

1264537

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. It provides care for up to six children who may have social and emotional difficulties.

There are currently three children living in the home.

The manager registered with Ofsted in April 2024.

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 May 2024

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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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	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 31 July 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
31/07/2023	Full	Good
11/10/2022	Full	Good
02/11/2021	Full	Good
15/08/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children have positive experiences of moving into or out of the home. The manager and staff take great care in the planning processes. They ensure that children have individual direct work. This helps to ease children's worries or anxieties and provides them with a positive experience.

Staff are warm, nurturing and caring towards children. Staff spend time with children and know them well. Children can identify a trusted adult they can talk to if they have any worries or concerns. One child said, 'It's a lot better since the new staff started, it doesn't feel like a children's home anymore, it is homely.'

Staff promote and encourage children to take part in their education. When there are barriers to education, staff do all they can to support children to overcome these. When children do not access full-time education, they are provided with structured educational activities throughout the day. As a result of this, one child has made significant progress. One social worker said, '[Name of child]'s education has really improved, he is now sitting in his exams, and this is a huge achievement for him.'

The manager ensures that children's views, wishes and feelings are fully embedded in their support plans. These plans are regularly reviewed and updated in line with children's individual needs and include actions from care plans and personal education plans. However, the most up-to-date copies of some children's local authority plans are not accessible to staff in the home.

There have been occasions when some children have struggled with their mental health and well-being. The staff and manager have ensured that appropriate medical advice is sought. Staff have ensured there are referrals to external agencies, to seek additional support. As a result, children receive specialist help that is individualised to their needs.

Relationships between family and friends are promoted. Staff support children to see their families in line with their plans. Staff recognise that seeing family members can sometimes be difficult for children, so they ensure that children are supported to work through any difficult feelings they may have.

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

The manager and staff know the children's risks and understand them. When assessing risk, the manager consults with other professionals. This means that staff are provided with the most appropriate strategies to help keep children safe.

There have been occasions when children have been missing from home. The manager and staff team are proactive in their response and the missing from care protocol is routinely followed. Assessments that are used to manage risks are regularly reviewed

and updated. When a child has been missing, incident reports are detailed and include the action that staff have taken to locate the child.

There have been occasions when staff have had to physically intervene and guide children to safety. This has been used as a last resort. Any holds have been in line with the home's policies and procedures. Records are detailed and contain the relevant information. Staff have debriefs and reflective conversations with children after incidents. This means children's views, wishes and feelings are fully considered. The manager ensures that staff are provided with a debrief and an opportunity to reflect on the circumstances leading to a physical intervention.

At times, children have displayed behaviours of concern. Records are detailed and it is clear what action staff have taken to manage the behaviour and minimise risk. Staff carry out regular direct work with children. These discussions are reflective, educational and purposeful. This practice is effective in supporting children to understand risks and is helping to keep them safe. One social worker said, '[Name of child]'s overall risk has reduced significantly since living in the home.'

Room searches are undertaken and often linked to incidents when a concern has been identified. Most room searches are documented and detail what action has been taken. However, there are some errors in the records and children's views are not always included.

Investigations into allegations or suspicions of harm are shared with the relevant agencies and in line with statutory guidance. When there have been serious safeguarding allegations, these have been investigated by senior managers within the organisation. When a need for additional training is identified, this is provided to staff, but not always in a timely manner.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Since the last inspection, there has been a significant change in the management team. Due to unforeseen circumstances, the previous registered manager resigned unexpectedly in August 2023. Following the resignation of the manager, several staff also resigned. This resulted in a period of unpredictability and instability in the home.

A new manager was recruited in October 2023 and she has since been registered with Ofsted. The new manager is experienced and qualified. She has worked together with senior managers to focus on staff recruitment. As a result of this, staffing levels have significantly improved, creating stability and consistency in the care for children. One child said, 'It's a lot better since the new staff started, it doesn't feel like a children's home anymore, it is homely.'

The new manager is inspirational, confident and leads by example. She is ambitious for children and has high expectations for the staff team and its development.

The staff team is relatively new and inexperienced. Staff are developing with support and guidance from the manager. New staff receive a comprehensive induction and training package. This helps to prepare staff for their role and to have a greater understanding of children's individual needs.

The manager ensures that supervisions take place regularly and in line with the home's statement of purpose. The manager provides staff with opportunities to reflect on their practice and the care that they provide to children. Regular team meetings also take place. These meetings are reflective and provide the staff team with opportunities to have discussions regarding the care provided to children.

The manager has developed positive working relationships with professionals, parents and family members. The manager understands the importance of effective partnership working and how this contributes towards children's positive experiences. One social worker said, 'The new management team is hands on, and communication has improved. They consult with me more often.'

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 care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that each child's relevant plans are followed. (Regulation 14 (1)(a) (2)(c)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that when children move into the home, they have access to the most up-to-date local authority care plans.	28 June 2024

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that when a training need has been identified following safeguarding incidents, they take a proactive approach and implement the training immediately. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.11)
- The registered person should ensure that when room searches take place, records are accurate and include children's views. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 16, paragraph 3.20)

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: 1264537

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: Tracy Cain

Inspectors

Kimmy Feeley, Social Care Inspector
Angeline Clarke, Social Care Inspector

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