

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	03/11/2015
Unique reference number	SC417031
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Pathways Care Group Limited
Registered person address	238 Station Road, Addlestone, Surrey, KT15 2PS

Responsible individual	Mr Colin Farebrother
Registered manager	Mr David Grayson
Inspector	Ms Michele Hargan

Inspection date	03/11/2015
Previous inspection judgement	Improved Effectiveness
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.	
how well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
the impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good

SC417031

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Young people receive one to one care enabling them to pursue and develop their individual talents and interests.
- Staff are consistent and persevere in their relationships with young people helping allay anxious feelings and enabling increasingly settled behaviour.
- Pre-admission planning is good and staff take effective action to keep young people safe.
- Recording of young people's experiences and significant events represents a meaningful narrative of their lives within the home.
- Leadership and management of the home is sound and staff are well supported.
- Independent psychological consultation is available, focussing on the individual needs of young people which staff incorporate into care practice.
- Young people who move on to live independently receive help that promotes a successful transition and this support continues after they leave.

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

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 (England) Regulations 2015 and the *Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards*. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The registered person must ensure that within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure. (Regulation 35(3)(a)(vii))	11/12/2015

Recommendations

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

- Homes must meet children's basic day to day needs and physical necessities recognising that many children in residential care have experienced environments where these needs have not been consistently met – doing so is an important aspect of demonstrating that the staff care for the child and value them as an individual. In particular, ensure good upkeep with the décor of the home. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 15 paragraph 3.7)
- Homes should seek, as far as possible, to maintain a domestic rather than 'institutional' impression. In particular, it is not necessary for young people to sign documentation to indicate their participation in activities of daily living. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 15 paragraph 3.9)
- 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. In particular, that all children are provided with an opportunity to speak with someone other than their social worker. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 45 paragraph 9.30)
- The registered person should actively seek independent scrutiny of the home

and make best use of information from independent and internal monitoring (including under Regulations 44 and 45) to ensure continuous improvement. In particular, to ensure the distribution of Ofsted surveys to children, parents, social workers and independent reviewing officers in addition to staff. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 55 paragraph 10.24)

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home may only provide care and accommodation for up to four children with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The home is operated by an independent provider.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
03/03/2015	Interim	Improved Effectiveness
10/12/2014	Full	Good
17/03/2014	Interim	Good Progress
10/05/2013	Full	Good

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	good
There are meaningful relationships between young people and staff. These are founded on a solid understanding of their needs and plans about how best to address these. This builds trust and promotes feelings of security, enabling young people to develop friendships with their peers and invest in their education. A member of staff said, 'I think we are always there for support and to make sure young people feel comfortable to tell us what they want to do.' Young people sign some documentation to indicate their participation in routine aspects of daily living, such as being given pocket monies. This is at odds with the home's ethos underpinned by attachment theory to establish trust. This practice is unnecessary and gives young people a message that they are different to their peers. Young people are able to vent their frustrations about their circumstances to staff, reflecting their views and underlying developmental needs. Staff listen and take their concerns on board and help young people resolve the issues that are troubling them. Parents and professionals can also raise concerns with the home and feel comfortable about doing so. A parent said, 'I would definitely talk to the manager or the staff if I was worried about anything.' A young person said, 'I think this place is great.' Staff are effective in helping young people make the most of education, employment and training opportunities. This means that most young people make progress taking into account their starting point. The registered person is advocating on behalf of one young person who is returning to education. As a result, young people learn they have the capacity to participate in school life, significantly improving their life chances. Young people moving into the home continue to take part in their established activities and they develop new interests. This promotes increased peer relationships and builds self-esteem. A parent said, 'I know that she gets to go on activities and she is still going to a theatre group and youth club.' A young person said, 'I go to karate I got my yellow belt.' Young people moving to independence are helped to do so at their own pace and support from staff continues after they leave. This increases the likelihood of a successful transition and helps allay young people's anxieties at times of increased vulnerability. A young person said, 'They've helped me over about six months to	

move house. A lot of the stuff I didn't have a clue about and they helped me out there.' Also, 'This is the first time I have left somewhere and haven't needed to say goodbye.' A social worker said, 'They have been absolutely brilliant.' And about the support provided to a young person, 'I feel that they have worked really well with him I wouldn't hesitate to work with the home again.'

