

SC417031

Registered provider: Pathways Care Group Ltd

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and managed by a private provider. It is registered to provide care for up to four children who experience social and emotional difficulties.

The home registered with Ofsted in December 2010. There has been no registered manager in post since 15 April 2024.

At the time of the inspection, no children were living at the home.

Inspection date: 8 October 2024

This monitoring visit

An assurance inspection was carried out on 13 August 2024 due to an increase in safeguarding notifications and an anonymous complaint. Inspectors identified several regulatory breaches that impact on children's safety and welfare. In response, Ofsted suspended the setting from operating. This meant children living at the home moved to new homes and no new children could move in. In addition, Ofsted issued a compliance notice under regulation 13.

This visit was carried out to monitor the provider's response to the suspension notice and to look at the action taken to meet the steps in the compliance notice.

The manager has made an application to Ofsted to become the registered manager of the home.

Leaders and managers completed a comprehensive review of the home environment. This includes redecoration, repairs, and the purchase of new essential kitchen appliances. The home is now clean and safe for children.

Leaders and managers have strengthened systems to monitor the quality of care that children receive. This includes regular audits and oversight of children's records and the health and safety arrangements in the home. However, the full effectiveness of the systems and documents at improving the safeguarding arrangements for children cannot be tested as there are currently no children living at the home.

New members of staff have been recruited and have received a good induction and completed mandatory training. Some staff hold a relevant residential care qualification. Leaders and managers have effective systems to monitor and ensure that staff have up-to-date skills and knowledge to care for children.

There continue to be shortfalls in safer recruitment and staffing sufficiency of permanent staff to care for four children. This means that leaders and managers are not reassured that the staff caring for children are safe.

There are now improved systems to ensure that children and staff records are safely stored. Consequently, this requirement made at the last full inspection is met.

Furthermore, leaders and managers have improved the fire safety arrangements in the home. This includes consultation and assessments by fire safety experts.

The provider has complied with the suspension notice and no children have moved into the home. Furthermore, the provider has met four of the five steps in the compliance notice. The compliance notice has been reissued for the provider to address the outstanding shortfall relating to safer recruitment and staffing sufficiency.

The provider has met three of the previous requirements made at the last assurance inspection. The other requirements and recommendations were unable to be considered at this visit due to no children currently living in the home. Therefore, they have all been restated. The suspension notice remains in force until 5 November 2024.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
29/04/2024	Full	Requires improvement to be good
03/07/2023	Full	Good
21/06/2022	Full	Good
10/01/2022	Interim	Improved effectiveness

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 with the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
*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— lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose; ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications, and skills to meet the needs of each child; ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child; understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home; and use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(c)(d)(f)(h)) This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	10 November 2024
The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.	10 November 2024

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)) This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	
The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on— mutual respect and trust; an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and positive responses to other children and adults. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— meet each child’s behavioural and emotional needs, as set out in the child’s relevant plans; help each child to develop socially aware behaviour; encourage each child to take responsibility for the child’s behaviour, in accordance with the child’s age and understanding; communicate to each child expectations about the child’s behaviour and ensure that the child understands those expectations in accordance with the child’s age and understanding; strive to gain each child’s respect and trust; understand how children’s previous experiences and present emotions can be communicated through behaviour and have the competence and skills to interpret these and develop positive relationships with children;	10 November 2024

are provided with supervision and support to enable them to understand and manage their own feelings and responses to the behaviour and emotions of children, and to help children to do the same; and de-escalate confrontations with or between children, or potentially violent behaviour by children. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(v)(viii)(ix)(x)(xi)) This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation; there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there; there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(a)(c)(e)) This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	10 November 2024
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 name of the person who used the measure ("the user"), and of any other person present when the measure was used; the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result of the measure;	10 November 2024

within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")— has spoken to the user about the measure; and has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(a)(i)(vi)(vii)(viii)(b)(i)(ii)(c)) This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	
The registered person must make arrangements for the handling, recording, safekeeping, safe administration, and disposal of medicines received into the children's home. In particular the registered person must ensure that— medicines kept in the home are stored in a secure place so as to prevent any child from having unsupervised access to them; medicine which is prescribed for a child is administered as prescribed to the child for whom it is prescribed and to no other child; and a record is kept of the administration of medicine to each child. (Regulation 23 (1) (2)(a)(b)(c)) This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	10 November 2024
The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which— include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child; and are kept up to date. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b))	10 November 2024

This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	
In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff— seek to involve each child’s placing authority effectively in the child’s care, in accordance with the child’s relevant plans; seek to secure the input and services required to meet each child’s needs; if the registered person considers, or staff consider, a placing authority’s or a relevant person’s performance or response to be inadequate in relation to their role, challenge the placing authority or the relevant person to seek to ensure that each child’s needs are met in accordance with the child’s relevant plans. (Regulation 5 (a)(b)(c)) This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	10 November 2024
The registered person must ensure that the employment of any person on a temporary basis at the children’s home does not prevent children from receiving such continuity of care as is reasonable to meet their needs. The registered person must ensure that— at all times, at least one person on duty at the home has a suitable first aid qualification. (Regulation 31 (1)(2)(a)) This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	10 November 2024
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children’s safety. The registered person may only— employ an individual to work at the children’s home; or	10 November 2024

if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home, if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3).

The requirements are that—

the individual is of integrity and good character;

the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification, and skills for the work that the individual is to perform;

the individual is mentally and physically fit for the purposes of the work that the individual is to perform;

and full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1) (2)(a)(b) (3)(a)(b)(c)(d))

This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.

*These requirements are subject of a compliance notice.

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff play a role in supporting children to understand their own history and identity, for example through memory books, life-story work, or other direct work. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 16, paragraph 3.14)
- The registered person should ensure that when a child is not attending their identified education provision, the child should be supported to regain their confidence in education and be engaged in suitable and structured activities. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 28, paragraph 5.15)

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this visit was to monitor the action taken and the progress made by the children's home since its last Ofsted inspection.

This inspection was carried out under The Care Standards Act 2000.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC417031

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Pathways Care Group Limited

Registered provider address: Pathways Care Group, Minton Place, Victoria Street, Windsor SL4 1EG

Responsible individual: Kian Tracey

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Cat Makel, Social Care Inspector

Joanne Wallis, Social Care Inspector

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