

2517184

Registered provider: ROC Family Support Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and managed by a private company. It is registered to provide care for up to two children with emotional and social needs.

The new manager registered with Ofsted on 25 October 2022.

There were two children living in the home at the time of the inspection. The inspector spoke with both children.

Inspection dates: 28 and 29 March 2023

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: 12 January 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/01/2022	Full	Good
12/02/2020	Interim	Improved effectiveness
23/07/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The home provides children with a therapeutic environment where children can grow, develop and make progress. The staff follow the home's therapeutic model and align their work with the children, with the therapist's advice and guidance. A professional said:

'The staff are extremely therapeutic. They listen, they are curious and they follow expert advice. This is the most stable home that [child's name] has had for a significant period of time.'

Children move in to the home in a well-planned way, and these moves are tailored according to the child's individual needs. Before a child moves in, the manager assesses the home's suitability to care for the child. He considers factors such as the staff skills, views of other agencies and the feedback from the children who live in the home. This supports all the children to live positively together.

Introductory visits and a warm welcome from staff help the children to prepare for moving in to the home. The staff get to know the child beforehand, so they are familiar with the child's previous experiences, their interests and dislikes. One professional said, '[Child's name] was really excited about moving in. The staff empowered [child's name] from the start.' This approach helps the children to settle quickly so that they can make progress.

Children are supported to develop a positive view of themselves. Staff treat the children with dignity and respect, and they provide care that is sensitive to the children's identity. Children are supported to explore their personal interests and learn about themselves. This helps the children to be happy.

The staff provide the children with advice so that they can make healthy choices. They accompany the children to the gym so that their physical well-being is promoted. Staff help the children to follow medical advice and deal with sensitive health-related matters. This supports the children to be healthy.

Children are supported to be considerate of each other. The staff promote the home's ethos of people caring for each other, being respectful and holding everyone in high positive regard. When relationships break down between the children, the staff manage this effectively. Children are encouraged to spend time together while also following individual interests.

Significant changes in the staff team have disrupted the children and resulted in them feeling loss and sadness. Children have been supported to say goodbye to staff and reflect on the good times that they have enjoyed. Staff wrote children therapeutic letters, sending well wishes and leaving sentiments about how much

they care about the children. This has helped the children to make new relationships.

The manager advocates regularly for the children. He escalates his concerns when the children are not able to access the help and support that they may need. However, in one example, a child did not receive the services they required as the manager was not proactive in escalating this.

The staff complete written records that mostly reflect the children's daily experiences. However, in a few examples, the quality of records was poor and lacked detail. This oversight hinders the children from having a full and rich understanding of their experience in the home, should they wish to review their records in the future.

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

Risks to children have reduced because of living in the home. Children do not go missing from the home. There are clear procedures, plans and strategies in place should this occur. The staff understand the action that they should take to help find the children and who they should contact if this was to occur.

Children feel safe living in the home. They trust the staff, and they know that the staff will listen to them and provide them with help when this is needed. The children talk to the staff about their past experiences and their daily lives. Staff respond appropriately to these conversations and consult with child protection professionals when safeguarding concerns emerge. This helps children to become increasingly safe.

Behavioural incidents involving the children are rare. This is because the staff manage the children's emotional responses and behaviours well. The staff follow the advice from the therapeutic service so that they understand the children's behaviour in the context of the trauma that the children have suffered. One staff member said, 'It's about understanding why the behaviour is happening, looking beyond the behaviour and helping the child.'

Staff understand and follow the provider's whistle-blowing policy. Investigations into staff conduct are promptly and thoroughly assessed. Children are prioritised. They are protected and well supported during the process.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

There have been changes to the management team since the last inspection. A new manager has been appointed. A thorough handover took place between the previous and new manager. The responsible individual provides additional management oversight in the home and supports the new manager well. A deputy manager has also been appointed to the growing management team.

The manager monitors the quality of children's experiences in the home. He is reflective and considers feedback from others, such as the home's independent visitor. The manager acts promptly to recommendations that are made and he involves the staff so that they understand when change is necessary. This helps the home to continually improve.

The staff feel well supported in their role. They describe the manager as 'approachable' and 'supportive'. A staff buddy system is used so that the staff have regular reflective discussions with each other and can seek colleague support when required.

Staffing pressures have resulted in the staff and the manager working additional hours. Occasionally, agency staff have been used. The manager ensures that these staff are suitably vetted and prepared prior to working with the children. Clear lines of accountability and 24-hour management oversight, mean that the staff understand their roles and responsibilities. A recruitment campaign is underway, and the team is almost fully staffed again.

Senior leaders have an excellent understanding of the way that the home operates, the strengths and areas of development. Senior leaders carry out audits that involve regular visits to the home to see the children and understand their experiences. Leaders also speak with the staff so that they can understand how the staff feel in their roles and what the company can do better to improve staff practice. Leaders use their findings to influence the home's development plan.

Staff receive regular supervision, which is held more frequently for staff who are going through their probationary period. Staff complete a mixture of face-to-face and online training to develop their skills and knowledge. However, when additional expert training is required, the manager does not source this in a timely manner.

When consent is required for children's day-to-day life, staff contact the child's local authority. However, when responses are slow, the manager does not consider other people who can give consent, such as the child's parents. This results in children waiting too long for agreement for simple daily activities, such as having a haircut or sleepover.

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should take the initiative in identifying people, bodies and organisations who must play a part for their children and engage with those relevant people proactively, advocating for the children in their care. This includes involving children's parents and relevant agencies. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 12, paragraph 2.7)
- The registered person should support the staff to be ambitious for every child in the home and to gain skills and experience that enable them to actively support each child to achieve their potential. In particular, the registered person should ensure that the staff receive expert training where required. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 52, paragraph 10.5)
- The registered person should ensure that the staff are familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. ('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: 2517184

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: ROC Family Support Ltd

Registered provider address: Hope House, Burnhope, Newton Aycliffe, Durham
DL5 7ER

Responsible individual: Laura Roberts

Registered manager: Daniel White

Inspector

Catherine Heron, Social Care Inspector

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