Young people receive good help from staff who promote a healthy lifestyle. Young people take part in a range of physical activities and staff take them to the doctors and health appointments as necessary. A young person who did not previously go to the dentist now does so, improving their health and wellbeing. A member of staff said, 'I bought the young person an electric toothbrush and the young person is meticulous with caring for their teeth now.'

Staff recognise how significant difficulties can be communicated through behaviour. They respond sensitively to young people who learn there is a genuine desire from staff to help them to improve their lives. This reduces young people's anxious feelings and promotes self-worth. A social worker said, 'He is a lot more confident and his personality has developed.' Young people and staff benefit from additional access to psychological support. This improves staff effectiveness and understanding, leading to young people's improved mental wellbeing. A mental health professional said, 'They're very good at being tuned into young people.'

Young people can choose their bedroom décor and have keys to their room if they so wish, and they have access to a phone for their sole use. This promotes young people's safety, sense of belonging and respects their privacy.

Young people are only admitted to the home on the basis that their needs can be met. This entails the completion of a thorough pre-admission assessment that also takes into account the impact of this for those already living in the home. This helps reduce young people's feelings of apprehension at times of transition and increases the likelihood of them getting along with their peers. A member of staff said, 'That is my job to make young people feel comfortable and enjoy living in their own home. The last thing you want is to make them withdrawn because then you will get problems.'

Young people's views about the home are important and they are invited to make these known to staff leading to improvements. The home has a 'Tell Us About it' book in which they can write their views and make requests which are responded to by the registered person. This approach ensures that young people have a voice as they can make their views known in a variety of ways. A senior member of staff said, 'Young people wanted a new car and we bought one. They are more comfortable and we can get the bikes in.'

Young people's parents are happy with the care their children receive. They also feel well informed by the home about matters affecting their children's lives. Making positive relationships with parents reassures young people and preserves

their sense of belonging within a family. Young people and, when necessary, some of their parents receive practical support with maintaining these relationships by having transport provided to meet with their child. When seeing family members is not in the young people's best interest staff take all necessary action to ensure that young people are informed about this and that they receive the necessary emotional support. This approach enables increased understanding by young people of their histories aiding their developmental needs.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
Young people feel safe and their behaviour shows that they learn how to keep themselves safer. Staff know what to do to help young people reduce risk taking behaviour by agreeing boundaries and expectations in and outside of the home. Young people realise that their wellbeing is of overriding importance to staff and as a result they feel valued and increasingly more secure. A young person said, 'I've been in other homes that were alright but this is one is really good.' Another young person said, 'I'd give them 8 out of 10 for fairness most of the time they were fair.' Staff work closely with the police and other professionals to return young people to the home who go missing. Combined efforts by all those involved address the underlying reasons for this behaviour, increasing their safety and wellbeing. There is a shared understanding about the need to enable young people to take age appropriate risks. This means young people gain increased understanding about the impact of the choices they make and how to stay safe. About how staff help young people, a police officer said, 'They need to develop as they would in a family home and I think the manager has got the balance right for the young people.' Not all young people who go missing are offered an opportunity to speak to an independent person following their return home. This can compromise full understanding about the reasons leading to missing behaviour. Young people's placement plans compiled by the home are thorough and detailed. This is achieved because comprehensive information is obtained as part of the admission process. Plans make clear any risk taking behaviour and what action staff take to reduce this. This ensures staff have a good understanding of young people's needs and how best to meet their daily needs, promoting consistently good care practice. Appropriate links are in place between the registered person and the local authority designated officer and advice from this person is sought when necessary. This ensures the safety and wellbeing of young people.	

