

SC417031

Registered provider: Pathways Care Group Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

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

Inspection dates: 14 to 15 June 2017

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **Good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **Good**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **Good**

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

Date of last inspection: 24 January 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: Improved effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: None

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because:

- The young people are settled, happy and progressing.
- There is a strong manager leading the team.
- The stable staff team provides warm, effective relationships for young people.

- Education is seen as a priority. Other services are effectively challenged, when needed, to meet the educational needs of the young people.
- The young people and the staff team benefit from a close working relationship with a psychologist.
- A wide range of activities are on offer for young people.

The children's home's areas for development:

- The staff team would benefit from in-depth training in relation to attachment and the effects of trauma on young people.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
24/01/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
19/07/2016	Full	Good
12/02/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
03/11/2015	Full	Good

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

Recommendations

- Staff need the knowledge and skills to recognise and be alert for any signs that might indicate that a child is, in any way, at risk of harm. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 43, paragraph 9.12)
In particular, ensure that the staff receive training in relation to attachment disorders and the impact of trauma on young people.
- Supervision of staff practice should ensure that individual adults in the home are engaged in the safeguarding culture of the home so that they understand what they would need to do if they found other staff misusing or abusing their position to the detriment of the safety of a child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 43, paragraph 9.14)
- The registered person must have systems in place so that all staff, including the manager, receive supervision of their practice from an appropriately qualified and experienced professional, which allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children assigned to their care. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)
In particular, the senior staff that carry out supervisions should be appropriately trained to do so.
- Under regulation 46, the registered person should review the appropriateness and suitability of the location and premises of the home at least once a year. The review should include the identification of any risks and opportunities presented by the home's location and strategies for managing these. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 64, paragraph 15.1)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Young people are settled and happy in this home. They each make good progress from their starting points in a variety of areas. They benefit from positive, secure relationships with the adults working at the home, characterised by warmth and good humour. The staff invest in the young people by spending time with them on a daily basis and engaging with them in activities and discussions relevant to their age and understanding.

The young people contribute regularly to their care plans. They are involved, from the point of their admission to the home, in looking at their needs and aspirations for the future. Individual work is undertaken with their key worker and evidence is gathered to enable them to reflect on their journey and achievements. The visual result gives young people confidence and raises self-esteem in a safe and secure atmosphere. Each session ends with identifying an outcome and possible actions that link with the plan of care for

the young person. A social worker said: '[Name] had made leaps and bounds since going there and there is real improvement in her behaviour and attitude.' This consistent approach allows young people to develop a strong sense of self-worth. A young person said: 'I am settled and doing well.'

Young people engage in a variety of recreational activities outside of the home, including quad biking, cinema, drama school and youth clubs. Young people are also engaged in the national citizenship awards and work with the Prince's Trust. This improves their physical and emotional well-being.

The staff ensure that young people are registered with health professionals and assist them to engage effectively. Medical appointments are well attended and relevant checks are up to date. Young people are encouraged to contribute to menus and eat healthily.

The home benefits from specialist help from a psychologist. He undertakes direct work with the young people, if required. He helps staff to understand and address the needs of the young people through group supervision, which takes place every two months. This takes place during a staff meeting, enabling all members of staff to raise issues and receive advice and guidance that informs and develops their practice. The psychologist said: 'They have a very straightforward and nurturing approach to young people. There is a good balance in the staff team and their practice offers young people structure and emotional containment.'

Education is seen as positive and is actively encouraged in the home. Young people have successfully engaged in education, even when this has previously been an area of difficulty. Achievements in education are recognised and celebrated. This progress is recognised by the other professionals who are involved in the lives of the young people. A social worker said: 'They are very proactive and have the best interests of young people at heart.'

Contact with family and friends is recognised as important and supported by the staff team. Family and friends are welcomed into the home, when appropriate, and the young people are transported to and from contact in their home area. The outcome is that the young people are able to repair family relationships, allowing them to return home or build up support networks for their lives as an adult. A parent said: 'The staff are lovely and friendly, we are welcomed as a family when we visit.'

