

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC391594
Inspector	Jacqueline Malcolm
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Pathway Care Solutions II Limited
Registered person address	14 Regent Street NOTTINGHAM NG1 5BQ

Responsible individual	Ameer Rehman
Registered manager	Stephanie Skinner
Date of last inspection	28/01/2014

Inspection date	29/01/2015
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Previous inspection	good progress
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

This inspection	
Overall effectiveness	good
Outcomes for children and young people	good
Quality of care	outstanding
Keeping children and young people safe	good
Leadership and management	good

Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	good
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Young people live in a good, stable home where they are cared for with dignity and respect. The shortfalls raised at this inspection have no impact on young people's safety and welfare. These relate to the home's Statement of Purpose, children's guide, complaints and allegations records.

High quality placement planning ensures that young people's complex and diverse needs are individually met. Young people's positive relationships with staff help them to develop in confidence, self-esteem and they make good progress. This includes those young people who have significantly improved their anti-social and risky behaviours. Young people have sustained good attendance and outcomes at school, college and work placements. The home has effectively challenged barriers to the full participation of young people at school. This demonstrates the home's commitment to promoting young people's right to education.

Young people's safety and welfare is promoted, which keeps them safe. Their wishes and feelings are listened to and acted on in their preferred communication methods. Good partnerships with a range of professional's enables young people to promptly access the services they need at any given time.

This is a well managed home. Staff are child-focussed and motivated which ensures

that all young people's aspirations are realised. The home has capacity to improve and this supports the team's intent to help young people make the best of the opportunities available to them.

Full report

Information about this children's home

This children's home is privately owned and provides care and accommodation for up to three children who have a learning disability.

The home is fitted with minor aids and adaptations to help support children who may also have a physical disability.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
28/01/2014	Interim	good progress
20/06/2013	Full	good
08/02/2013	Interim	inadequate progress
10/07/2012	Full	good

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

Statutory Requirements

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person/s meets the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Reg.	Requirement	Due date
4 (2001)	ensure that the children's home is at all times conducted in a manner which is consistent with its statement of purpose, in particular make an accurate statement about the use of surveillance and monitoring of children accommodated there (Regulation 4(1) Schedule (1)(13))	20/03/2015
24 (2001)	ensure that a written record is made of any complaint, the action taken in response, and the outcome of the investigation (Regulation 24(5))	20/03/2015

Recommendations

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

- ensure that the children's guide includes a summary of what the home sets out to do for children, how they can find out their rights, how a child can contact their IRO, the Children's Rights Director, Ofsted if they wish to raise a concern with inspectors, and how to secure access to an independent advocate (NMS 13.5)
- ensure a clear and comprehensive summary of any allegations made against a particular member of staff, including details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved, a record of any action taken and the decisions reached, is kept on the person's confidential file and a copy is provided to be retained on the confidential file, even after someone leaves the organisation, until the person reaches normal retirement age, for ten years if this is longer. (NMS 20.7)

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for children and young people **good**

All young people benefit from a stable home life and they make good progress in all areas of their lives. This has enabled them to develop positive attachments with staff and engage in their individual plans. The strong attachments between young people and staff are successfully sustained even during challenging times. This builds young people's trust and resilience in the adults caring for them. Over time young people develop in confidence and their self-esteem has increased. Those young people who initially presented with highly risky and anti-social behaviours show positive signs of rehabilitation. A young person said that living at the home has significantly transformed their life. They said, 'This care home has put me where I am today.' Young people's heritage and identity needs are reinforced by their regular contact with their families. This is supported by staff who have good relationships with parents who are complimentary of the services that their children receive.

Young people benefit from good health outcomes. Their registration with health care professionals ensures their attendance at routine health appointments. Young people's engagement with health professionals enables their health to be closely monitored and treated. Young people have access to the looked after children's nurse and health teams. They provide good advice and support about sexual health issues. The risks of smoking, alcohol and substance misuse improves young people awareness about how these risky behaviours may impact on their health. A number of young people's emotional health is supported by professionals from the local Child and Adolescent Mental Health services (CAMHS). Young people who on admission to the home had a restrictive diet now enjoy trying different foods. This promotes a healthy, balanced diet.

Young people of school age have regular attendance at school, which significantly improves their education outcomes. Other young people have been fully involved in visiting potential schools and this increases their chances of committing to their educational plans. Young people of leaving school age are realising their potential due to their positive engagement in college studies and work placements. A young person said, 'Going college, it will get me far in life.' This shows that young people have self-belief and aspirations for their future.

