

SC374405

Registered provider: Pathway Care Solutions Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is privately operated. It provides care for up to four children with learning disabilities.

At the time of the inspection, two children were living at the home. Both children were spoken to by the inspector.

The manager registered with Ofsted in October 2024.

Inspection dates: 24 and 25 September 2025

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
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The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: 14 October 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/10/2024	Full	Good
19/09/2023	Full	Good
15/11/2022	Full	Outstanding
13/07/2021	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Staff build strong, positive relationships with children based on children's individual needs. Children gain confidence to embrace their abilities and develop physically and emotionally which helps them make progress. Staff use communication aids to capture children's wishes and feelings. Staff know children extremely well and plan creative approaches to build their independence. This helps children to develop their abilities and engage in meaningful daily activities.

Staff are committed to providing children with memorable experiences tailored to children's individual needs and interests. Children recently enjoyed their first holidays. Staff planned these carefully to ensure the children had positive and memorable experiences. One child wished to travel by plane, so staff prepared them through airport visits and by watching planes take off and land. Another child enjoyed a holiday where there was a hot tub. The child enjoyed this so much that a hot tub is now being considered as a permanent feature in the home.

Children attend full-time education that meet their individual learning needs and stimulate their interests. Staff are highly committed to supporting children to attend school. Staff work closely with education professionals to fully understand each child's abilities, challenges, and preferred ways of learning. This proactive approach ensures that children make sustained progress in their learning.

Staff ensure children receive excellent healthcare. Staff advocate to ensure that interventions in children's health are reviewed and are in children's best interests. This rigour has prevented one child from having unnecessary surgery. Children are supported to understand their medication and are reminded that they can refuse if they wish. Staff are skilled in recognising one child's early signs of any seizure activity and act quickly to keep children safe.

Children's sense of permanence is prioritised, with the staff providing a nurturing environment and stability that children benefit from. One child moved to a foster family that staff planned carefully at a pace tailored to the child's needs. Staff worked to prepare and support the child throughout the process to ensure the move was managed well, and in the child's best interests.

The home is designed to meet children's individual needs. The decoration, furnishings, and lighting are carefully considered to allow children to choose active areas or low-stimulus spaces for relaxation. These spaces are regularly reviewed and adapted to reflect children's preferences.

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

Staff have excellent safeguarding knowledge and understand how risks and concerns may present for each child. Staff exercise professional curiosity and are confident in following escalation processes. Safeguarding is reinforced through regular training, team meetings, and supervision sessions, ensuring staff remain alert and skilled.

Staff work well with other agencies to keep children safe. This includes maintaining close links with the children's local authorities and having direct access to safeguarding specialists. These arrangements ensure children receive timely interventions if risks increase.

Staff are knowledgeable about children's risks and follow detailed plans to reduce them effectively. Staff have discussions with children about sensitive topics, including sexual safety and personal care. Discussions are tailored to each child's communication needs, helping them understand themselves and stay safer.

Staff support children to manage their emotions. Staff work with children to develop strategies that help them communicate and express feelings. Successful strategies, such as squeezing hands, are embedded once proven safe and effective. This has reduced incidents where children have become distressed.

Staff are experienced in behaviour management. They use preventative strategies to de-escalate situations effectively. Staff only hold children when necessary, and clear, timely records demonstrate appropriate and proportionate use. The manager monitors trends and implements strategies to reduce incidents.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The manager demonstrates exceptional leadership skills, promoting a culture of respect across the home. She ensures staff understand their responsibilities while supporting development and progression opportunities. Staff consistently compliment the manager for her support of both staff and children. Improvements led by the manager have created thorough processes, team consistency, and stability, promoting positive outcomes for children.

The manager has established strong audit processes. These directly inform how staff help children to move towards their goals and make progress. These thorough systems ensure nothing is overlooked and are actively used to monitor and improve the services provided in the home. Outcome trackers identify areas where additional support is needed. These are assessed, prioritised, and delegated to achieve the desired outcomes.

The manager helps staff to develop professionally. This helps staff to build confidence and supports their progression in the home. Staff receive thorough, ongoing training tailored to children's needs. This includes practical exercises that place staff in children's positions to enhance staff's understanding.

The manager values input from staff and invites regular feedback. The manager implements staff suggestions in a safe, child-focused way. This approach ensures a better experience for children by using strategies suggested by staff who know the children best.

The manager and staff share positive practice across the wider organisation. This promotes approaches that achieve strong outcomes for children. Staff model good practice in other homes where they support colleagues effectively through their own expertise. Staff also organise fundraising activities for charities linked to children's needs.

The manager's processes for considering new children joining the home is thorough, and child centred. Risk assessments consider individual needs and positive relationships. Staffing ratios are carefully planned to avoid an institutional feel in the home. The manager is supported by the company to make thoughtful and planned moves into the home without pressure to accept new placements.

Staff have not been writing children's records in a child centred or personalised way. This does not reflect staff practice, which demonstrates caring conversations with children. Staff quickly identified ways to improve paperwork and ensure it better reflects children's experiences and needs.

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

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that staff record information on individual children in a non-stigmatising way that distinguishes between fact, opinion and third-party information and is recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

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: SC374405

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Pathway Care Solutions Ltd

Registered provider address: Keys Group, Maybrook House, Third Floor, Queensway, Halesowen B63 4AH

Responsible individual: Donna Carlin

Registered manager: Callai Mcdowell

Inspector

Vikki Thwaites, Social Care Inspector

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