaviour is a means of communication and do all they can to understand what children are trying to say. Staff support children to live alongside each other, despite the significant differences in needs. Children may get angry and frustrated with each other but also know how to repair these relationships, and have a sense of belonging and commitment to one another.

Children learn through natural consequences, and the use of physical intervention is low. The manager provides a safe environment for both children and staff to reflect on any incidents, to develop plans and to consider how best to respond in the future. Records are clear; however, there is no specific process for oversight of incidents where the registered manager has been involved.

Children are supported well to understand the risks of being online, communicating with people via social media and out in the community. When there have been safeguarding concerns, comprehensive responses and joint working with safeguarding agencies and social workers lead to a strong programme of support for the children. However, the recording of some ad hoc discussions with children regarding safety and the appropriateness of some of the content they view online is not easily accessible.

The physical environment has significantly improved. It provides many spaces for the children to relax or play and is, in the main, well maintained and decorated. There continue to be concerns that some damage is taking a long time to be repaired, and some repairs are not necessarily made to an appropriate or acceptable standard.

Children are protected from avoidable risk through regular checks of the firefighting equipment and overall quality of the home. They are protected from being supported by inappropriate people through safer recruitment processes, which have been strengthened since the last inspection.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The management team members have extremely high aspirations for the children they care for. They lead by example and expect high levels of commitment from the staff in the home. The registered manager provides a strong and stable base for staff to develop their skills. Staff consistently talk about the management team with high regard. The team feels well supported to be able to share their views and to learn from the managers and each other, leading to an increase in confidence in their skills in recent months.

A new responsible individual with experience in working in residential childcare has recently joined the organisation. As they are still new in their post, they are currently learning about the home and reviewing the systems and approaches in place.

The managers have strong oversight of the children's experiences and progress. Regular monitoring with the organisation's behaviour support team provides a sound review of children's plans and approaches to care. In addition, joint working with the other professionals in the children's network has improved consistency in the outcomes for children.

Children's experiences are captured for them to keep in memory books. These contain photos and comments from the staff about different achievements and activities they have enjoyed, and days out are documented. A young person who has recently moved on to an adult home remains in contact with staff, who are supporting them to build relationships with the staff in their new home.

The management team continually reviews practices in the home, monitoring the effectiveness and quality of care to feed into the home's development plan. Staff training and supervision focus on their well-being but also on the areas where they can

improve their skills to care for children in a suitable and evolving way as children's needs change. Most staff are enrolled on a suitable level 3 qualification. However, only one member of staff has completed this qualification. Therefore, this requirement is reset at this inspection. The manager makes effective use of reports by the independent visitor to review and develop the running of the home, to improve experiences for 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 quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff— protect and promote each child's welfare. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(ii)) In particular, ensure that there are clear and easily accessible records when discussions take place for children outside of one-to-one sessions.	29 August 2025
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The registered person may only— employ an individual to work at the children's home; or if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home, if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform.	29 August 2025

For the purposes of paragraph (3)(b), an individual who works in the home in a care role has the appropriate qualification if, by the relevant date, the individual has attained—

the Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare (England) ("the Level 3 Diploma"); or

a qualification which the registered person considers to be equivalent to the Level 3 Diploma.

The relevant date is—

in the case of an individual who starts working in a care role in a home after 1st April 2014, the date which falls 2 years after the date on which the individual started working in a care role in a home. (Regulation 32 (1) (2)(a)(b) (3)(b) (4)(a)(b) (5)(a))

This requirement is restated.

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that maintenance is carried out promptly and to a suitable standard. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should ensure that when the registered manager is involved in an incident or physical intervention somebody other than the registered manager reviews the suitability of the response and measure used. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.36)

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: 2696825

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Pathway Children's Services Ltd

Registered provider address: Quadrant House, Floor 6, Thomas More Square,
London E1W 1YW

Responsible individual: Tendai Funganjera

Registered manager: Shauna Lund

Inspector

Jennie Christopher, Social Care Inspector

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