

SC029504

Registered provider: Pathway Care Solutions Ltd 04004053

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home's statement of purpose states that it can accommodate up to four young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. It also states that it has experience of supporting young people who are experiencing issues with their gender identity or who identify as transgender.

There is an acting manager who is not yet registered with Ofsted. She has been in this post since 14 May 2018.

Inspection dates: 9 to 10 July 2018

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 9 August 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/08/2017	Full	Outstanding
03/03/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
09/08/2016	Full	Good
10/03/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness

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, 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 education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— help each child to attend education or training in accordance with the expectations in the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 8 (1)(2)(a)(x))	31/08/2018
The registered person must ensure that— within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes— the name of the child; details of the child's behaviour leading to the use of the measure; the date, time and location of the use of the measure; a description of the measure and its duration; details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure; the name of the person who used the measure ("the user"), and of any other person present when the measure was used; the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result of the measure; within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised	31/08/2018

person")— has spoken to the user about the measure; and has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(b)(i)(ii)(c)(iv))	
The registered person must ensure that the procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation of abuse or neglect must: provide for records to be kept of an allegation of abuse or neglect, and the actions taken in response. (Regulation 34(2)(d))	31/08/2018

Recommendations

- When a child returns to the home after being missing from care or away from the home without permission, the responsible local authority must provide an opportunity for the child to have an independent return home interview. Homes should take account of information provided by such interviews when assessing risks and putting arrangements in place to protect each child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.30)
- The registered person should have a workforce plan which can fulfil the workforce related requirements of regulation 16, schedule 1 (paragraphs 19 and 20). The plan should:
 - detail the necessary management and staffing structure, (including any staff commissioned to provide health and education), the experience and qualifications of staff currently working within the staffing structure and any further training required for those staff, to enable the delivery of the homes Statement of Purpose; detail the processes and agreed timescales for staff to achieve induction, probation and any core training (such as safeguarding, health and safety and mandatory qualifications); detail the process for managing and improving poor performance; detail the process and timescales for supervision of practice (see regulation 33 (4) (b)) and keep appropriate records for staff in the home. The plan should be updated to include any new training and qualifications completed by staff while working at the home, and used to record the ongoing training and continuing professional development needs of staff – including the home's manager. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.8)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Young people are making good progress and they are happy and settled. The individualised care and support that staff provide is instrumental in young people achieving positive outcomes. Relationships between staff and young people are very good and are a strength of the home. Another strength is the resilience of staff when young people display particularly challenging behaviours.

Staff hold the young people in positive regard and have their best interests at heart. As a result of this, young people say that the best thing about the home is 'the staff'. One young person also commented very positively about the high-quality, home-cooked food. This is an important part of the homely, warm atmosphere that the staff and manager have created.

All the young people have made good educational progress, particularly when compared with their previous experiences. One education provider said: 'The home has been absolutely fundamental in the young person getting through the examinations.' This is because of the practical and emotional support that the staff have provided, which was 'over and above' what could have been expected. All young people attend school and their engagement is good or improving. However, one young person is late for school on occasion because the transport arrangements are not reliable. This is unsettling for the young person and does not give sufficient weight to the importance of education.

Young people have developed in confidence since being at this home. They have a better sense of self and are starting to establish their own identities. Staff are very good at accepting young people for who they are and allowing them to express their feelings. Young people confirm that they can talk to staff about any worries, and that staff listen to them and take them seriously. Their views play an important part in the decision-making about how care is provided.

Staff are keen to engage young people in meaningful activities, both as a way of making friendships in the community and to promote their physical and emotional health. One social worker commented: 'Staff have a lot of time to do things with the young people.' Staff also support young people to maintain positive contact with their families and people who are important to them so that they maintain their sense of belonging.

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

Young people become safer as a result of the care and support that they receive. A young person said: 'I've never been this safe before.' Risk-taking behaviours, such as drug misuse and going missing, reduce. A social worker confirmed this, saying: 'He is a totally different guy.'

Young people rarely go missing or have unauthorised absences from the home. However, when this has occurred, young people have not always been offered the opportunity of a return home interview with an independent person. It is not clear from the records that staff have been proactive in seeking this opportunity from the local

authority. As a result, information that may be useful in reducing risk is not always being gathered.

Staff know how to respond to safeguarding and child protection concerns. They have regular training that covers all aspects of safeguarding, including sexual exploitation, the safe use of social media and the risks relating to extremism and radicalisation. Staff benefit from managerial support when they raise any concerns.

Record-keeping in relation to reporting and decision-making needs to improve. Although the correct procedures were followed in two incidents that precede the current managerial arrangements, there is not a complete written record of the actions taken, the information provided and the decision-making processes to provide a satisfactory level of accountability.

Behaviour is generally well managed. Young people have individual plans that provide staff with written guidance about how to manage behaviour successfully. Staff have training in physical intervention and de-escalation. On a small number of occasions, these techniques have not been successful in managing situations. However, all incidents are subject to managerial oversight and reflection in order to improve future practice.

The records of physical intervention and sanctions do not meet the requirements of the regulations. Managerial oversight and discussion with the people concerned have not always occurred within the correct timescales. This could lead to a delay in addressing important issues. Young people's views are not always recorded, and the sanctions record would benefit from more clarity about the behaviour that warrants the sanction.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home has an acting manager who has been in post since the middle of May 2018, following the departure of the long-standing registered manager. An assistant manager has recently been appointed to provide the manager with additional capacity.

A strength of this home is the positive relationship that staff have with other professionals. Communication and information-sharing are good. This ensures that all the agencies that are involved in a young person's life are working consistently to improve outcomes. One education provider confirmed that one young person's educational success was due to 'joined-up working'. Another education provider commented that they were working closely together on a particular issue.

The home has a competent and child-focused staff team. Staff members are either appropriately qualified or undertaking the required qualification. They also benefit from relevant training. Supervision is regular and helpful, and the manager is available for advice at any time. Staff feel well supported and that enables them to support the young people well. The home does not have a workforce plan that details the qualifications, training and development plans for the home and staff. This would provide clarity about how the home ensures that it maintains a competent workforce.

Monitoring arrangements are good. These ensure that the manager has an accurate grasp of the strengths of the home and the areas for development. The internal monitoring systems provide the manager with a good understanding of the progress that

young people are making and whether the home is providing the care and support that are required. External monitoring is used effectively to improve outcomes.

The statement of purpose provides an accurate and up-to-date reflection of the home. This ensures that relevant people have access to the information they need before they decide to place a child in this home.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and 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 whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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: SC029504

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Pathway Care Solutions Ltd 04004053

Registered provider address: 1 Merchant's Place, River Road, Bolton, Lancashire BL2 1BX

Responsible individual: Andrew Smith

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Ros Chapman, social care regulatory inspector

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