

2527558

Registered provider: ROC Northwest Limited

Interim inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is privately owned and run and is registered to provide care for up to five children.

The manager was registered with Ofsted in July 2021.

Inspection date: 28 March 2022

Date of last inspection: 20 April 2021

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

This inspection

The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection

This home was judged requires improvement to be good at the last full inspection. At this interim inspection, Ofsted judged that it has sustained effectiveness.

Since the last inspection, the format used for documenting children's plans has improved. These plans have undergone revision with the assistance of the home's psychologist. They are individual to each child and document the care that needs to be offered by staff. In addition, a reliable internet connection into the home has been secured and this ensures children can take part in online education.

Over time, children have developed trusting relationships with staff. This is evidenced in their willingness to engage in a lot of activities with staff, such as crazy golf, swimming, cooking and boxing. A social worker, commenting on a child's progress in developing relationships with staff, said, 'He is more settled than he has ever been.'

Children are regularly consulted about their preferences for meals and leisure pursuits. A social worker commented on how well one child had been prepared for meetings, ensuring his views were sought and represented.

At the last inspection, a requirement was made in relation to risk assessments. Since then, children's risk assessments have been revised and updated. However, one child's record had not been updated with managerial advice regarding the use of 'friendly' guides. Other assessments of risk lack clarity. For example, when staff have been redeployed to other homes following allegations, these assessments have not been dated or signed by the respective managers. The assessments are not specific in relation to children in the other home and do not detail how managers are going to manage any of the risks identified.

Since the last inspection, there have been few incidents of children going missing from home. Staff have been active in searching for children, liaising with other agencies and securing children's safe return. However, some staff recordings lack clarity as to the timings of their efforts and details as to when staff searched beyond the immediate area.

At the last inspection, a requirement was made regarding staff qualifications and experience. This requirement has not been met. Since the last inspection, nine new members of staff have started work at the home. Only two staff are qualified, the manager and deputy manager. Managers are aware of this shortfall and have ensured that all relevant staff are enrolled on the appropriate courses and are working towards gaining the appropriate qualification.

At the last inspection, a requirement was made with regard to care planning and challenging service providers and local authorities. Managers have worked hard to secure appropriate services. On one occasion, managers lodged a complaint because of poor responses to requests made and lack of planning by a local authority.

Some children do not access formal education settings. In response, managers ensure that children have detailed plans that support their daily learning. However, one child does not consistently engage with this plan, and it is not clear how managers are to review and evaluate the progress he is making.

When children have moved into the home they have done so in a planned way. To assist with this planning, managers complete impact risk assessments as part of the matching process. However, these assessments do not detail how identified risks are to be managed by the staff.

Managers have reviewed and assessed the use of sanctions by staff as a means of managing children's negative behaviour. As a result, decision making is more reflective and proportionate in considering sanctions for children.

Managers have appropriately responded to and investigated allegations made by children. They have made prompt referral to the local authority designated officer. Incidents of a serious nature have then been notified to Ofsted. As a result, a requirement made at the last inspection has been met.

Some children's behaviour has required staff to intervene physically. Although these interventions were proportionate, managerial advice given to staff had not been followed. For example, it has been identified that a trigger for one child becoming heightened is staff being in the office. Management instruction to staff is to spend minimal time in the office and to lock the office door when inside. In one incident, staff had not ensured that the office door was locked. In addition, staff have not ensured recordings are comprehensive and detailed. For example, in relation to one incident, it was not clear from records that a member of staff was inside the office during an incident or why another member of staff had been outside the home. Neither was it clear why records had subsequently been amended. Some of these details only emerged from debriefs with staff.

Children benefit from living in a home that is maintained and spacious. An upstairs room has recently been converted to be used as a home gym. However, this room was kept locked by staff. A bedroom that could potentially be used for a child was filled with unused furniture.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
20/04/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person 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 must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The registered person must ensure that— children can access all appropriate areas of the children's home's premises; and any limitations placed on a child's privacy or access to any area of the home's premises— is intended to safeguard each child accommodated in the home; is necessary and proportionate; is kept under review and, if necessary, revised; and allows children as much freedom as is possible when balanced against the need to protect them and keep them safe. (Regulation 21(b)(c)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv))	30 April 2022
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; understand the role and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and	30 April 2022

are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(v)(vi)) This particularly refers to staff ensuring that children's risk assessments are updated with the most recent managerial advice regarding approaches to be used to prevent escalation of incidents, ensuring risk assessments used for temporary redeployment of staff are clear, dated and signed by relevant managers, and that staff clearly record their actions with regard to responding to incidents of children going missing from home. This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care for each child. (Regulation 13 (1) (2)(a)(b)(c)(e)) This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	30 June 2022
The registered person must prepare and implement a policy ("the behaviour management policy") which sets out— how appropriate behaviour is to be promoted in the children's home. The registered person must ensure that—	30 April 2022

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 that includes—

details of the child's behaviour leading to the use of the measure;

details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure.

(Regulation 13 (1)(a) (3)(a)(ii)(v))

This particularly refers to staff recording these incidents within timescales and that any alterations to records are signed, dated and agreed by the manager and records are comprehensive. This also refers to staff following managerial instruction, to prevent incidents from occurring.

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that there are clear, measurable and reviewed plans that enable children to resume full-time education. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 28, paragraph 5.15)
- The registered person should ensure that assessments used to measure the impact of children on each other are detailed and include how staff might mitigate against any identified risks. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 56, paragraph 11.4)
- The registered person should ensure that bedrooms assigned for children's use and in line with registration numbers are maintained to a standard of readiness to receive a child into the home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

Information about this inspection

This inspection focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full 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: 2527558

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: Hannah Curwen

Inspector

Pauline Yates, Social Care Inspector

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