

SC029504

Registered provider: Pathway Care Solutions Limited 04004053

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately run home provides care for up to four children who experience emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

The manager has recently been appointed. She was the deputy manager of the home prior to appointment. She is yet to register with Ofsted.

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

We last visited this setting on 16 February to carry out a monitoring visit. The report is published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 August 2021

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

How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be 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: 15 April 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
15/04/2019	Full	Good
09/07/2018	Full	Good
09/08/2017	Full	Outstanding
03/03/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children make small but significant steps of progress. Their progress sometimes fluctuates, but staff persevere in building positive relationships and providing support to children.

Staff work closely with children, schools, colleges and external agencies to secure the right type of education. Before moving into this home, one child had been out of school. However, they now have a full-time placement. Children's attendance at school has varied, but staff understand the reasons for this and find alternative ways to enable children to continue to learn.

Children are supported to understand the importance of routine and specialist healthcare and checks. Staff are persistent in talking to children about their health and they explain the importance of attending health appointments. Staff provide children with information and links to online resources to aid their understanding. This consistent approach from staff means that children have started to attend a range of health appointments.

Children have good, age-appropriate independence skills and they are supported to develop these further. With staff's support, children have applied for part-time jobs. The children have an insight into the expectations of a workplace. At times, children struggle to maintain personal hygiene routines. Staff provide guidance, both practical and emotional, to help children get back into good routines.

Children have opted not to have regular formal children's meetings. They feel able to express their views without the need for a formal process. The manager ensures that the children are invited to, and involved in, all meetings held about them. The manager seeks the children's views on their care, their placement plans and other important documents.

Children receive good practical and emotional support for gender identity. Staff have completed specialist training and have a good understanding of children's needs. Staff identify potential support groups and make children aware of them.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

Following a safeguarding disclosure by one child against another child, the then manager's initial response did not fully consider the risks. This potentially meant that both children were still at risk of harm. On hearing about the disclosure, senior managers took immediate action to keep both children safe.

Risk assessments do not contain all the information that staff need to keep children safe. Potential risks through children using ligatures are not identified. Although the

agreed likelihood of this occurring is low, staff are not clear about the risk or what action they should take.

Children still go missing from the home. However, the frequency of these incidents has reduced. This is due to staff being proactive in addressing the reasons why children have gone missing. Missing-from-care protocols are clearly written and are followed by staff appropriately. The protocols are regularly reviewed following independent return home interviews.

One child spends considerable time away from the home without authorisation. This has affected the capacity and opportunities to develop strong, positive relationships between the staff and the child. Staff and partner agencies understand that the reasons behind this behaviour are entrenched and they are working together to improve relationships.

There have been no referrals to the designated officer. Staff have a good understanding of whistle-blowing. Comments made by children about staff have been recorded and discussed with external agencies. Risk assessments have been updated to protect children and staff.

The house is large and has plenty of communal space. Although it is well maintained, the manager has identified that some updating is required. Part of her development plan includes making improvements to the decor and making better use of the space.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is newly appointed. However, she has substantial experience as the former deputy manager at the home. She has a clear vision for the service, which is outlined in a development plan. She has already started to make some improvements to recording systems and the environment.

Staff receive good support from the manager. She has a strong focus on staff development. She is completing a staff skills audit for every staff member, to help them identify how they can develop their practice. This is recognised by staff, who say that she pushes them to achieve their best.

There is a stable, consistent and experienced staff team. Staff turnover is low. Staff receive good support through regular supervision and team meetings. Both are used to reflect on incidents and discuss how to support children when they are struggling.

The manager uses a range of systems to ensure that she has good oversight of the quality of care provided. Checklists are used to ensure that daily tasks are completed. Various audits take place monthly. Visiting external professionals are encouraged to provide feedback. The manager reads and signs off all important records written about the children. Any concerns are followed up with staff or the appropriate agencies.

Despite the recent change in manager, external agencies report that communication and partnership working have remained good. Feedback from partners is positive about the support offered to the children and the attitude and approach of staff.

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 protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child; help each child to understand how to keep safe; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(v)(vi)(b)) In particular, risk assessments must contain sufficient information for staff to be able to keep children safe, especially with regard to ligature risks.	1 September 2021

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: SC029504

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Pathway Care Solutions Limited 04004053

Registered provider address: Atria, Spa Road, Bolton BL1 4AG

Responsible individual: Donna Carlin

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Alison Marshall, Social Care Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2021