

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	17/08/2016
Unique reference number	SC391594
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Pathway Care Solutions II Limited
Registered provider address	1 Merchants Place, River Street, Bolton BL2 1BX

Responsible individual	Zoey Lees
Registered manager	Stephanie Skinner
Inspector	Stella Henderson

Inspection date	17/08/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Sustained effectiveness
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Outstanding
The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the home contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help, protection and care.	
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good

SC391594

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is outstanding because:

- Young people thrive at the home and make significant progress in a safe, caring and inclusive environment. Young people are safe and happy here and feel that their lives have improved.
- Young people are not marginalised, but participate in every aspect of life in their local and wider community. Activities and hobbies are varied and tailored to the preferences of each young person.
- Staff manage the very different levels of young people's complex needs very well. Highly individualised care planning, devised in partnership with parents and professionals, helps young people to achieve their individual goals.
- Parents and professionals have confidence in the ability of the manager and staff to provide high-quality care for young people. Effective partnership working helps young people to become safe and make excellent progress.

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

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further, the service should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- There may be circumstances where a child can be prevented from leaving the home. Any such measure of restraint must be proportionate and in place for no longer than is necessary to manage the immediate risk. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 48, paragraph 9.52). Specifically, the home should ensure that, during these short periods of restraint, only the outer doors of the home are locked.
- The registered person's review should focus on the quality of the care provided by the home, the experiences of children living there and the impact the care is having on outcomes and improvements for the children. The report produced under Regulation 45 should clearly identify any actions required for the next six months of delivery within the home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 64, paragraphs 15.2–15.4)

Full report

Information about this children's home

This is a private children's home. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for three children who have learning disabilities.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
19/01/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
13/10/2015	Full	Good
18/03/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness
29/01/2015	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Outstanding
This is a very happy household where young people live life to the full. They make excellent progress during their time here, even over the short term. They do well in their education, improve their health through diet and exercise, and enjoy a range of enriching experiences. A social worker said, of one young person: 'He has thrived since he has been at the home.' This is achieved because staff provide a family-like environment that is nurturing and affectionate. Once here, young people tend to stay for several years. This gives them the chance to build up strong attachments to staff, and gives staff the time to get to know young people as the unique individuals they are. One parent commented that staff had given her son, 'the best years of his life.' Young people get a lot of support to understand their past history and to plan ahead in a way that makes sense to them. One parent said that her son, 'suddenly starting asking about his Nan, who had died. They constructed a social story to help him understand, "Nan is not here".' Young people's complex needs do not get in the way of their having a great social life and having fun. They use local as well as specialist services to get fit, try new experiences and prepare for independence. A social worker said, of one young person: 'He is never marginalised. Staff are always thinking of new experiences for him. They take him out of his comfort zone and push him to develop his independent living skills.' When not in school, young people get involved in a number of activities, of their own choosing, both within and outside the home. For example, one young person has been on a city break to York, and the home recently held its own mini-Olympics, with everyone taking part. Young people often help others through fund-raising for charity or doing local voluntary work. An open-house event was recently held to which nearby neighbours were invited. This promotes community relations and helps young people to integrate into their local community. Highly effective care planning provides young people with plenty of opportunities to extend their learning and independence skills. The home's system of a planned 12-week key-working system keeps young people really engaged, and staff focused on, achieving clear, specific outcomes. For example, since the last	

inspection, young people have improved their personal hygiene, lost weight and reached their educational objectives. They have embarked on new adventures and tried new activities. For some young people, these small changes represent significant progress.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
Young people are protected by effective safeguarding measures, good key working and a good level of vigilance. The nature of young people's learning disabilities means that, for the majority of time, staff are close by, offering support as well as supervision. This is done in a way that respects young people's privacy and desire to have time on their own. One parent said: 'I know my son is content and secure here.' A social worker commented: 'They have been absolutely fantastic with my young person. They have done everything they can to safeguard her.' Young people have occasionally put themselves at risk of child sexual exploitation. The manager has worked effectively with young people and professionals to greatly reduce this risk. This includes locking doors of the property during times of crisis, for very short intervals. This is a sensible precaution that prevents young people from putting themselves in danger. However, this measure should not include locking the kitchen door, as this means that young people cannot gain access to parts of their own home. There are two further doors beyond the kitchen door. Changing the strategy to lock these doors instead will be easy to implement, without compromising the home's levels of safety. Staff have a very good understanding of the nature of young people's learning disabilities, and how this can impact on their behaviour. They understand the importance of good communication, structured routines and clear boundaries. This assists young people in managing their frustration, anxiety and anger in an acceptable way.	

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
The registered manager has a level 5 award in leadership and management. She has managed the home since 2012. The work of the manager and staff adds value to the life experiences of every young person. She appropriately challenges other professionals and escalates concerns, when necessary, to get the best outcomes for young people. The manager has a clear agenda for the continual improvement of the home. This is aided by regular scrutiny of the home's performance. To make this process even more effective, the six-monthly monitoring report should more clearly evaluate, rather than describe, events at the home and the feedback gained from young people and others. This will help the report to become a more practical tool for prioritising the actions that will further improve life for young people. Parents, professionals and young people comment positively on the work of staff. One young person described staff as, 'pretty and intelligent.' A parent said: 'I think the home is really well managed. Staff are absolutely wonderful and the manager is very approachable.' Social workers said that the manager and staff were 'effective partners' in helping to safeguard young people and ensure that they get the best out of life. They commented positively on the quality of care provided by staff, their focus on young people's needs and the emphasis placed on young people's views. A social worker commented: 'The home worked really well with me regarding education; as a result, the young person's attendance levels at school have improved.' Staff feel that they receive good management support. They meet regularly and plan shifts to ensure that young people are safe, able to engage in the activities on offer and helped to meet their goals. The manager has ensured that requirements to improve the recording of complaints, the confidentiality of written information and adjustments to bedroom doors have been met.	

What the inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against the 'Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection'.

An **outstanding** children's home provides highly effective services that contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help and protection and care. Their progress exceeds expectations and is sustained over time.

A **good** children's home provides effective services that help, protect and care for children and young people and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

In a children's home that **requires improvement**, there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. The welfare of children looked after is safeguarded and promoted. Minimum requirements are in place. However, the children's home is not yet delivering good protection, help and care for children and young people.

A children's home that is **inadequate** is providing services where there are widespread or serious failures that create or leave children and young people being harmed or at risk of harm or result in children looked after not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people living in the children's home. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference adults make to the lives of children and young people. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with children, young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care given to children and young people. Wherever possible, they talked to children, 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.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service 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'.

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