



Arolygiaeth Gofal
Cymru
Care Inspectorate
Wales

Inspection Report

Pathway Care Ltd (Trading as Calon Cymru Fostering)



Pathway Care Ltd, Unit 12, Cardiff Business Park Lambourne Crescent,
Cardiff, CF14 5GF



02920811173



www.caloncymrufostering.co.uk

The inspection visits for this service took place between 11/03/2026 and 16/03/2026

Service Information:

Operated by:	Pathway Care Limited
Care Type:	Fostering Service
Main language(s):	English
Promotion of Welsh language and culture:	The provider promotes, anticipates, identifies, and meets the Welsh language and culture needs of people.

Themes:



Well-being



Care & Support



Environment



Leadership & Management

Summary:

Pathway Care Ltd (trading as Calon Cymru Fostering) is an independent fostering service responsible for the recruitment, assessment, training, supervision and support of foster carers across South and West Wales. The service provides a range of fostering arrangements, including parent and child, and therapeutic-led placements. The service works effectively with placing local authorities to match children with foster carers and support stability. At the time of inspection, the service had 278 approved foster carers (162 fostering households) caring for 176 children.

Children experience safe, nurturing care. Foster carers are committed and support children to achieve their well-being outcomes. Most children report they feel safe, settled and listened to, and benefit from strong trauma-informed practice. Children, foster carers and staff have access to a specialist therapeutic service, which supports children's well-being and contributes to their stability. Children are safeguarded and supported to achieve positive outcomes in education, health and leisure.

Foster carers receive regular, reflective supervision and support from a stable, skilled and experienced workforce. Foster carers report feeling valued and confident in their role. Staff and foster carers access a wide range of training, including trauma-informed training, and opportunities

to learn and develop are rated highly.

The service demonstrates clear leadership and effective governance, with oversight arrangements in place to monitor safeguarding, placement stability and outcomes for children. Leaders work proactively and in partnership with other organisations to meet children's needs. Quality assurance activity informs service development. Calon Cymru is a well-led fostering service where children experience positive well-being outcomes.

Findings:



Well-being

Children have a voice and are supported to express their views and influence decisions about their care. Their wishes and feelings are actively sought and inform day-to-day support and care planning. Children share their views through ongoing conversations with foster carers and supervising social workers, during foster carer annual reviews, participation events and local authority statutory reviews. Children express positive views about their care and their relationships with foster carers. The provider is considering how best to capture children's views following unplanned endings to further support learning. The service continues to develop its approach to participation through creative and child-led activities. The Welsh language active offer is promoted in line with children's needs and preferences.

Foster carers support children to access and attend appointments with primary health professionals and address emerging health needs. They work closely with Child Looked After nurses and specialist health services to respond to complex health needs. Children's emotional well-being is supported through access to a specialist therapeutic service, which provides direct work with children and guidance to foster carers and staff. Trauma-informed training for staff and foster carers has strengthened understanding of children's needs and supports more responsive and consistent care, contributing positively to children's well-being and stability.

Children are supported to attend education, make progress and achieve their potential. Where children experience barriers to suitable education provision, foster carers and staff actively advocate for children and work with placing authorities and partner agencies. The service has introduced a dedicated education support officer, which helps to strengthen advocacy and coordination for some children with more complex needs. Specialist support is used where needed to help children engage with education and promote learning.

Children are supported to do things that matter to them. They take part in hobbies, leisure activities and holidays with their foster carers, which helps to build confidence, resilience and a sense of belonging. Children are supported to develop independence and life skills appropriate to their age and stage of development. Young people experience continuity of relationships and support as they prepare for adulthood.

Children feel safe and have trusted adults they can talk to. One foster carer described the service as "*child-focused to the core, with support that makes it possible for children to feel safe, settled and understood.*" Children are supported to maintain relationships that are important to them, where this is safe and in line with their assessed needs and wishes. Foster carers play an active role in supporting family time and helping children maintain a sense of identity and connection.



Care & Support

The service clearly outlines the expected standards of care and support for children within its Statement of Purpose and its supporting policies and procedures. Foster carers have clear information about their role and the support available to them through accessible guidance and resources. Children receive age-appropriate information about the service, their care and their rights and entitlements, which supports their understanding. The service uses a range of approaches to help children become familiar with foster carers, which supports smoother transitions and reduces anxiety.

Arrangements to support children living with foster carers are generally well planned and supported. Decision making is informed by consultation with foster carers, placing authorities and managers, and is underpinned by risk assessments and detailed information about children's needs. Foster carers are provided with as much information as possible through early meetings and receive ongoing updates as further information becomes available. Most children develop positive relationships with foster carers and experience positive well-being outcomes.

The service is proactive in supporting children and foster families where there are vulnerabilities or risks to children's stability. Additional support is provided through increased supervision, consultation and access to specialist therapeutic input, which helps sustain stability for children. When children move on, opportunities to consistently gather and record feedback from children, foster carers and professionals would further strengthen reflection and learning.

