

SC417031

Registered provider: Pathways Care Group

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and managed by a private provider to care for up to four children who may have emotional and/or social difficulties.

The inspector spoke to all four children living at the home during this inspection.

The manager registered with Ofsted in March 2022.

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 June 2022

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: 10 January 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: improved effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10/01/2022	Interim	Improved effectiveness
14/09/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good
07/01/2020	Full	Good
26/06/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Most of the children have lived in the home for a long time. Children experience stability and said that they are happy living here.

The manager assesses the competing needs of children before new children move in. The manager consults with the children during the referral procedure, and she supports the children to understand the changes that they face. This helps to alleviate any worries that the children may have.

Staff put great effort into helping the children celebrate special occasions. These memorable experiences help children to build positive memories and enjoy high-quality fun time together. Staff take the children on exciting activities and trips, providing opportunities for the children to enjoy and explore the world around them.

Some children have good attendance at school, and some face issues with attendance. The manager advocates on behalf of children with a sense of urgency, to help to secure school placements. In addition, the manager arranges additional tutoring for children who require it, to support their continued education progression.

Staff support the children to attend routine and specialist health appointments. Staff consistently assist the children to follow the guidance and advice of health professionals. This has helped one child to make significant progress towards their health goals.

Staff understand the importance of family ties, and respectfully support the children to keep in touch with the significant people in their lives. Family members said that the staff communicate well with them, which further promotes family inclusion.

Children's records do not include information about their presenting behaviour, or the associated risks for children who smoke. Therefore, the staff are not provided with written guidance to help them to understand how to respond to this behaviour. Additionally, key-work sessions do not focus on this health need, which is a missed opportunity to promote the benefits of healthy choices.

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

Children quickly develop trusting bonds with the adults who care for them. Children are cared for well by staff who they can turn to for guidance, which helps them to feel safe and secure.

There has been one instance of a child going missing from the home. Staff swiftly followed the appropriate protocols, including making persistent attempts to locate the child themselves. Staff talk to the children about the importance of their safety.

This helps children to accept the boundaries, which supports the children to become increasingly safe, as repeat incidents do not occur.

Staff promptly share concerns with the relevant professionals when they suspect that children may be experiencing bullying at school. Staff escalate their concerns to help to ensure that the appropriate action is taken. Staff keep the children informed, so that they know that matters are being addressed. This sends a powerful message to children that their happiness and safety are prioritised.

Recruitment procedures follow safe recruitment guidelines. This gives assurances that the adults who are caring for the children are suitably vetted.

The staff occasionally lock the lounge door at night, which prevents the children from freely accessing this area of the home should they wish to. This practice detracts from the otherwise welcoming and relaxed atmosphere in the home.

Staff are suitably trained to administer the children's medication, and they support the children to take their medication as needed. However, while the medication records include that a dose of medication has been administered, these records do not include the quantity or dosage of the medicine prescribed. This could lead to medication errors. Additionally, some records lack accountability as amendments made to these records do not always include the author of the amendment.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The former deputy manager is now the manager. She is supported well by the previous registered manager, who is now the responsible individual. They both continue to spend high-quality time with the children. The management arrangements help the children to experience familiarity and consistency.

Staff have regular reflective supervision. This is used to discuss the children, and to explore how to raise the standard of care that they receive. The manager sets targets for the staff to help them to focus on improving specific areas of practice.

Staff have completed the organisation's mandatory training. The manager has also sourced external training, which the staff have completed, including a course on autism spectrum disorder and another on eating disorders. This helps staff to increase their knowledge and understanding of how to respond to children with these needs.

The manager provides senior staff with tasks and responsibilities to help them to develop and learn in their senior role. The manager assigns aspects of the auditing processes to the deputy manager, so that there is a joint effort to monitor and scrutinise the care that the children receive.

A record is not always made of visitors to the home. This means that this security measure, which helps to track who may have met the children, is not consistently in place.

The recommendations that were issued at the last inspection are judged to have been met.

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, 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 within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The health and well-being standard is that— the health and well-being needs of children are met; children receive advice, services and support in relation to their health and well-being; and children are helped to lead healthy lifestyles. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff help each child to— achieve the health and well-being outcomes that are recorded in the child's relevant plans; understand the child's health and well-being needs and the options that are available in relation to the child's health and well-being, in a way that is appropriate to the child's age and understanding. (Regulation 10 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(i)(ii))	24 July 2022
Schedule 4 sets out the other information that the registered person must keep in relation to a children's home. The registered person must— maintain in the home the records in Schedule 4; ensure that the records are kept up to date; and retain the records for at least 15 years from the date of the last entry. (Regulation 37 (1) (2)(a)(b)(c)) This specifically relates to ensuring that a record is made of all visitors to the home.	23 June 2022

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the children can access all shared areas of their home unless there are specific reasons why this would not meet a child's needs. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.10)
- The registered person should ensure that records are kept of the administration of all medication. This specifically relates to ensuring that medication administration records include information regarding the quantity and dosage prescribed. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 35, paragraph 7.15)
- The registered person should ensure that all the children's case records are kept up to date and are signed and dated by the author of each entry. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.3)

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people, 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

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

Responsible individual: David Grayson

Registered manager: Sandra Brown

Inspector

Paula Kelly, Social Care Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2022