

1244287

Registered provider: ROC Northwest

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. The home provides care for up to five children who may have social and emotional difficulties.

At the time of the inspection, there were five children living in the home.

The manager has been in post since January and has applied to register with Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 16 and 17 April 2024

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
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The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: 31 May 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
31/05/2023	Full	Outstanding
05/04/2022	Full	Good
10/06/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good
14/04/2021	Full	Inadequate

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

The manager ensures that when children move into the home, thoughtful and careful planning takes place. Staff do all they can to welcome children sensitively and to ease any anxieties they may have. As a result of this, children's first experiences of the home are positive.

Care planning and care practice are highly individualised. Leaders, managers and staff have a comprehensive understanding of children's needs and provide them with a bespoke package of support. They work closely with external agencies to ensure that children receive the services and support they require to make progress. One social worker said, 'Children's support plans are individual, thorough and thoughtful.'

Staff are warm, nurturing and caring towards children. The quality of relationships between staff and children is exceptional. Managers continue to be a significant driving force in creating a positive culture in the home and ensure that the therapeutic care provided to children is high quality. As a result of this, research continues to be fully embedded in staff practice. One social worker said, 'I have only seen staff be nurturing or caring towards [name of child]. The message he gets from staff is, we care for you and you are worthy of love.'

The manager and staff have high aspirations for children and support them to do well in education. When there are barriers to education, staff and managers are creative and support children to overcome these. Most children have high levels of attendance and engagement, and for other children, this is an area that is continuously improving. One social worker said, 'It took ages to find a school. Staff at the home advocated strongly for him to return to school.'

The quality of direct work carried out with children is excellent. Staff make creative use of research and sensitively talk to children about key issues which are relevant to each child. Records are detailed and contain input from the manager.

Children are supported to take part in a wide variety of experiences, including going on holiday to Tenerife. Staff encourage children to explore their hobbies and interests. Children regularly attend clubs. One child auditioned successfully for a part in a theatrical show. One teacher said, '[Name of child] is always busy. He is really talented and staff support him to attend football clubs.'

Staff recognise the complexities of the relationships that exist between the children and their families. They go over and above to support children to manage and improve family relationships. As a result of this, children's family relationships are improving significantly and children feel happier.

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

Children's risk management plans are up to date and reflect each child's personal needs and risks. The manager ensures that plans are up to date, clear and directive. Managers and staff know children's risks and understand them. As a result of this, children are helped to keep safe.

Some children have gone missing from home. Individual support plans help the staff understand the action that they need to take to locate children and keep them safe. Incident reports are detailed and show the steps that staff have taken to locate a missing child. One parent said, 'The missing-from-home incidents have significantly reduced since summer 2023. This is a huge improvement.'

One child has regular planned overnight stays at his friend's house at weekends. There have been some occasions when he has refused to return to the home. Staff remain in contact with the child during these missing episodes and carry out regular welfare visits to encourage him to return home. However, when staff have been unable to contact the child's friend's parent, staff enquiries have not been sufficiently robust.

Staff are skilled in de-escalation techniques and, as a result of this, there are very few occasions when physical intervention is needed. There have been two occasions when staff have had to hold children to keep them safe. This has been done as a last resort. Physical holds used are in line with the home's policies and procedures. Records are detailed and contain the relevant information. Appropriate debriefs and reflective conversations are carried out with children, taking into consideration their views, wishes and feelings. The manager ensures that staff are provided with a debrief and an opportunity to reflect.

Staff carry out regular direct work with children to support them to understand how to keep themselves safe, including when out in the community. Children are also encouraged to attend workshops to support and educate them around risks in the community.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

There has been a change in the management team since the last inspection. The current manager has been in post since January 2024. Before this, she was the home's deputy manager. She has provided a seamless transition for the leadership of the home.

The manager is enthusiastic, inspirational and forward thinking. She has a clear vision and ambition for each child. She leads by example and is supported by a deputy manager who is supportive and shares her vision. They work exceptionally well together and have each been influential in changing the lives of children and leading the staff team.

The manager ensures that all staff receive regular supervision that is reflective but also focuses on their individual development. Supervisions are well planned and structured and because of this, staff practice is developing. One staff member said, 'Supervisions are supportive. I feel like managers listen to me and want me to do well.'

Staff retention is exceptionally high. Staff feel valued, supported and listened to by their managers and colleagues. One staff member said, 'I feel very grateful for our management team. The manager is such a caring, thoughtful, understanding and supportive manager. She is always open to listen to my views.'

Management oversight in the home is excellent. Managers are extremely reflective in their approach and they are open to new learning. Staff receive an extensive training package. This consists of mandatory training and additional training to meet the needs of the children.

The managers have developed and nurtured positive working relationships with external professionals and family members. One social worker said, 'The home is amazing. It is one of the best homes I have ever seen. Communication is excellent. They are really focused in terms of the support provided to [name of child].'

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, The 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)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that a child is absent from the home without authority, staff do all they can to ensure contact is made with the child's friend's parents and when contact cannot be made, follow up and escalate any concerns with the local authority.	17 May 2024

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

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

Responsible individual: Jeanette Swift

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Kimmy Feeley, Social Care Inspector

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