Young people take part in activities that they enjoy. This includes attending youth clubs, the local library, going on trips out to places of interest and activity holidays. Young people involved in the Duke of Edinburgh Award have successfully passed, which is an enormous accomplishment that improves their confidence and sense of achievement. Young people recently enjoyed building a snowman in the garden, which enabled both young people and staff to contribute and have fun. Young people's interests are developing all of the time and staff guided by their wishes and feelings. Some young people are positively involved in neighbourhood activities. For

example, helping out the neighbours and doing chores for them, such as gardening. This provides young people with opportunities to feel a part of the community. A young person said on reflection of previous issues with the neighbours, 'we need to know how to live together.'

Young people are developing skills that help them to become more independence. For example, travelling independently and expressing choice of preferred activities. Those 'eligible' young people who are making leaving care plans have a pathway plan. Some young people show an entrepreneurial streak for doing small jobs for neighbours. This helps young people to understand the value of work. Staff act as good advocates to ensure that young people make a good transition into independence. This is acknowledged by parents who feedback to the home, 'Thank you for all that you have done for (name of the young person) over the past years. You have really helped (name of the young person) come along way and build his independence.'

Quality of care

outstanding

Young people receive an excellent quality of care that meets their unique needs, personalities and traits. This is provided to them by a child-focussed, nurturing and driven staff team who have created a family atmosphere. Some young people show positive connections with staff. Other young people speak highly of the staff who look after them. A young person said, 'It's their care, help and motivation to help me. I feel 110 times better.' A parents reported to the home, 'I have no concerns (name of the young person) has excellent care and support at (name of the home). I am very pleased (name of the young person) is at (name of the home). The staff give 110%.'

Members of staff have an excellent understanding of the young people with whom they are entrusted to care for. Their exceptionally good engagement with young people has resulted in some positive and constructive relationships. This helps young people to build trust in the positive adult role models and feel safe and valued. As a result of these strong foundations, those young people presenting with significantly challenging behaviours have learned to respect the homes routines and boundaries. A young person said, 'I like it here, I have learned a lot.' Changes in young people's behaviour no matter how small are highly rewarded and celebrated.

Young people's needs are at the centre of care practices and staff are highly aspirational for them to succeed. Young people's highly individualised placement plans clearly inform staff about how their diverse and complex needs will be met by the home. This activates consistent staff practice and the plans are reviewed to ensure they remain current and show progress. Young people's personal identity is well integrated into their plans to ensure their holistic needs are actively promoted at all times.

Young people are empowered to voice their wishes and feelings and they know how

to complain. Their communication needs are identified and responded to accordingly. For example, young people are supported to communicate in Makaton, Widgit and verbally. This ensures that every young person is heard, understood and their wishes are acted on wherever possible. Young people benefit from spending individual time with their keyworker, meeting together as a group or discussing matters informally on a range of issues. This results in young people feeling listened to and confident to express themselves. An excellent emphasis is placed on young people's participation in fun events in the home. These include young people and staff member's involvement in regular theme nights in recognition of events, such as Eid, Diwali, American thanks giving and Christmas. Young people have opportunities to choose costumes and related foods. Photographs of these events clearly showcase the good times that young people and staff have together. It also demonstrates how young people learn about equality and diversity issues in vibrant and creative ways.

The home has developed strong and effective partnerships with parents and other agencies. For example, educational professionals, social care and health services. Staff have made effective use of their partners in supporting young people to attend their educational provisions, sustain their attendance, attainment and levels of engagement. The home has found recent success in overcoming barriers to young people's access to education by their persistent challenge to the authorities. This enables young people to have the right to a good education and fully integrate into the school community. This promotes equal opportunities and ensures that young people can access the services they need, thus improving their life chances.

Young people benefit from living in a well-resourced homely environment. Young people appear comfortable in their surroundings and treat the home as their own. The location of the home enables young people to travel to local community facilities and integrate into the community. The home has recently undergone some improvements which enhances the overall appearance of the home. This includes new flooring on the ground floor, a refitted, tiled and painted kitchen. In addition, the young people's bathroom has been painted and décor has been updated. This improves the overall ambience of the home and values the young people who live there.