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

Young people are safe in this home. The relationships with staff have enabled young people to reflect on their own situations and take action. The result is that risks for some of the young people, previously identified as having high-risk behaviours, have reduced.

Risk assessments are thorough and guide staff with strategies to mitigate and reduce risk. This begins with impact risk assessments at the point of admission and is carried on via comprehensive, individual risk assessments that are updated regularly.

Episodes of the young people going missing have drastically reduced and currently there have been none for over six months. The staff work closely with the police and other professionals to return young people to the home when they do go missing. The young

people are helped to explore the reasons for their absence and the risks that this behaviour poses, increasing their safety and well-being. They are offered the opportunity to speak to someone independent of the home when they return. This consistent approach has contributed to the reduction in episodes of young people going missing. Relationships with the local police are positive. A member of the local police team said: 'We have a really good working relationship. I pop in often and am always made welcome, they seem to do lots of activities with the young people.'

Positive behaviour is constantly promoted. There are clear expectations and boundaries in place. Sanctions are rarely used as the staff prefer a restorative approach. However, when sanctions are used they are appropriate and include an opportunity to record the reflections of the young person in response to the sanction. This enables young people to develop a sense of what is acceptable behaviour.

Physical interventions are rarely used and episodes have continued to reduce since the last inspection. Distraction and regular engagement or activities are used to manage situations of heightened emotion. This helps the young people to begin to self-manage their behaviours and emotions. When physical interventions are necessary, staff use de-escalation techniques and respond quickly. Records of interventions are clear and contain sign-off by the manager as to the appropriateness of the action taken.

Care plans and behaviour management plans are in place and are reviewed regularly. Such plans are actioned via help and support documents that clearly identify what needs to be addressed, by who, and with timescales. This offers young people a consistency of approach that enables them to increase their feelings of safety and security.

The home is large and well maintained, but some areas are in need of decoration. There is a full programme of repair and decoration in place which is due to start in the coming weeks. There are ample spaces for both group and individual activities, with a wide range of books and games for young people to enjoy. The external garden area is undergoing renovation and has benefited from a new surrounding fence and the addition of a trampoline. This was at the request of a young person who then helped to construct the apparatus. This level of response and involvement increases a young person's sense of belonging.

Consultation with the young people is managed via young people's meetings, but also by a 'have your say' book. The young people use this to request items such as repairs needed in their bedroom to outings or equipment. Staff respond with positive messages and details of when the request will be resolved, or reasons why it can't be if this is necessary.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is a suitably qualified and experienced individual who has been in post since November 2012. The reduction in effectiveness identified at the last inspection has been addressed, and tasks are now delegated to others in the team to allow the manager to focus on his own role.

The manager is knowledgeable, passionate and committed. He provides clear direction

and is assisted in his development of the staff team by the psychologist. Further development is undertaken with regular training for staff. There is a training matrix in place which identifies that all mandatory courses are up to date. However, there are areas of training required to ensure that all of the needs of the young people are addressed. In particular, training in attachment disorders and the impact of trauma on young people and their behaviour would benefit the staff team in its understanding of presenting behaviours.

The staff team has remained stable for some time now. This provides young people with a sense of trust in their relationships with the adults around them. Recruitment procedures, when needed, are clear and effective. This is followed by clear induction and ongoing support through regular supervision. However, the quality of some of the supervisions recorded by senior staff is not of the same level as that of the manager. Therefore, training in effective supervision is needed to ensure that all members of staff benefit from such support.

Recording has improved overall since the last inspection. Daily records in particular now include more details that tell the story of daily living in the home. Monitoring and auditing of records is regular and efficient in identifying gaps in required documents or practice.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and 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.

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: SC417031

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Pathways Care Group Limited

Registered provider address: 238a, Station Road, Addlestone KT15 2PS

Responsible individual: Lisa Deane

Registered manager: David Grayson

Inspector

Susan Atkinson-Millmoor, social care inspector

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