

## Children's homes – Interim inspection

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|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Inspection date</b>             | <b>03/03/2017</b>                                                     |
| <b>Unique reference number</b>     | <b>SC029504</b>                                                       |
| <b>Type of inspection</b>          | <b>Interim</b>                                                        |
| <b>Provision subtype</b>           | <b>Children's home</b>                                                |
| <b>Registered provider</b>         | <b>Pathway Care Solutions Ltd<br/>04004053</b>                        |
| <b>Registered provider address</b> | <b>1 Merchant's Place, River Road,<br/>Bolton, Lancashire BL2 1BX</b> |

|                               |                           |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Responsible individual</b> | <b>Andrew Smith</b>       |
| <b>Registered manager</b>     | <b>Katherine Sydenham</b> |
| <b>Inspector</b>              | <b>Ros Chapman</b>        |

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| <b>Inspection date</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | <b>03/03/2017</b> |
| <b>Previous inspection judgement</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | <b>Good</b>       |
| <b>Enforcement action since last inspection</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | <b>None</b>       |
| <b>This inspection</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                   |
| <p><b>The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection</b></p> <p>This home was judged <b>good</b> at the full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judges that it has <b>improved effectiveness</b>.</p> <p>Children and young people with complex needs, including those relating to gender identity, make good progress in this home. They benefit from positive relationships with staff, who are competent, and committed to improving outcomes. One young person commented that the best thing about the home is 'the staff'. Another young person said: 'Everyone is like a family, there is always someone to talk to.' One young person was less happy and felt that staff were inconsistent in their responses to incidents. The young people who have lived at the home for a longer period of time have made significant progress in many ways. One young person said: 'I am getting on really well.' One social worker described the progress as 'huge' and another said it was 'really good'. Relationships with family members have improved. Children and young people have started to have a better understanding of themselves and their behaviour, and they are engaging more in the community. This increases their self-confidence and self-esteem.</p> <p>Since the last inspection, the manager and staff have been particularly proactive and challenging in relation to educational outcomes. One requirement and one recommendation were made at the previous inspection in relation to this area. Both have been met. As a result, two young people have increased their access to education and are engaged in a package of support that is more appropriate to their needs. Staff have increased their understanding of their role in relation to education. The manager held a team meeting to discuss the education quality standard, and staff are now more involved in the development of personal education plans and education, health and care plans. They also summarise these plans to facilitate a better understanding of their responsibilities. As a result, young people are making better progress and staff are able to demonstrate the impact that education is having. One young person's attendance was 91% last month and another had increased their attendance from 30% to 74%.</p> <p>A further requirement was made in relation to the monitoring and development of the home. The manager has shown great commitment to improving this area. The continuous improvement plan is now more evidence-based and consists of only one document, to make monitoring and evaluation more effective. Achievements are now clearly documented and there is continual evaluation of the plan and target-</p> |                   |

setting to improve the home across six specified areas. Managerial monitoring is robust. The manager responds to any recommendations made within the reports of the independent visitor. She also undertakes her own internal monitoring, which feeds into the three-monthly report, team meetings, key-work sessions and the continuous improvement plan. This enables her to demonstrate where there has been progress, where things need to improve, and how this can be achieved.

Three further recommendations were made that have also been successfully addressed. Two related to staffing arrangements. There is now a more stable staff team, and the manager ensures that there is always a senior member of staff on duty on each shift. As a result, children and young people are cared for by staff they know and who are competent to meet their needs. The other recommendation concerned record keeping. This has also improved. The quality of daily logs is better and staff are more rigorous in following up any missing information. Children and young people therefore have a better and more accurate record of their time in the home, and staff have all the information they need to provide effective support.

The home environment has also improved since the last inspection. Some areas of the home looked 'tired'. Although this is still work in progress, the main lounge has been redecorated and furnished to provide a more homely place for children and young people to relax in. A bathroom has been completely refurbished to provide a separate shower in addition to the bath. This demonstrates the value that the manager and staff place on the children and young people, and supports their improved self-esteem.

Two young people have left the home since the last inspection. These were positive and planned moves, in line with their progression to independence. Two children and young people have moved in, one very recently, so the home is full. Both these moves were planned, with full consideration given to ensuring that the home can meet their needs without detriment to the rest of the group.

Children and young people are safe in this home. Because of their complex needs, some young people self-harm. Staff have had training and demonstrate a good understanding of this issue. Young people also have access to specialist help to provide them with the right support. Incidents of self-harm have decreased significantly in the last two months. There are occasions when young people are absent from the home and their whereabouts are unknown. This is not a common occurrence. Staff follow the individual protocols to support their safe return, and request return home interviews from the social worker. One stakeholder commented: 'The risk has reduced dramatically.' No young people are currently deemed at risk of sexual exploitation.

Partnership working is good, and this ensures that children and young people receive the right help and support. Partnership working has improved in relation to education partners since the last inspection. The home provides access to a therapist with particular skills in therapeutic parenting and attachment. She can

work directly with children and young people, with the agreement of the local authority, and also provides consultation and training for staff. She said: 'The team here is very proactive and asks for specialist support and input.' This improves staff's knowledge and competence in dealing effectively with the complex needs of the children and young people for whom they care. There is good communication between the home and social workers, to ensure that everyone is aware of current issues. One social worker described the communication as 'fantastic', and another said, 'I can't fault it'.

## Information about this children's home

This privately owned children's home is registered to provide care and accommodation for four children and young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

## Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement   |
|-----------------|-----------------|------------------------|
| 09/08/2016      | Full            | Good                   |
| 10/03/2016      | Interim         | Improved effectiveness |
| 02/12/2015      | Full            | Good                   |
| 12/03/2015      | Interim         | Improved effectiveness |



## **What the inspection judgements mean**

At the interim inspection we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the 'Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection'.

## **Information about this inspection**

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people living in the children's home. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference that adults make to the lives of children and young people. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with children, young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care given to children and young people. Wherever possible, they talked to children, young people and their families. In addition the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people who it is trying to help, protect and look after.

This inspection focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service 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'.

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