

SC382994

Registered provider: Pathway Care Solutions Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a private company. It is registered to provide care for up to 5 children who may have disabilities.

The manager registered with Ofsted in November 2024.

There were five children living in the home at the time of inspection and their views were obtained.

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 March 2026

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

Date of last inspection: 4 March 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/03/2025	Full	Outstanding
07/11/2023	Full	Outstanding
16/05/2022	Full	Good
18/05/2021	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children, including those who use non-verbal communication, take an active role in their care. Staff understand each child's communication style and use social stories, PECS and symbols placed around the home to help children express their wishes and feelings. Children share their views after incidents and during regular meetings with managers and staff. Children also provide their views about food, activities and give feedback on their care.

Staff prepare children for medical procedures. They use each child's preferred communication methods to explain health needs and upcoming operations, reducing anxiety and increasing understanding. For example, a child recently attended hospital for treatment under general anaesthetic and recovered with minimal impact on emotional wellbeing.

Children receive consistent support with their education. When difficulties arise, the manager and staff work with professionals to understand the causes and put strategies in place to improve engagement. When children cannot attend formal education, the manager advocates for in-home tuition and phased timetables. Consequently, children meet targets in their plans and remain engaged in their learning.

Children have their ethnic and cultural needs met. Staff speak with children, professionals and follow parental guidance on cultural and religious expectations. Staff adapt menus seamlessly with small but effective changes. Children are provided with appropriate skin and hair products, and cultural practices are promoted through regular interactions and skills development. Staff promote children's understanding of these aspects through routine discussions and daily care.

There are unnecessary restrictions on a child's privacy. A monitoring device remains in place to oversee night-time routines, despite the home's own assessment stating the likelihood of incidents is unlikely and any harm would be minor. There is no record of these incidents, team meetings do not review the risk effectively, and staff have not completed key work to help the child understand why the measure is in place.

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

The plans that staff use are effective. They identify each child's vulnerabilities and any risk they may pose to other children or adults. The plans set clear actions so children can try new experiences and continue preferred activities at home and in the community. This promotes a positive attitude to risk taking that allows children the freedom to try new experiences safely.

Staff rarely use physical intervention to manage behaviour. Staff follow children's plans to engage them positively and address potential situations before they escalate. When this

is not enough, they use distraction and the least-restrictive interventions or low-level touch to keep everyone safe. Children have repeated opportunities to express their feelings at a time they are able and in a way they understand.

All staff, including those new in their role, know the children and the relevant plans that set out the children's care needs. The staff also understand what action to take in the event of a serious incident. They are familiar with the children's missing-from-home protocols and the allegations management procedure. Staff have children's safety and well-being at the centre of decisions if they were to respond to incidents of this nature.

On one occasion, a child received an overdose of controlled medication. Staff did not follow the home's medication policy, and the home was operating with less than the required numbers of staff during the day. As a result, the child needed to attend hospital immediately for hourly tests and observations before being allowed to return home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager creates an environment where staff feel supported and encouraged to learn within their roles. Regular supervision sessions give staff the opportunity to reflect on their practice, discuss their performance and consider how they can continue to develop. Discussions place strong emphasis on relationships with children, focusing on what staff are learning from their work and how they can adapt their approaches to better meet children's needs.

Leaders and managers routinely monitor the home's systems and processes to ensure the quality of care remains high. Daily, weekly and monthly checks help them identify any shortfalls and respond to these promptly. When issues arise, managers address them through supervision, team meetings and day-to-day discussions with staff. As a result, the quality of recording in children's files has improved, and children's health and welfare have been better safeguarded.

When new staff join the home, they complete all mandatory training alongside additional competency assessments and regular check-ins with supportive mentors. Throughout the probationary period, managers carry out increased supervision sessions to ensure consistency in staff development. Staff report feeling well supported by the manager, senior staff and more experienced colleagues.

When external services are not performing to the expected standard, leaders and managers raise their concerns directly with the professionals involved. Their communication keeps the child's health and well-being at the centre while maintaining a professional and respectful tone. For example, health and education services acknowledge the shortfalls and arrange home visits to build a better understanding of the child and work in line with their plans and needs.

When concerns arise about staff practice, the resulting investigations do not provide a thorough reflection of the evidence. Staff involved in the process identified several

shortfalls. However, these were not fully explored or followed up when evidence was gathered. As a result, key information was overlooked, limiting opportunities to conduct a meaningful lessons-learned exercise to strengthen the quality-of-care children receive.

Routine maintenance within the home is not addressed promptly, allowing minor issues to develop into more significant repair needs. The home looks in need of refreshing inside and outside of the home. There are radiators that need replacing and holes in the ceilings. This environment does not provide children with a homely, welcoming space, nor does it offer a comfortable setting for their families when they visit.

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, The 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 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)(b)) In particular, that when staff administer medication to children, the procedures must be followed correctly.	29 April 2026
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on— feedback on the experiences of children, including complaints received; and use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(g)(ii)(h)) In particular, that investigations into staff practice should be thorough, and when shortfalls are identified they should be explored fully.	29 April 2026

The registered person must ensure that— the privacy of children is appropriately protected; and any limitation placed on a child’s privacy or access to any area of the home’s premises— is intended to safeguard each child accommodated in the home; is necessary and proportionate; is kept under review and, if necessary, revised; and allows children as much freedom as is possible when balanced against the need to protect them and keep them safe. (Regulation 21 (a)(c)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)) In particular that the use of monitoring devices in relation to children are only used when required and are kept under review to ensure these are still required.	29 April 2026
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Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that repairs and maintenance are completed routinely to maintain a nurturing and homely environment that meets the needs of children. ('Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

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: SC382994

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: Callai Hanley

Registered manager: Nikki Chamberlain

Inspector

Lee Riley, Social Care Inspector

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