Young people, their parents and professionals are provided with useful information aiding their understanding of the home when they first visit. This ensures young people understand their rights and helps prepare them for transition. In relation to this, a social worker said, 'The young person was interested in looking around and she had a good look when she came.'

While sanctions are rarely used by staff in response to young people's behaviour, on occasions when they are, the consequence of the measure is not considered. This means full understanding about the young person's behaviour is not arrived at. Conversely, young people seldom need to be restrained due to their behaviour. On occasions when this has been the case, proper review and consideration about why this was happened is carried out by the registered person. This is aimed at ensuring young people's safety and wellbeing are not compromised. This respects young people's dignity and preserves their rights.

The homes décor requires renewal. Lack of upkeep with this is at odds with home's approach and gives mixed messages to young people about their worth. However, there are improvements with the home's furnishings and fitments. Involving young people in choices about how the home is furnished promotes a sense of ownership and belonging. A senior member of staff said, 'Young people chose the new settee and pouffe.' Also, 'We have replaced the flooring upstairs and fitted a new carpet.'

Young people can choose their bedroom décor and have keys to their room if they so wish, and they have access to a phone for their sole use. This also promotes a sense of belonging and respects young people's privacy. A young person said, 'One of the best things here is my room, I chose how to decorate it.' Also, 'I feel safe because staff check the doors and windows and make sure no-one can get in.'

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
The Registered Manager is a suitably qualified and experienced individual who has been in post since November 2012. This person provides strong leadership to staff and models proactive approaches to working with young people. Anticipating and addressing difficulties before they arise promotes placement stability for young people. Young people receive support from staff who are sufficient in number, suitably qualified and experienced. Devoted one to one time for young people helps build feelings of self-worth and esteem. The registered person has plans in place that make clear the support available to staff from induction onwards. This document emphasises staff's role in helping young people make progress by appropriately	

fulfilling their responsibilities. This promotes consistent care practice and the accountability of staff. For instance, new staff are supported to fully inform themselves of young people's needs and how to meet them. This helps establish consistency, building trust between young people and staff.

Staff take part in a worthwhile discussion and reflect on young people's experiences during 'handover' at the beginning and completion of their working day. Young people's experiences are recorded, forming a meaningful chronical about their lives aiding their current and future understanding. This also means staff stay up to date and young people are reassured because there is effective communication about their needs.

Staff adopt an approach of partnership working with school and college staff so there is shared understanding about young people's needs. This maximises young people's educational and training opportunities and supports them with making positive choices aimed at improving their lives as adults.

The registered provider's care and safeguarding of young people is robustly reviewed by an independent visitor on a monthly basis. This meets requirements of legislation which promotes accountability of staff and the wellbeing of young people

Ofsted surveys are not distributed to young people, parents, social workers and independent reviewing officers. This omission restricts their opportunity to contribute their views about the home. Young people, parents, and professionals consulted at inspection are overwhelmingly positive about the home. When concerns are raised by young people or others about any matter to do with their life in the home, these are taken seriously and speedily responded to. A health professional said, 'I have seen challenging young people who show them what they are made of and they have settled down very quickly.

Staff receive regular supervision, training and appraisal and have access to the registered person and or senior staff when necessary. This level of support promotes staff's ongoing development, helps them feel valued and motivates them to improve young people's lives.

The registered person completes a meaningful review of the care provided to young people demonstrating how outcomes are improved for young people. Effective systems to address areas for further development and to build on good practice help ensure young people's needs remain at the forefront of care practice.

The home's Statement of Purpose is written in plain English making it accessible to young people. Copies are made available to parents and professionals, providing useful information about how the home is run. This means parents and those who place young people at the home have all the necessary information.

Significant events affecting the welfare and safety of young people are notified to Ofsted in accordance with legislation. This provides the regulator with an opportunity to establish what action has been taken to address the concerns and

protect the welfare of young people.

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 *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 looked after children 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 who 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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