

# 1277380

Registered provider: Roc Northwest Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

The home provides care and accommodation for up to five children who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The home is operated by a private provider.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since July 2019.

### Inspection dates: 10 to 11 March 2020

**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 **requires improvement to be good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

**Date of last inspection:** 19 November 2019

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** sustained effectiveness

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement    |
|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------------|
| 19/11/2019      | Interim         | Sustained effectiveness |
| 11/03/2019      | Full            | Good                    |

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good**

The manager and staff support children in a way that gives most children stability and a genuine sense of belonging. However, a small number of children have chosen not to engage with staff, escalating risk-taking and challenging behaviour over time. In these circumstances, strategy meetings have been convened and a multi-agency approach taken to trying to manage and reduce risk. Decisions have been made to close placements when these actions have not been effective, particularly when the behaviour of the individual has impacted negatively on the other children living in the home.

The three children living at the home currently have developed strong and meaningful relationships with the manager and staff. Staff take a parent-like approach to meeting each child's needs, reinforcing a feeling of belonging. The children said that they are happy, settled and regard this as their home.

Care planning is based on the principles of assessment, monitoring and review. The manager and staff have a comprehensive understanding of each child's needs. Staff are child focused and work hard to deliver individually tailored packages of support for each child. As a result, children who have experienced disruption have established predictable routines that are helping them to develop and thrive.

Children recognise the importance of learning. Going to school or college is part of each child's daily routine. Staff maintain good links with teachers and college tutors and demonstrate an interest in the progress that children make. They attend meetings, parent evenings and other events. Achievements are celebrated. Children are proud of their successes. One child spoke with pride about his 'front of house' role during a catering event at college.

Staff enjoy spending time with the children. Children are provided with lots of opportunities to pursue their interests, enjoy life and have fun. For some children, these interests have developed into part-time work opportunities. For example, one child is working at a go-cart track and another is working in a local bakery. These experiences will provide a good foundation for future employment.

Appropriate levels of support are given to help children develop basic life skills and increased independence. This is done at a pace that takes into consideration the child's age, level of understanding and vulnerability. These children are highly dependent on staff. It is positive that staff are continuously looking for ways to encourage children to develop friendships outside of the home, which is an important part of their social development.

Children are helped to improve their physical and emotional health. They have access to routine health services and referrals to specialist services are made when required. The arrangements for managing medication are safe and promote independence. For example, one child is taking full responsibility for the safe storage and administration of his medication. This is in preparation for when he leaves the home.

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

Staff practice is underpinned by a good range of safeguarding procedures and risk assessments. Links with external professionals and agencies are in place. These partnerships have been used effectively to manage a few allegations against the manager and staff. The designated officer said, 'The organisation has taken appropriate action in response to the concerns. It took steps to put safeguards in place to keep all children safe. Good communication was maintained, and good-quality information was shared when required. I have no concerns about the safety of children.'

The risk management elements of care planning are carefully considered and understood by staff. Staff recognise the need for children to take risks. They take an educational approach, helping children to understand and make better choices when managing their own behaviours, risks and vulnerabilities. For some children, this approach has been highly effective in helping them to better manage risk, for example safer use of the internet and social media.

Children benefit from living in a structured environment that is based on clear expectations, boundaries and planned daily routines. Staff act as positive role models and are constantly looking for ways to acknowledge, praise and reward positive behaviour.

Negative and unsafe behaviour is proportionately challenged. Sanctions are used. There is good evidence that staff opt for a restorative approach that enables children to reflect, learn and make better choices about how they behave.

Staff are trained in and have used physical restraint on 43 occasions since the last full inspection. Detailed records are maintained and provide good evidence of why this course of action was necessary. However, one record was insufficiently detailed. It did not clearly state why physical restraint had been necessary. Also, the incident was evaluated by a manager involved in the restraint. This would not stand up to challenge in the event of an allegation being made and does not protect either the child or staff involved.

## **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good**

The manager was registered with Ofsted in July 2019. He is suitably experienced and has recently completed the level 5 diploma. The manager has recently returned from an unavoidable period of absence. His absence was covered by an interim manager. While it is evident that some administrative duties have been neglected, meeting children's needs has remained the number one priority.

The manager has developed effective links with partner agencies such as the police, safeguarding professionals and placing authorities. However, the manager has failed to effectively implement the organisation's escalation policy when the local authority has failed to provide statutory information. Consequently, children's records do not include key documents such as pathway plans, medical assessment reports and personal education plans.

Staff talk with enthusiasm about their work. They are complementary about the day-to-day support that they receive from the registered manager, and each other. However, managers are failing to provide staff with regular and purposeful supervision. This is detrimental to staff development, especially for those staff who are new to their role and require individual support to enable them to meet their probationary targets.

The quality of supervision records requires improvement. Several records lacked detail and showed no purpose to the supervision other than a general chat. Many records could not be located initially, and staff are not routinely signing to confirm that the record is a true reflection of the supervision discussion.

Staff make good use of handovers and team meetings to plan each child's care and monitor their progress. Mandatory and needs-led training is available. Five staff are qualified, and the arrangements are in place for the remaining staff to gain a relevant qualification.

The manager has a clear vision of the type of child-focused service that he wants to develop. He shows good learning from those placements that have not been successful. For example, he recognises the types of needs and behaviours that are best suited to his experiential background and the skills of his staff team. This information has been incorporated into the referral and matching procedures. If used effectively, it will increase the potential for the next child admitted being a good match to this uniquely complex group of children.

# 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 registered person must ensure that all employees—<br>receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(b))                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | 15/04/2020 |
| The registered person must ensure that—<br>within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes—<br>details of the child's behaviour leading to the use of the measure;<br>the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure.<br>(Regulation 35 (3)(a)(ii)(vii))<br>Specifically, ensure that restraint records clearly evidence that the threshold for physical restraint is met, and that incidents of restraint are evaluated by a person who has not been involved in the restraint. | 15/04/2020 |
| The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which—<br>include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child.<br>(Regulation 36 (1)(a))                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | 15/04/2020 |

## Recommendations

- Where the placing authority or another relevant person does not provide the input and services needed to meet a child's needs during their time in the home or in preparation for leaving the home, the home must challenge them to meet the child's needs (see regulations 5(c)). ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 12, paragraph 2.8)

Specifically, the registered manager should follow the organisation's escalation policy when the child's placing local authority does not provide statutory information in a timely manner.

- A record of supervision should be kept for staff, including the manager. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.3)

Specifically, ensure that good-quality records of supervision are maintained, and that staff sign these records to confirm that they are a true representation of the supervision discussion.

## **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:** 1277380

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** Roc Northwest Limited

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

**Responsible individual:** Katie Stephens

**Registered manager:** Matthew Hart

## Inspector

Paul Scott, social care inspector

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