Supervising social workers maintain regular contact with foster carers, and supervision arrangements provide reflective and responsive support. The quality of supervision records is good and provide clear evidence of oversight and children's progress. Arrangements for monitoring children's finances are in place. Foster carers value the regular, responsive support they receive from supervising social workers. One foster carer told us, *"I never feel alone, there is always someone available who understands our family and the children's needs."*

Annual foster carer reviews are undertaken in line with the service's review policy. These demonstrate a thorough, competency-based approach, incorporating a wide range of consultation, and are appropriately presented to panel. The fostering panel and the independent reviewing officer provide effective scrutiny and oversight.

Safeguarding arrangements are suitable and effective. Policies relating to safeguarding and behaviour management are regularly reviewed, and staff and foster carers understand their safeguarding responsibilities. Safer caring plans and risk assessments are in place to support children's safety and well-being. Safeguarding concerns are managed appropriately, with strong oversight and review following investigations.



Environment

The fostering service operates from two office bases in Cardiff and Carmarthen, which provide suitable, secure and professional working environments for staff. Both offices have dedicated rooms available for supervision, meetings and training, as well as child-friendly spaces used for therapeutic work and family time. The premises are appropriately maintained and support the effective delivery of the service across South and West Wales. Staff are supported to work flexibly through hybrid working arrangements, with suitable office desks available when required.

Access to office premises is secure, and health and safety arrangements are in place, including fire safety procedures and maintenance oversight. Staff are equipped with laptops and mobile phones, which support secure, flexible working. Records are held electronically within secure systems and are password protected, supporting confidentiality and information governance. Foster carers and professionals engage with meetings, reviews and panels both in person and virtually, which supports accessibility and participation.

Arrangements are in place to ensure foster homes provide safe, welcoming and suitable environments for children. Health and safety assessments are completed as part of the foster carer assessment process and expectations regarding household safety are clearly set out in policies and guidance. Supervising social workers undertake visits to foster homes, including unannounced visits, to monitor standards and children's living environments.



Leadership & Management

The service has clear lines of accountability and governance, with suitable management and contingency arrangements in place. The Statement of Purpose is reviewed regularly and reflects the service, including its trauma-informed ethos and commitment to promoting positive outcomes for children. Policies and procedures are accessible to staff and foster carers, supporting consistent practice across the service. The service has a clear and accessible complaints policy. Records show complaints and concerns are responded to appropriately, with safeguarding referrals made where necessary and follow-up action taken, including management oversight and fostering panel where appropriate.

Leaders have a clear understanding of the service's responsibilities and maintain a strong focus on children's well-being, stability and support for foster carers. Oversight arrangements include regular management meetings, safeguarding oversight and review of key performance information, which supports monitoring of practice and outcomes. Quality assurance activity identifies strengths and areas for development and informs service improvement. Leaders also seek feedback from children, foster carers and staff, and use this to shape and develop the service.

The fostering panel meets regularly and is chaired by an experienced and consistent chair. Panel discussions are robust and well balanced, with clear consideration of risk, and children's needs. Recommendations are clearly recorded and inform the agency decision making process. Panel membership is suitably skilled, including some care experienced members, and of sufficient numbers to support continuity and decision-making. Panel members undertake training and receive regular appraisal.

The service benefits from a stable, safely recruited and experienced workforce. Staff and managers receive regular, supportive and reflective supervision, which evidences appropriate prioritisation of work and escalation of safeguarding concerns. Communication and service developments are supported through team meetings, supervision, practice and team development days. Feedback from staff is positive, highlighting visible, approachable managers and a shared commitment to achieving the best possible outcomes for children.

Training and staff development are key strengths of the service. Staff and foster carers have access to a wide range of high-quality training, including specialist and trauma-informed training, which supports effective practice. Foster carers value the training available to them and demonstrate a strong commitment to ongoing learning and development.

Arrangements to support foster carers are well established. Support groups and out-of-hours arrangements are highly valued and provide reassurance and timely access to advice when needed. Foster carers report positive relationships with supervising social workers and managers and describe responsive, reliable support that helps them care effectively for children. Staff and

foster carers consistently describe a positive and supportive culture. One staff member told us, *“Managers are visible, approachable and genuinely care about staff, carers and children – it feels like a team working towards the same goals.”*

Areas identified for improvement

Where we identify **Areas for Improvement** but we have not found outcomes for people to be at immediate or significant risk, we discuss these with the provider. We expect the provider to take action and we will follow this up at the next inspection.

Where we find outcomes for people **require significant improvement** and/or there is risk to people's well-being we identify areas for **Priority Action**. In these circumstances we issue a Priority Action Notice(s) to the Provider, and they must take immediate steps to make improvements. We will inspect again within six months to check improvements have been made and outcomes for people have improved.

CIW has no areas for improvement identified following this inspection.

CIW has not issued any Priority action notices following this inspection.

Welsh Government © Crown copyright 2026.

*You may use and re-use the information featured in this publication (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government License. You can view the Open Government License, on the National Archives website or you can write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gov.uk
You must reproduce our material accurately and not use it in a misleading context.*