

1244287

Registered provider: ROC Northwest Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is one of several owned and managed by a private company. It provides care for up to five children who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

A permanent manager has been appointed, and he has submitted his application to become registered with Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 5 and 6 April 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 June 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10/06/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good
14/04/2021	Full	Inadequate
19/02/2020	Full	Good
21/11/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are making good progress from their individual starting points. They benefit from positive and trusting relationships with the staff who care for them. One social worker said, 'The staff team are very caring and clearly go above and beyond to support [child's name]. The team have established a really positive relationship with him, and this has helped him achieve some fantastic outcomes recently.'

Staff understand the importance of education in achieving good outcomes for children. Staff have successfully supported children to re-engage with education despite having long periods of non-attendance. The manager liaises effectively with wider professionals, such as virtual headteachers, to ensure that children return to full-time education.

Children's health needs are identified and responded to effectively. For example, with encouragement and reassurance, one child has been supported to go to the dentist for the first time. In addition, children are supported to better understand their long-term health needs. This helps raise children's awareness of the potential impact those health needs may have on them.

Children are supported to pursue their hobbies and interests. Staff encourage children to try new activities and take part in charitable initiatives in the local community. One social worker said, 'Staff are creative in how they encourage [child's name] to engage meaningfully in activities which are healthy and beneficial.' Staff are creative and have developed individual books for children which capture new experiences and special memories of the child's time at the home.

Children are regularly consulted on their views on the home's care. They are actively encouraged to contribute to their care-planning documents in a way that reflects their voice. One parent said, 'He has matured a lot. They treat him as an individual, and he is able to be himself there.'

The home is spacious and has large communal areas for children to use. Parts of the home were being redecorated at the time of the inspection. However, some furniture and carpeting are tired and in need of replacement. This detracts from the homely atmosphere that staff are trying to achieve. A recommendation is made to address this.

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

Children are settled and they are increasingly making safer decisions. For some children, significant risks associated with going missing from home and exploitation are reducing.

Children receive a high level of supervision and support. This is in line with their assessed needs. However, with careful planning, children are being supported to start taking age-appropriate risks. This is helping them to build their confidence and to become more independent. For example, one child attends football matches with his friends.

Children benefit from regular direct work focused on children's individual risks and vulnerabilities. This helps children to learn how to keep themselves safe. Furthermore, the manager has sourced additional support from external bodies such as the police and fire service to educate children about risk. This increases children's knowledge about how to stay safe and raises their awareness of potential dangers.

Staff are supporting children to form positive relationships with each other. When there has been conflict between children, staff have taken effective action to ensure that children feel safe. In addition, staff complete work with children to help them to mend their relationships.

Staff rarely use physical interventions to manage children's behaviours. Staff use their knowledge of children to try to diffuse situations. When a physical intervention is used, children are always given the opportunity to talk about how this made them feel. Children are encouraged to reflect on their behaviours and talk about strategies that might help staff to support them when they feel angry or upset.

The manager is swift to respond to emerging risks and puts appropriate control measures in place to safeguard children. However, some children's risk management plans do not contain up-to-date information. For example, some risk assessments have not been changed when risks to children have lowered. In addition, children's risk assessments do not always accurately record the measures that staff use to keep children safe. A requirement has been repeated to secure improvements in this area.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Since the last inspection, a permanent manager has been appointed, and he has submitted his application to become registered with Ofsted. The manager is supported by a deputy manager and two team leaders. Together, they form a cohesive and visible leadership team.

Managers have taken effective action to address the shortfalls identified at the last full inspection. This has led to improvements to the children's experiences and to the arrangements in place to safeguard them.

The new manager has a clear vision for the home. He demonstrates a commitment to providing children with high-quality, child-centred care. He made improvements to the quality of care provided to children in a short period of time. One independent reviewing officer said, 'I was impressed with the drive and passion of the new manager and how quickly any issues are resolved.'

The manager acts as a good advocate for children. He helps children to voice their wishes and feelings as well as empowering them to become more involved in decisions about their day-to-day care. He is embedding this culture in the staff team. One social worker said, 'Staff actively champion [child's name]'s voice and advocate strongly on his behalf.'

Parents and professionals value a high level of communication from staff. This helps to ensure they are up to date with children's progress. Parents told the inspector that they felt involved in decisions about their child's care.

Improvements have been made to the internal monitoring and review systems. However, these systems are not yet sufficiently robust. For example, some children's risk assessments contained out-of-date information and there are some inconsistencies in children's care plans. In addition, there has been a delay in notifying the regulator of an incident of significance to children in the home. Recommendations have been made to address this.

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 protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. 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))	27 May 2022

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the home is decorated and furnished to a good standard. Replacement furniture should be ordered when required and without unnecessary delay. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9).
- The registered person should make best use of internal and external monitoring systems to secure continuous improvement. This relates specifically to ensuring that children's care plans and risk management plans contain accurate and up-to-date information. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24).
- The registered person should ensure that there is a system in place so that all serious events are notified to the regulator without delay. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 63, paragraph 14.13).

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: 1244287

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: ROC Northwest Limited

Registered provider address: 5th Floor, Metropolitan House, 3 Darkes Lane,
Potters Bar EN6 1AG

Responsible individual: Katie Stephens

Registered manager: vacant

Inspector

Sophie Thomson, Social Care Inspector

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