

1277380

Registered provider: ROC Northwest Limited

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and managed by a private provider. It provides care for up to five children who may experience social and emotional difficulties and who may have learning disabilities. At the time of the inspection, two children were living in the home.

The registered manager left the home in December 2022. The new manager has yet to apply to register with Ofsted. The responsible individual leaves the service on 31 March 2023.

Inspection date: 29 March 2023

Date of last inspection: 14 November 2022

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Information about this inspection

At this inspection, the inspector evaluated:

- the care of children
- the safety of children
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers.

The inspector has looked closely at the experiences and progress of children, using the social care common inspection framework. This assurance 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'.

Findings from the inspection

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

The care of children

Children form positive relationships with staff, who know the children well. Children are encouraged to express their views and are provided with communication and pictorial aids to support this. Staff complete communication training to further help the children to articulate their opinions. Consequently, children understand that their views matter and are considered in the running of the home.

Children's educational needs are met. In addition to their formal schooling, they enjoy a wide and varied range of fun and stimulating activities. These help children to learn new social skills and develop their confidence.

Staff ensure that children's physical health needs are met. Children are encouraged to eat a healthy diet and take regular exercise. These factors also support children's emotional health and well-being.

Work is being progressed to improve the appearance of the home. Staff have considered how the decor and furnishing can better reflect the sensory needs of the children.

The safety of children

A child whose needs could not be met alongside those of the other children has moved on since the previous inspection. This has brought greater stability to the home, and the other children are more settled as a result.

Staff regularly update children's risk assessments, and there is a system in place to ensure that all staff are aware of any changes to children's plans. When children's needs change or new risks emerge, the acting manager takes steps to adjust staffing levels accordingly. The acting manager also ensures that children can access specialist support if they are experiencing difficulties. This helps to keep children safe.

When physical restraint is necessary to protect children from harming themselves or others, the acting manager talks to the children and staff about what has happened. Nevertheless, learning derived from these discussions is not consistently recorded. This is a missed opportunity for reflection and to develop practice.

Systems to ensure that medication is safely administered have been strengthened. Team meetings and regular supervision are used as additional opportunities to

refresh the staff's understanding of correct procedures. This helps to ensure that children receive the correct medication.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers

Leaders, managers and staff have reflected on the outcome of the last inspection. The acting manager, with the support of a newly appointed deputy manager, has made considerable progress in addressing the shortfalls identified at that time. It is too soon to fully evaluate the impact of some of the changes. Nevertheless, there are noted improvements to the quality of recordings in children's case files and documents and an increased focus on gathering children's views. These positive improvements demonstrate the home's capacity to continue to develop.

Staff now benefit from regular supervision sessions, and additional training has been provided. Staff's knowledge of policies has improved, and they are now more confident in using their skills to de-escalate situations. As a result, staff practice has improved, which helps children to feel more secure.

The acting manager has introduced new systems to monitor the service and identify any patterns of behaviour or concerning trends. This enables the acting manager to continually review staff practice to ensure that it meets children's needs.

There are some gaps in recording the steps that the acting manager takes to address any staff performance or conduct issues. The impact on the children has been minimal as staff have responded to guidance. However, improving the quality of supervision records would increase the effectiveness of the manager's monitoring of staff practice.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/11/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
11/11/2021	Full	Good
10/03/2020	Full	Good
19/11/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that any steps taken to address staff conduct or performance are consistently recorded. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.3)
- The registered person should ensure that when evaluating any incidents of physical restraint, there is a record of how children's and staff's feedback contributes to learning. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 49, paragraph 9.59)

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: Emmie Wearing

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Laura Grundy, Social Care Inspector

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