

2504093

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 five children who may have social and emotional difficulties.

The registered manager has been in post since July 2023.

There are currently five children living in the home.

Inspection dates: 14 and 15 May 2024

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
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The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: 11 July 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/07/2023	Full	Good
16/08/2022	Full	Good
27/04/2021	Full	Good
10/07/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

The manager ensures that highly effective planning takes place before children move into the home. She places great emphasis on the needs of children and the skill set of the staff team. As a result of this, children receive high-quality care from a staff team that can meet their individual needs.

When children move into the home, the manager ensures that they have a meticulously planned transition package that is centred around the children's views. Children make several visits to the home before they move in and staff do all they can to welcome children sensitively and to ensure it is a positive experience.

Managers and staff advocate strongly for children to receive education that is in line with their individual needs. Most children attend school or college and have high levels of attendance; they are achieving and making progress from their starting points. One child successfully completed his exams and enrolled on a college course; he regularly achieves distinction grades for his course assignments. When children do not attend school on a full-time basis, the manager ensures that they receive an individual education package at home that consists of private tuition and structured activities.

The manager and staff apply a research-based methodology that places emphasis on children developing healthy attachments, a sense of belonging and genuine feelings of being loved. The relationships between staff and children are exceptional. Staff know the children well and spend quality time with them. When asked their views about staff, one child said, 'I really like [name], she is like a mum.'

Children's views, wishes and feelings are held in the highest regard by staff, and this is fully embedded in the care children receive. Care planning is highly effective. Children have their own care and support plans, which are personalised and child-focused.

Children are supported and encouraged to explore their hobbies and interests; they take part in a wide variety of activities, holidays, and trips. One child is a devoted rugby league fan. The manager arranged for him and his key worker to travel to France and Barcelona to watch his favourite teams play. Children are provided with opportunities to create long-lasting memories and their overall experience living in the home is enhanced.

Staff support children to develop and maintain their relationships with their family and friends. Friends are regularly invited to visit and, on occasions, children have sleepovers with their friends. Staff go over and above to support quality time between children and their families, regardless of distance and location. As a result of this, children's emotional well-being and self-esteem have significantly improved.

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

Safeguarding is of paramount importance in this home. From the time of children's admission to the home, their risks are well understood. Risk assessments provide clarity to staff. Risks are reviewed and strategies to protect children adapted. Over time, risks reduce for children. This means they gain a higher level of independence.

Managers and staff have an excellent understanding of the vulnerabilities of the children. The manager has built a strong, child-focused safeguarding culture in the home. She is creative in her approach and ensures that highly effective planning takes place to support staff to manage and mitigate risk. This helps to ensure that children have a strong sense of safety.

Children rarely go missing from the home. On the one occasion that this occurred, the staff response was highly effective. Children are supported and encouraged to help staff to understand why they have left the home without permission. Consequently, staff have been able to prevent further incidents.

Behaviour management is excellent. Positive behaviour is consistently promoted in the home. Staff make excellent use of reward systems and incentive charts to reward children's positive achievements and behaviour. This is effective and is helping to develop children's self-esteem.

Staff know the children well. They provide children with clear, consistent boundaries and children respond positively. Staff confidently support children to manage conflict and difficult feelings safely. Staff are trained in behaviour management that focuses on the use of de-escalation strategies which help staff to manage children's behaviour safely and effectively. As a result of this, there are few incidents involving physical intervention.

The manager ensures that the home environment is safe and secure. The communal areas are well maintained. They are homely and nicely decorated, with lots of photos of children. The manager ensures that there are clear systems in place to ensure that health and safety practice in the home is robust. However, when children have damaged furniture or property in their bedrooms, this is not always replaced in a timely manner.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The manager is inspirational and leads by example. She creates a culture of high aspiration and positivity and is extremely ambitious for children and the care that they receive. As a result of this, she has been influential in changing the lives of children living in the home. One child said, 'Living in the home wouldn't have gone so well without the support of the manager. She is a godsend to us, a go-to person and always has a good solution.'

The manager is extremely reflective in her approach and her level of oversight is exceptional. She is open to new learning and is a driving force in the development of

staff and their practice. She is innovative in her approach and regularly generates creative ideas to sustain the highest quality care for children.

The manager has advocated strongly for the development of positive working relationships with family members and professionals. Feedback is extremely positive; professionals regularly praised the manager for her management of the home and her approach to ensuring the best quality of care is provided to children. One professional commented, 'The home is one of the most positive providers I have worked with. Nothing is too much, and they really understand children's needs.'

Staff have regular, well-planned, structured and reflective supervision that focuses on their individual development. The manager is creative and regularly quizzes staff on their knowledge and safeguarding practice. As a result, staff continue to learn and develop. However, the manager's own supervisions are not to the same standard or quality.

Staff morale is exceptionally high. The staff team is stable and consistent and they are supported by a pool of bank staff who know the children well. Staff feel valued, respected and fully supported by the management team. One staff member said, 'I am happy and I enjoy coming to work.' As a result, staff retention is high and children receive continuity of care.

Regular team meetings take place. These are valued meetings and provide staff with an open forum giving opportunities for constructive reflection of practice. There is a huge commitment in the meetings from managers and staff to ensure that children's experiences remain a priority and their care is regularly discussed.

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 quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— provide to children living in the home the physical necessities they need in order to live there comfortably; provide to children personal items that are appropriate for their age and understanding; and 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 (1) (2)(b)(vii)(viii)(c)(i)(ii)) In particular, the registered person must ensure children's bedrooms are maintained to a high standard and that any broken or damaged furniture is removed and replaced in a timely manner.	14 June 2024

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that the registered manager receives supervision that is reflective and supportive, focuses on their individual development and is of the same standard as supervision for staff. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)

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: 2504093

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: Shannen Fisher

Inspectors

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

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