

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 home provides care and accommodation for up to four children who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

The manager was registered by Ofsted on 1 February 2019 and she has an appropriate qualification in leadership and management.

Inspection dates: 15 to 16 April 2019

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	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 9 July 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/07/2018	Full	Good
09/08/2017	Full	Outstanding
03/03/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
09/08/2016	Full	Good

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 registered person must ensure that— within 48 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised 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)(b)(i)(ii)(c)(iv))	31/05/2019

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 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)
- The registered person must have systems in place so that all staff, including the manager, receive supervision of their practice from an appropriately qualified and experienced professional, which allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children assigned to their care. ('Guide to the children's homes

regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)

- All children's case records must be kept up to date and stored securely while they remain in the home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.3)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are making good progress, and in some cases exceptional progress, as a result of living in this home. They are all very settled in their long-term placements and they are clear that they want to remain in this home until they reach the age of 18. Children have benefited from having this stability and from being cared for by staff who are committed to them, despite the challenges.

Children are happy. They have very positive relationships with staff. The atmosphere in the home is relaxed, warm and friendly. One child said: 'The staff are lovely. They are always there if I need to speak to them.' Another child said: 'Staff are comforting, and you can have a laugh with them.'

Children say that they are listened to and they say that they can share any worries with the staff. Children are consulted regularly about their care and they influence the choice of decor and facilities in the home.

Children have made good progress with their education. Some children had very poor experiences of attending school prior to coming to this home. Now they have good attendance, they are aspirational for their futures and they are doing well. One child spent a lengthy time attending an alternative provision, but is about to return to mainstream education in order to take GCSEs.

Children have become more confident and self-assured because of the positive regard that staff have for them. They now all take pride in their appearance. They have developed friendships outside of the home and they are becoming more independent.

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

Children have become safer as a result of living in this home. Their drugs misuse has decreased significantly and the number of incidents of children going missing from care is minimal. There have been a small number of occasions when children have had unauthorised absences from the home. Staff are guided by clear and detailed written protocols in relation to each child that address specific vulnerabilities. Although staff have managed these absences well, they have not consistently challenged the local authority to offer independent return home interviews or obtained information from the interviews to inform their practice. This was a recommendation at the last inspection and has been repeated.

Risk is assessed well and there are comprehensive written risk assessments that provide staff with strategies for minimising known and potential risks.

Behaviour is managed well. Children have become calmer and they have learned to manage their feelings in more socially acceptable ways. Incidents have significantly reduced in number and there has been no need to use physical intervention since the last full inspection. Sanctions are also used rarely. However, although the recording of these has improved, on each occasion the oversight of the sanction has been carried out by the person who gave the sanction. Opportunities to reflect on the use and appropriateness of the sanction are therefore lost.

Staff have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities in relation to keeping children safe from harm. They benefit from receiving training that is relevant and up to date.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

There are some shortfalls in the management of this home, but these have not had an impact on the high quality of care that children receive. Three issues that were raised at the last inspection have not been fully addressed and are therefore repeated. In addition, children's case records do not contain all the required documentation, for example the most recent statutory reviews and personal education plans. The manager has not been robust in trying to obtain these documents from the local authority in a timely way. As a result, staff may not know the most up-to-date plan for the child or be able to support this consistently.

Staff feel well supported. However, they have not all received supervision regularly and the records of the supervision are poor. Consequently, opportunities for staff to reflect on their practice or be challenged appropriately may be lost. The record of the staff's training is not up to date and this makes monitoring of their competence and developmental needs more difficult.

In many respects the manager has provided good leadership. She is child focused and is passionate about providing a service of the highest quality for the benefit of the children. She has a happy team of staff who enjoy working at the home. She has worked hard to repair the poor relationships that existed between the home and the community and she has been successful in achieving this. A member of the community commented: 'I can't give the manager enough praise. She has turned the home around.'

The manager has developed a system for monitoring children's progress through the home's placement plans. This is in its early stages and is going to be developed further.

Partnership working is good. Stakeholders commented that there is good communication and information sharing, so that all agencies work together for the benefit of the children.

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 Limited 04004053

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

Responsible individual: Patricia Gregory

Registered manager: Sharon Billson

Inspector:

Ros Chapman: social care inspector

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