Keeping children and young people safe good

Young people are safe and feel safe. A young person said, 'I am looked after here. I am thankful.' Staff are aware about young people's significant vulnerabilities, which protects them against the risks associated with child sexual exploitation and other forms of abuse. A member of staff said, 'The care of the young people will always come first.' Most staff have are trained in safeguarding, which informs their practice and new staff are due to attend in the near future to ensure their competence in this area.

Allegations against staff are responded to in a timely manner by the home. This

involves the local authority designated officer (LADO) and investigations are concluded in communication with young people and their families. However, the process is undermined by the absence of a written summary of allegations made. Although there is no impact on young people's welfare this does not provide for a clear audit trail of any allegations made against staff.

Young people live harmoniously together and some act as protective siblings. Older young people express positive affection for younger people. They make comments such as 'I love (name of young person) to pieces' in an appropriate context. This minimises incidents of bullying or peer conflict. In any event, staff are aware about dealing with bullying behaviour. As a result, young people live in the home without fear and intimidation.

Young people rarely go missing. However, the home has protocols in place to follow should this occur which is carried out in partnership with the police.

Good behaviour management plans support young people to self-regulate and develop socially acceptable behaviours. This has been strong in enabling some young people to reflect on their behaviour and apologise for their actions. This will bode well for them in the future. There is minimal use of restraint or physical interventions. This is due to the skilful de-escalation techniques that staff use when they are reasoning with young people. A young person said, 'No-one has restrained me. Staff would rather make me calm down.'

Young people respond well to positive incentives and rewards, which promotes their positive behaviour and sense of achievement. A professional stakeholder said, 'My perception of (name of the young person) is that they are providing (name of the young person) with an effective environment in which he can manage his behaviour and function in the community'.

Effective risk management strategies help to minimise risks to young people's safety and welfare. Checks on gas, electricity and fire equipment keeps young people, staff and visitors safeguarded against fire and hazards to their health and safety.

Staff recruitment files are located at the organisations head office and could not be accessed due to poor weather conditions. These will be checked as soon as practicable. The Registered Manager satisfies herself that unsuitable people do not access young people. She achieves this by ensuring that staff recruitment files comply with the regulations and contain up to date disclosure and barring checks.

Leadership and management

good

The Registered Manager has several years' experience working with young people. She holds the level 5 diploma in leadership and management, children and young people. She has been in post since 2009 and therefore has the appropriate experience to manage this home.

Overall, the home is well managed by an effective, supportive and very child focussed management team. The home has sound internal and external monitoring systems. This stimulates improvement and shows that the home is ambitious to improve outcomes for young people. A development plan clearly demonstrates how the objectives are achieved and celebrated. Some documents maintained by the home are not clear and accurate. For example, there is an inaccuracy in the Statement of Purpose in relation to surveillance measures used in the home. The information for children and young people does not include contact details of how to contact their social worker, independent reviewing officer and Ofsted should they wish to raise an issue outside of the home. These shortfalls do not impact on young people's safety and welfare.

Although complaints made by the young people and members of the community are investigated, not all complaints clearly show the outcome of the investigation. This does not ensure a resilient process that will withstand challenge in future years. Despite this, positive outcomes have arisen from neighbourhood complaints. Positive interventions driven by the home and young people have changed some neighbour's perceptions of certain young people, which has in turn significantly improved their relationships.

Young people benefit from caring and motivated staff who are energetic and aspirational for them to succeed. They ensure their knowledge about young people's progress is refreshed. For example, daily handovers, team meetings, regular supervisions, mandatory and specific training. A number of staff have attained an approved childcare qualification, or they are either studying towards completion or registered to start. This ensures that staff have the relevant training and guidance to meet the young people's diverse needs. Staff enjoy their role and responsibilities and feel well supported to develop their knowledge and skills.

The home has made progress to address the requirement raised at the last inspection. Therefore, the recommendations raised during monitoring visits are acted on in a more timely fashion unless external factors prevail. Recommendations made in relation to obtaining the pathway plan for 'eligible' care leavers and sending monitoring reports to Ofsted at specified intervals have been resolved. This demonstrates that the home has capacity to improve.

What inspection judgements mean

Judgement	Description
Outstanding	A service of exceptional quality that significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Good	A service of high quality that exceeds minimum requirements.
Adequate	A service that only meets minimum requirements.
Inadequate	A service that does not meet minimum requirements.

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The 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 relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the framework of inspection for children's homes.