

1277380

Registered provider: ROC Northwest Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A private company owns and manages this children's home. The home provides care for up to five children who may have social and emotional difficulties or learning disabilities. Three children were living in the home at the time of the inspection.

The registered manager left in August 2021. A new manager has been appointed. She has applied to register with Ofsted.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021.

We last visited this setting on 2 December 2020 to carry out a monitoring visit. The report is published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection dates: 11 and 12 November 2021

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 March 2020

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10/03/2020	Full	Good
19/11/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
11/03/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are making good progress in all areas of their development. Staff take time to build positive relationships with them. Staff listen to the children and allow them to make their own decisions about their care when this is appropriate. As a result, the children feel a sense of belonging and respect. One child said, 'Staff listen to me and I trust them.'

Children's school placements are tailored to meet their needs and this helps them to maintain good attendance. Where barriers to learning occur, staff are quick to work with education professionals to resolve these issues. Staff continued to support children with education during the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions. This focus on education ensures that children's learning is consistent and that they are prepared well for later life.

Children live in a homely environment. They say that they like their bedrooms and are able to personalise these. One child chose to move bedrooms as he 'loves his view of the sheep'. Encouraging children to choose their own decor allows them to express their own individuality. However, in spite of staff efforts to clean one bedroom, there are apparent hygiene issues. There is an unidentified smell in the room and mould around a window. This does not create a pleasant or comfortable bedroom.

Staff support children to attend routine health appointments. Children learn about healthy eating and benefit from a range of physical activities such as walking and horse riding. Staff provide good emotional support for children and this improves their well-being. The organisation's psychotherapist also supports the staff to better support the children by providing regular advice.

Children's social skills and confidence improves. They benefit from a variety of individual and group activities. During the COVID-19 restrictions, the children enjoyed in-house activities such as arts, craft and sensory toys. They also made use of outside space with outdoor games. Now that restrictions have lifted, children are able to further develop their social and interaction skills by participating in more off-site experiences such as trips to theme parks and to the zoo.

Children's relationships with their families improve and they enjoy the time that they spend with them. Staff support these relationships by inviting family members for meals and helping them to enjoy trips out together. For some children, this support means that they are now working towards overnight stays with their families.

Children celebrate their differences and develop their self-identity. They take part in events such as Pride Week, Macmillan Coffee Mornings and Black History Month. This helps them to recognise and value diversity.

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

Children complete individual and group work to help them to understand potential risks to their safety and welfare. The topics they cover include online safety, healthy relationships, staying safe in the community and safety in the car. This work helps children to take an age-appropriate responsibility for their own safety, but to also recognise that staff will support them and help to keep them safe.

The staff know the children well and they use this knowledge to offer children emotional comfort and support when they are upset, frustrated or anxious. The staff use physical intervention as a last resort. They use low-level holds for a short time for the safety of children and staff. Children and staff always reflect on what happened during incidents so that they learn for the future.

Risk assessments are updated after significant incidents. However, these risk assessments are difficult to follow. This is because the headings do not make it clear for staff which risks are current and which are historical, and there are no dates to identify when specific risks last occurred. The lack of information is confusing and does not help staff identify the most relevant risks to children's safety.

Staff are employed in line with safe recruitment procedures. The procedures ensure that the staff are suitable to work with the children and that their suitability is confirmed and verified.

Staff complete a range of courses in relation to child protection and safeguarding children. As a result, the staff know how to report any concerns that they have with regard to children's safety and protection, and they feel confident to follow procedures to keep the children safe.

When allegations are made, managers are quick to act to protect children. They work closely with the designated officer for the local authority to make sure that information is shared effectively. This helps to ensure that the right decisions are made in the best interests of the children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

There has been a recent change in management. The registered manager was due to leave in June 2021, but remained in post to provide consistency for children and staff until a new manager was recruited in August 2021. The new manager commenced her role in October 2021. The service manager retained a good oversight of this service whilst managers were transitioning in and out of their roles. The service manager's oversight ensures that children's needs remain a priority.

The staff say that they enjoy their work. They receive support from their colleagues and feel that they are a strong team. The staff report that managers have time to listen to them and that they receive regular supervision. This helps them to reflect on the children's needs and on their own practice.

Managers are strong advocates for children. They challenge professionals when needed to make sure the children get the help that they need. Managers listen to children's opinions and make sure that children's wishes influence their care planning now and in the future.

The manager is new in post. She continues to work closely with the service manager as she settles into her role. The manager knows the service strengths and has focused on areas for development to continually improve and build on children's experiences.

Management monitoring systems are effective. These systems enable leaders and managers to track all aspects of the children's care. The information they collect enables managers to follow children's progress. The process also helps them identify and address any issues quickly. Children's information is written into various plans, which are stored in a variety of places. Although all the information staff need is there, the recording and filing procedures are confusing and risk important information being overlooked.

The manager and the service manager work closely with social workers and other professionals, including the organisation's psychotherapist, educational professionals and the police. The positive relationships between services ensure that communication is effective and children receive the help they need to make good 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
In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to— meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 6 (2)(c)(i)) In particular, ensure that all children's bedrooms are well maintained and clean.	17 December 2021
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))	17 December 2021

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful and clear recording. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

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 EN6 1AG

Responsible individual: Katie Stephens

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Jamie Richardson, Social Care Inspector
Evelyn Chafota, Social Care Inspector

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