

# 2517433

Registered provider: Pathways Residential Child Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This home provides care and accommodation for up to four children who may have emotional and behavioural difficulties. It is owned by a private provider.

There has been no registered manager in post since August 2020. A new manager has recently been employed. The responsible individual has been managing the home in the interim period, supported by a deputy manager.

We last visited this setting on 24 February 2021 to carry out a monitoring visit. The report is published on the Ofsted website.'

### Inspection dates: 21 to 22 April 2021

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

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **inadequate**

There are serious and widespread failures that mean children and young people are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded.

**Date of last inspection:** 11 February 2020

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** Good

### Enforcement action since last inspection:

Following a monitoring visit on 23 and 24 February 2021, Ofsted issued two compliance notices to improve safeguarding practice and management arrangements. Ofsted also issued a restriction notice so that no more young people

could be admitted to the home. During this full inspection, the compliance notices and restriction notice were monitored.

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/02/2020	Full	Good

## Inspection judgements

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

This home is inadequate because leaders and managers have failed to consistently keep children safe. Children have often been cared for by new and inexperienced staff. There is a high turnover of staff, with some staff only working at the home for short periods of time before leaving. This means that the trusting and reliable relationships that make children feel secure cannot be formed.

Placement endings are not always well planned. Some children's placements have ended because the home could not meet their needs or manage their behaviours. In these cases, children have moved to another placement without the opportunity for any transition planning. This means placement endings have been poor.

Some outcomes for children have improved within a short period of time since the last Ofsted monitoring visit. The calmer atmosphere in the home means that children now have a much healthier pattern of sleep. This has impacted positively on other aspects of their life. For example, children have now started to make good progress in their education.

Children have also improved the way that they participate in the local community. For example, they have taken part in a charity walk that benefitted children with illness. They were sponsored by people in their local community. They also participate in sporting activities, such as horse riding and walking.

Children voice their opinions and views freely. They are encouraged to share any concerns or complaints. Children understand how to access the home's complaints procedure.

Children are encouraged to be part of planning future developments in the home. Managers take account of their tastes and preferences. However, in some areas the home is poorly decorated. Some furniture is in need of repair or replacement.

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

Children have been put at risk of harm because they have been looked after by inexperienced staff. In one instance, all staff on duty had only a few weeks of experience. During this period, poor decisions were made that had the potential to place children at risk. Children did not feel confident to speak about their concerns with the staff on duty. Managers only became aware of the children's concerns at a later time.

When children go missing, staff make efforts to encourage them to return. However, when a child returns from being missing, the home is not advocating on their behalf to ensure that they are offered an independent return interview. Such interviews are not routinely taking place. This means that the reasons that children go missing from the home, and the risks that they face while missing, cannot be fully understood by the staff. This reduces the effectiveness of risk management strategies.

Children's bedrooms are searched without their knowledge or permission. This happens when there is no immediate concern about safety. Children say that they are unhappy about this. This practice acts as a barrier to children building trusting and reliable relations with staff.

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

Leaders and managers have not provided sufficient support and guidance, particularly to new and inexperienced staff. Because inexperienced staff have been left to care for a child without adequate support and supervision, the child was placed at risk of harm.

Leaders and managers are aware of the home's inability to maintain a consistent team of staff but have been unable to rectify this problem. As a result, children do not have the opportunity to build secure, nurturing relationships with the adults who care for them. Children have sometimes not felt able to confide in staff when they have been worried or concerned.

Arrangements for staff training have improved in recent weeks and staff now have access to a better range of training. However, leaders and managers have not ensured that all staff, including senior staff, have undertaken all training that is required to meet the needs of children.

Despite inconsistent and weak management, staff report that they feel positive about working at this home. They say that they feel supported by their colleagues. They are encouraged by recent developments and are motivated to improve the home further.

## 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—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other;</p> <p>understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person;</p> <p>take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare.</p> <p>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)(a)(iv)(v)(vi)(b))</p> <p>This specifically relates to the lack of independent review when children go missing. Children have also been put at risk of harm by new and inexperienced staff.</p>	31/05/2021
<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> <p>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and</p> <p>promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p>	31/05/2021

<p>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;</p> <p>ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child;</p> <p>ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child;</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;</p> <p>demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on—</p> <p>research and developments in relation to the ways in which the needs of children are best met; and</p> <p>feedback on the experiences of children, including complaints received; and</p> <p>use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(c)(e)(f)(g)(i)(ii)(h))</p> <p>This specifically relates to children not having meaningful relationships with staff, training not meeting each child's needs and the management monitoring of all staff.</p>	
<p>The care planning standard is that children—</p> <p>receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and</p> <p>have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that children are admitted to the home only if their needs are within the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home's statement of purpose. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a))</p>	<p>31/05/2021</p>

This specifically relates to children needing planned endings so that wider professionals can be given enough time to plan appropriately in accordance with each child's needs. Where the relationships between children are poor, action should be taken to address the situation to prevent escalation. Children should only be admitted to the home if staff are able to meet each child's needs and presenting behaviours.

\* These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

## Recommendations

- For children's homes to be nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of their children, they will, in most cases, be homely, domestic environments. Children's homes must comply with relevant health and safety legislation (alarms, food hygiene etc.); however in doing so, homes should seek as far as possible to maintain a domestic rather than 'institutional' impression. (Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards, page 15, 3.9)
- Where the home has questions or concerns about a child's medication, they should approach an expert such as a general medical practitioner, community pharmacist or designated nurse for looked-after children. (Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards, page 35, 7.15)
- Homes are required to develop and keep under review a "Statement of Purpose" (regulation 16 and schedule1). The home's Statement of Purpose should be child-focused, indicating how the home provides individual care to meet the Quality Standards for children in their care. (Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards, page 14 3.5)

## 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:** 2517433

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

**Registered provider:** Pathways Residential Child Care Limited

**Registered provider address:** 45 Burton Road, Branston, Burton-On-Trent,  
Staffordshire DE14 3DL

**Responsible individual:** James McCabe

**Registered manager:** Post vacant

## Inspector

Simon Hunter, Social Care Inspector

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