

# 1241897

Registered provider: Pathways Care Group Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This home is one of five children's homes run by a private organisation. The home provides accommodation for up to eight children and young people, who may have experienced neglect, emotional abuse or had a traumatic experience which has left them vulnerable, and may find it difficult to manage in society.

The manager has been registered at this home since November 2016.

**Inspection dates:** 11 to 12 April 2018

<b>Overall experiences and progress of children and young people,</b> taking into account	<b>requires improvement to be good</b>
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

**Date of last inspection:** 28 February 2018

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** sustained effectiveness

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
28/02/2018	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
24/05/2017	Full	Good

## 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
<p>The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(a)(i))</p> <p>In particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ ensure that the location risk assessment considers risks in the local area such as roads, railway stations, waterways and building sites</li> <li>■ ensure that placement matching decisions consider the needs of and risks to the children who are resident at the home as well as the needs of and risks to the child who is being considered for admission.</li> </ul>	14/05/2018
<p>The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—  that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(d))</p> <p>This is with particular regard to ensuring that grounds of the home are made safe and hazards are removed.</p>	14/05/2018
<p>The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that—</p>	14/05/2018

<p>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare.</p> <p>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. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b)(2)(f))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that the arrangements for the management and oversight of the home are effective in the absence of the registered manager.</p>	
<p>The registered person must compile in relation to the children's home a statement ("the statement of purpose") which covers the matters listed in Schedule 1. (Regulation 16 (1))</p>	14/05/2018
<p>If the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005(a) applies to the home—</p> <p>the registered person must ensure that the requirements of that Order and any regulations made under it, except for article 23 (duties of employees), are complied with in respect of the home. (Regulation 25 (2)(b))</p> <p>In particular, make immediate arrangements to ensure that all of the fire doors close fully.</p>	20/04/2018
<p>The registered person must ensure that all employees—</p> <p>receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience (Regulation 33 (4)(b))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that all staff receive supervision at the frequency set out in the home's supervision policy.</p>	14/05/2018
<p>The registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ("a quality of care review") at least once every 6 months.</p> <p>After completing a quality of care review, the registered person must produce a written report about the quality of care review and the actions which the registered person intends to take as a result of the quality of care review ("the quality of care review report").</p> <p>The registered person must—</p> <p>supply to HMCI a copy of the quality of care review report within 28 days of the date on which the quality of care review is completed. (Regulation 45 (1)(3)(4)(a))</p>	14/05/2018

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good**

Staff create good relationships with children and their families. However, the children's experiences and progress are mixed. Some children experience settled placements and speak positively about the home and the staff. The matching process, which lacks rigour, has resulted in some placements ending in an unplanned way. During a recent new admission assessment, staff considered the risks posed by the children who lived in the home to the new admission, but no consideration was given to what impact the new admission may have on the resident children. The child who was admitted displayed challenging and aggressive behaviours, and the placement ended in an unplanned way.

Contact between children and their families is encouraged and sometimes facilitated by the staff. However, this is not always arranged in an agreed and planned way. Contact between one child and their family was increased to stop the child becoming upset, but this decision was made without agreement from the child's social worker.

Staff listen to the children's views about their care, in both group and individual sessions. Children say that they feel listened to and they trust the staff. One child said, 'I can request time with staff and they take me out somewhere. It's cool, and I like the key-working sessions.'

Some children make progress in their education. When a child does not attend school, the staff work creatively to encourage the child into education.

Relationships between the home and other professionals are positive, and feedback is encouraging. A social worker said, 'The staff have been really creative in engaging [the child] in educational activities, as they will not engage with their education provision. [They take] them out for educational trips.' Encouraging children to engage with their education supports a learning culture in which unplanned breaks in learning are reduced.

Children are encouraged to choose a varied and healthy diet. The staff help the children to develop their self-care skills. The children can participate in a range of activities at the home and in the community. These activities, such as trips to the coast, going to the gym and cooking, broaden their experiences and can improve their overall well-being.

