

# SC429369

Registered provider: Pathways Care Group Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

A private company runs the home. It provides care for up to four children aged between eight and 18 years with a range of needs and learning disabilities, including autism, social communication issues and associated behavioural and medical needs.

At the time of the inspection, three children were living at the home.

The manager registered with Ofsted in July 2025.

### Inspection dates: 12 and 13 November 2025

|                                                                                           |             |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| <b>Overall experiences and progress of children and young people,</b> taking into account | <b>good</b> |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|

|                                                             |      |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| 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:** 20 August 2024

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement            |
|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| 20/08/2024      | Full            | Good                            |
| 24/04/2023      | Full            | Good                            |
| 11/04/2022      | Full            | Requires improvement to be good |
| 11/03/2022      | Interim         | Declined in effectiveness       |

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good**

The three children living at the home all contributed to the inspection.

Children are supported by nurturing and intuitive staff who understand their individual needs. The children have developed secure relationships with staff. The interactions between children and staff are warm and receptive. Staff thoughtfully celebrate children's achievements and life events. These positive relationships have contributed to the children's security and have helped give them the stability they need to make progress.

External professionals and parents spoke highly of the care provided to the children. All said that this support has helped children to make progress. One parent said, 'I feel so happy that [name of child] is so happy at the home, he just loves them like he does me. I cannot fault the staff. They understand everything about him and are just brilliant.'

Staff support children to maintain links with people who are important to them. Children regularly see and speak to family members. Staff have developed positive relationships with the children's families. Staff have supported a parent to take their child on holiday. This gave the child a new experience and quality time with family members.

Staff actively encourage children with their learning. Staff maintain good communication with school staff to reduce any gaps in the children's learning. When staff identify barriers to children's learning, additional support strategies are implemented. One child struggled with the journeys to school. To support the child, staff accompany them on the journey to school. The children's school attendance is high and they are all making progress with their learning.

Children's milestones and achievements are recognised and rewarded. Staff work with children through individualised goals and regularly discuss their progress with them. This has supported the children with their life skills, social skills and communication.

Children enjoy a range of enjoyable activities at the home and in the wider community. These include holidays to seaside resorts, sensory play, trampolining and going to safari parks. Memories of holidays and trips are thoughtfully captured by the staff in memory books. These activities support the children to have enjoyable memories of experiences shared with others.

Overall, the home is welcoming and stimulating. Children's bedrooms reflect their personalities. However, the bathrooms need refurbishment. This detracts from the otherwise homely environment.

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

Staff understand the children's vulnerabilities and the risks they face. Staff know the children well and support them to take age-appropriate risks to promote their independence. Risk assessments are clear and concise and are followed by staff. As a result of these approaches, children's risks have significantly reduced.

Staff use personalised responses that help children to feel reassured if they are upset. Managers review each incident in detail to identify any patterns to the children's behaviours and to identify alternative creative strategies. Worries about the children and their behaviours are discussed with staff. Managers and staff use initiative approaches to help children to feel calm and safe.

Children do not go missing from the home. Staff spoken with were able to detail what they would do if this occurred. Children who have attempted to walk away from staff have been redirected kindly and staff have supported the children to return to a safe environment, preventing them from coming to harm.

Some children have complex health needs. Staff have responded well when children have needed support to manage their conditions. Managers have advocated for children when they have needed additional medical intervention during hospital admissions. Staff work closely with health professionals. Medical professionals described the staff as having good awareness and responsiveness to children's medical needs.

There have not been any allegations made by children. Staff were able to detail how they would respond to children and how they would identify concerns. All staff have appropriate safeguarding training, and regular discussions take place to support staff to appropriately safeguard the children.

Safer recruitment checks are in place, and leaders and managers ensure that staff are appropriate to work with the children.

Physical interventions are used as a last resort to keep children and staff safe. Staff use de-escalation strategies before using a restraint. Incident reports are detailed, and thorough reviews take place by the manager after physical interventions have taken place. Although children are observed after physical interventions and are offered medical and emotional support, direct feedback from children has not always been requested. This does not ensure that children's views about the physical intervention are meaningfully sought.

## **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good**

The previous registered manager left the home in January 2025. The new registered manager has been managing the home since then.

The manager is suitably experienced and is working towards a relevant level 5 qualification. The manager is focused on improving the lives of children in her care. Staff speak highly of the manager, saying that she leads by example and is approachable.

The manager has a strong understanding of the strengths and areas for development in the support provided to children. She carries out detailed reviews of children's experiences and staff practice. Lessons learned and identified improvements are actioned when identified. This approach taken by the manager ensures that there are sufficient opportunities for growth and improvements in practice.

Staff benefit from supervision sessions that focus on reflection and well-being. Children are discussed in detail. This helps staff to review the progress that children make and to discuss any concerns. The well-being of staff is prioritised. Managers recognise that staff's well-being is central to the care that they provide. Staff said that they feel well supported by the manager and that there is positive team morale.

Most staff are qualified for their roles or are working towards the relevant qualification. When staff have struggled to achieve this within the required time frame, leaders and managers have taken the initiative and have provided additional supervision sessions and implemented practice development plans.

When staff's annual appraisals take place, these are detailed and support staff with opportunities to reflect on and develop their practice. However, one member of staff has not received an annual appraisal within the required timescale. This does not ensure that all staff have had the opportunity to reflect on their practice annually. There is a good range of training to equip staff with the skills they need to meet children's individual needs. However, not all staff have received training in alternative methods of communication. This means that some staff lack the skills and experience to support children with their communication effectively.

Professionals and parents involved with the home provided positive feedback about the manager and staff. One professional said, 'Communication is brilliant, the home has been a pillar of support for [name of child]. They have come on leaps since living at the home, it is remarkable.'

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

### **Recommendations**

- The registered person should ensure that the home is a nurturing and supportive environment that meets the needs of children. In particular, ensure that the bathrooms are well maintained and provide a welcoming environment for children. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should ensure that all staff have their performance and fitness to carry out their role formally appraised at least once annually. This appraisal should take into account, when reasonable and practical, the views of other professionals who have worked with the staff member over the year and children in the home's care. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.5)
- The registered person should ensure that staff can access appropriate facilities and resources to support their training needs. In particular, ensure that staff receive training in alternative methods of communication. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.11)
- The registered person should ensure that a child who has been restrained is given the opportunity to express their feelings about their experience of the restraint as soon as is practicable, ideally within 24 hours of the restraint incident, taking the age of the child and the circumstances of the restraint into account. Children should be encouraged to add their views and comments to the record of restraint. Children should be offered the opportunity to access an advocacy support to help them with this. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 50, paragraph 9.6)

### **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:** SC429369

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** Pathways Care Group Limited

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

**Responsible individual:** Benjamin Harper

**Registered manager:** Kayleigh Drake

## Inspector

Syvanna Matthew, Social Care Inspector

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