

1244287

Assurance visit

Information about this children's home

The home is one of several owned and managed by a private company. The home provides care and support for up to five young people who can no longer live at home.

The registered manager left in June 2020. A new manager has been appointed and is in the process of submitting an application to become the registered manager.

Visit dates: 16 to 17 September 2020

Previous inspection date: 19 February 2020

Previous inspection judgement: Good

Information about this visit

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), Ofsted suspended all routine inspections in March 2020. As part of a phased return to routine inspection, we are undertaking assurance visits to children's social care services that are inspected under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF).

At these visits, inspectors evaluate the extent to which:

- children are well cared for
- children are safe
- leaders and managers are exercising strong leadership.

This visit was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000, following the published guidance for assurance visits.

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills is leading Ofsted's work into how England's social care system has delivered child-centred practice and care within the context of the restrictions placed on society during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Findings from the visit

We did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance visit.

The care of children

Children describe caring and trusting relationships with staff. These positive relationships significantly enhance the children's well-being and progress.

Children's emotional health and well-being are improving. One child's confidence and self-esteem have greatly improved because of changes to his personal care needs. His social worker said that his school has also noticed the positive changes in him. He now engages more in lessons and is eager to go home at night as he looks forward to seeing the staff.

Children's healthcare plans are poor and do not contain all the necessary information about the child. This may lead to inconsistencies in the quality of care provided.

Children's education has been well supported during the pandemic, and they have all returned to school. When children face barriers to their education, the staff are quick to support them.

Children maintain positive contact with their families. Staff use various social platforms effectively to help children who live some distance from home to remain in contact with those people who are important to them.

A parent was complimentary about the staff and the support offered to her and her son to plan his move back home. This is a massive achievement for this child and has been his goal since he moved to the home.

The safety of children

Safeguarding practice is improving. Staff are much more confident to raise concerns and to escalate these to senior managers if necessary. Safeguarding discussions are now an integral part of team meetings, staff supervision and daily discussions.

Children feel safe and have a sense of belonging. They know that they can talk to the staff about their worries and that the staff will help them to be safe. Children are now safer from the risks of going missing from home.

Children are increasingly aware of their own safety. A child explained that they cannot play one of the games as they are too young, and it was not appropriate for them. Children are developing an understanding of the world around them and are learning to be tolerant and respectful of the needs of others.

Staff and children enjoy respectful, caring relationships. Children eagerly greet staff as they arrive home with an enthusiastic hug and say 'hello, darling'. Clear

consistent boundaries help children to feel safe. Several social workers said that their children are much more able to manage their emotions and to self-regulate. Consequently, the number of physical interventions has greatly reduced.

The home is well maintained and has recently been repainted. Children's bedrooms are bright and reflect their individual interests. Children said that they love their new bedrooms, and that they enjoy spending time there.

Leaders and managers

The registered manager left the home suddenly in June 2020. A new manager is in post and is completing her application to register with Ofsted. A new staff team is in place. The staff and children said that the home is now much more settled. This has restored the confidence of the parent and social worker spoken to during the visit.

The new manager is knowledgeable about the home's strengths and areas for development. Consequently, the areas for development identified at this inspection were expected. Supervision sessions are improving and provide opportunities for staff to discuss their professional development.

The staff team is still relatively new but they said that they have the building blocks in place to move forward. Staff training on several topics has been delayed due to COVID-19, such as recording with care.

Children are regularly consulted about all aspects of their care. They have requested a new play area, and this is under construction.

The quality of record-keeping is variable. Behaviour management plans are a generic document and do not consider the diverse needs of each child. Care plans and risk assessments are not current and contain a lot of historical information that is not relevant.

Monitoring of the home by the manager and the independent person does not provide a critical oversight of the quality of care, records and documentation. This hinders the home's ability to make continuous progress.

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 health and well-being standard is that— the health and well-being needs of children are met; children receive advice, services and support in relation to their health and well-being; and children are helped to lead healthy lifestyles. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff help each child to— achieve the health and well-being outcomes that are recorded in the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 10 (1)(a)(b)(c)(2)(a)(i))	30/10/2020
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— 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; ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate; ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child;	30/10/2020

ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child; 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; 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)(b)(c)(e)(f)(h))	
The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which— include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child; are kept up to date; and are signed and dated by the author of each entry. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b)(c)) In particular, that the young people's care plans, behaviour management plans and risk assessments are current and contain all of the necessary information.	30/10/2020

Recommendations

- The registered person should actively seek independent scrutiny of the home and make best use of independent and internal monitoring (including under regulations 44 and 45) to ensure continuous improvement. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 10.24) In particular, that the monitoring of the home is robust and provides a critical analysis of the care and support provided.
- Staff should be familiar with the home's policies on record keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that is helpful to them. The home's records on each child represent a significant contribution to their life history. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraphs 14.4 and 14.5)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 1244287

Registered provider: Roc Northwest Ltd

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

Responsible individual: Katie Stephens

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Chris Scully, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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