The staff use incentives to encourage positive behaviour. The sanctions imposed in response to unwanted behaviour are fair and reasonable. The staff use a restorative approach, sometimes to good effect.

## **How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good**

There are items in the grounds of the home that are hazardous to children and staff. The cover to the gas mains is damaged and not secured safely. There are broken chairs, a trip hazard, and a section of wire fencing is rusty and in a state of disrepair. This makes the property less secure and dangerous if, for example, a child was to cut themselves on the fence.

The home has sustained flood damage, which is under repair. The interior decoration and furnishings are welcoming and the home is clean throughout. The staff work hard to maintain the home's appearance. However, essential fire safety measures have been overlooked, with 11 fire doors not closing securely. This poses a risk to children and staff. The provider confirmed during the inspection that they would make immediate plans to ensure that the fire doors close properly.

The location risk assessment considers the main road on which the home is located and the risks that this can pose. However, the mitigation of risk is not detailed enough. Other local risks, such as a train station, waterways, pubs, shops and a building site, are not considered. Therefore, the assessment of local risks to children is ineffective.

Clear processes guide the staff if children leave the home without agreement. The staff have created links with the local police. The missing person liaison officer visits the home regularly. Staff work effectively with the children to reduce the number of incidents of going missing. Children who have previously gone missing have stopped doing so since the last inspection.

A recent increase in physical interventions related to one child. The four interventions were proportionate and recorded appropriately. This child has since moved on from the home.

All of the staff are trained in safeguarding children as part of their induction process. The home provides a range of training to the staff. The staff demonstrate a good understanding of their roles and their responsibilities to safeguard.

Professionals are positive about the staff. One social worker said, 'The staff meet [the child's] needs. They turned a lot of negative behaviour around at the beginning. The home is doing as expected and [the child's] placement there is stable.'

## **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good**

The registered manager is currently absent from the home. The deputy manager is overseeing the day-to-day running of the home, with support from other managers from within the organisation. However, the organisation does not have suitable arrangements in place during the manager's absence. Consequently, important information was

inaccessible during the inspection. Some of the electronic files cannot be accessed by anyone other than the registered manager. This meant that some aspects of the safe recruitment checks could not be reviewed. No arrangement has been made to forward emails that have been sent to the manager. This means that, potentially, important information relating to the children has not been accessed. Some of the paper files were inaccessible. This led to staff needing to drill open a filing cabinet during the inspection. Failure to provide required access to information does not enable the deputy manager to have proper oversight of the home in the manager's absence.

The arrangement for additional managerial support is not sufficient. The deputy manager is unable to access some of the electronic systems that the registered manager has access to, which means that undertaking some of the additional management responsibilities is not possible.

The deputy manager has not received supervision for over two months. This is despite her taking on the responsibility of the daily running of the home in the registered manager's absence. One member of staff said that they could not remember the last supervision that they had. The last recorded supervision on this staff member's file is dated August 2017. Lack of information makes it difficult to assess the quality of the supervision and support that the staff receive.

The statement of purpose lacks information about the experience and qualifications of the staff team. This means that Ofsted and others are not presented with all of the information that they should be to inform them accurately about the service provided.

There have been some improvements to the external monitoring of the home. The independent visitor now seeks feedback from professionals and the children's families. However, the most recent internal review and assessment of the quality of care covers a 10-month period, rather than the required six-month period. This review was submitted to Ofsted four months after completion and contained inaccurate information about the number of times that a child had been reported missing to the police. The review contained no action plan to drive improvement. Lack of accurate information and evaluation means that the monitoring does not identify patterns and trends and areas for improvement.

Multi-agency working is a strength of the home. Professionals and family members gave consistently good feedback. One professional said, 'When staff come to meetings, they present well in terms of wanting the best for [the child], and they follow through things that are agreed. They have good insight into the needs of [the child] and seem to really understand them.'

## **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 differences 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 whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.



## Children's home details

**Unique reference number:** 1241897

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

**Registered provider:** Pathways Care Group Limited

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

**Responsible individual:** Lisa Deane

**Registered manager:** David Sanders

## Inspector

Ricky D'Arcy, social care inspector

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