

2729569

Registered provider: Clear Path Care Limited

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is privately owned and provides care for up to 3 children who experience social and emotional difficulties.

There has been no registered manager in post since June 2023. Two managers have been appointed and submitted their application to register with Ofsted but left before registration. There is currently no registered manager in post. The responsible individual is currently overseeing the operation of the home while recruitment continues.

There were 3 children living in the home at the time of the inspection. Two children were spoken with as part of this inspection. One child was out of the home for the day. They were contacted by phone and offered the opportunity to share their views but chose to decline.

Inspection date: 17 December 2025

Date of last inspection: 23 June 2025

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Information about this inspection

At this inspection, the inspector 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.

Three children are living in the home. One child has lived in the home since it opened, and two children have moved in since the last inspection. No children have left. Children have strong relationships with adults in the home. They feel a sense of belonging and will share their worries and concerns with them. In return, adults know how to support and care for children.

When children move into the home, the responsible individual ensures that all available information has been received from the child's local authority before agreeing a move-in date. Meetings with previous care providers have informed decision-making, and effective assessments ensure consideration of all children's needs.

All children are in full-time education and are making progress. One child has been supported by staff to move into post-16 education while navigating a move into residential care. Another child who moved into the home has been able to maintain their existing school provision to ensure consistency. Since the last inspection, one child attended prom and was supported by staff to have a memorable experience. This child spoke with pride and appreciation about how staff made the occasion special given that they were new to the home.

Children's hobbies and talents are nurtured. Children who move into the home are supported to continue with existing clubs and hobbies. Since the last inspection, children have enjoyed a camping holiday and short breaks. Additionally, children have access to a range of activities both in and outside of the home. Children enjoy craft activities, and their artwork is displayed throughout the property.

Staff support children to attend routine health appointments, and where required, they are supported to access specialist services to support their health and wellbeing. An in-house therapist continues to support children in the home and works directly with children on a weekly basis.

Since the last inspection, there has been an increase in incidents. Managers and staff have a clear understanding of safeguarding thresholds and processes in the home. Staff understand their responsibilities and how to keep children safe.

The complexities of one child's care plan have meant that staff have shown resilience and an ability to respond to fluctuating needs and numbers of incidents. One professional said, 'The staff have worked well to support [name of child], who has complex needs, and in difficult circumstances have supported them to make continued progress.' Where challenges have arisen, managers have completed reflective meetings to consider how to mitigate future risks and strengthen practice.

There is a clear and consistent approach to risk management. Detailed risk assessments are overseen by managers and, where necessary, are written in conjunction with the placing authority. This ensures that staff are knowledgeable about effective strategies to reduce and respond to risk and behaviours. This practice contributes to the child's safety and promotes their welfare.

Incidents where children hurt themselves are managed sensitively by staff who understand the associated risks. Staff have received additional training, and regular case meetings are held to ensure that they can support the child. The child's plans effectively address the child's vulnerabilities and set out the action that staff should take. When it has been necessary to conduct a room search following an incident, this has been done with dignity and respect and with the child's consent.

Incidents of physical restraint are rare. The use of restraint has been required on occasions to prevent harm to a child or staff. When holds are used, they are brief and proportionate. Incident reports are detailed, timely and have clear managerial oversight. On one occasion, a member of staff used unapproved holds, but this was in a high-risk situation where there was immediate risk of significant harm. Managers have shown openness and reflection following this incident, with timely reporting to all key agencies. This was an isolated incident, and learning and training have been implemented to strengthen staff practice.

Despite some managerial changes since the last inspection, there have been no other changes to the staff team, which has enabled the team to strengthen. The responsible individual remains a consistent person in the home for staff and children. She visits the home most days. As a result, the departure of the manager has had a minimal impact on the home. Staff report they feel supported and continue to enjoy working in the home, and children feel settled and safe.

The responsible individual is committed to the home and its continued growth. She is actively seeking to recruit a new manager but is diligent in her approach to ensure the next manager has the skills and experience to excel in the role on a long-term basis.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
23/06/2025	Full	Requires improvement to be good
15/05/2024	Full	Requires improvement to be good

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

Recommendation

- The registered person should appoint a manager. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 60, paragraph 12.2)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 2729569

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Clear Path Care Limited

Registered provider address: 42 Hunslet Road, Burntwood WS7 9LF

Responsible individual: Rebecca Cowley

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Joanne Hawkins, Social Care Inspector

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