

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	01/02/2017
Unique reference number	SC401603
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Residential special school
Registered provider	Roc Northwest Ltd
Registered provider address	Roc Northwest Ltd, 41 Silverdale Road, Carnforth, Lancashire LA5 0AL

Responsible individual	Katie Stephens
Registered manager	Lindsay Tallon
Inspector	Elaine Clare/Mandy Williams

Inspection date	01/02/2017
Previous inspection judgement	Inadequate
Enforcement action since last inspection	Three compliance notices issued 17/11/2016 Restriction of accommodation notice issued 17/11/2016
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.	
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Requires improvement

SC401603

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- The senior leadership team has invested time and passion in developing the children's home from its previous inadequate judgement. The manager is particularly enthusiastic and child-centred. An ethos of continuous learning and reflection underpins the improvements identified at this inspection.
- Staff nurture young people and as a result develop good relationships with them. They create calm and relaxed environments in which the young people feel safe. Close liaison with social workers and parents enables staff to work with them to support young people to progress in all areas, including social presentation, self-care and independence skills.
- Staff give young people's education a high priority and address any barriers effectively. Consequently, young people engage well in education and obtain a lot from it.
- The company is striving to improve its services and is investing accordingly in staff training and refurbishment of the home.

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person(s) meets 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 meeting the quality standards, the registered person must ensure that staff seek to involve each child's placing authority effectively in the child's care, in accordance with the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 5(a)) This is with particular regard to transition plans to adult services.	31/03/2017
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. (Regulation 32) This is with particular regard to the use of agency care staff.	31/03/2017
The registered person must ensure that all employees undertake appropriate continuing professional development; receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience; and have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33(4)(a)(b)(c))	31/03/2017
In order to complete a quality of care review, the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating the quality of care provided for children. (Regulation 45(2)(a))	31/03/2017

Full report

Information about this children's home

- The home is registered for up to 15 children from eight to 18 years old.
- The home is run by a private company.
- A company school is on site.
- The home offers care and accommodation for children who have learning disabilities, physical disabilities and associated behavioural needs.
- An outreach service is registered separately with the Care Quality Commission.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
03/11/2016	Full	Inadequate
15/03/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
20/05/2015	Full	Requires improvement
05/03/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
<p>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</p>	<p>Good</p>
<p>Consultation with young people leads to their views making a difference throughout their home, including over decoration and furnishings. Young people spoken to were able to name someone to whom they can talk about any concerns they may have. They also report that they can talk to all staff. Young people improve their independence skills, such as by undertaking cooking sessions. This has led to greater involvement in the community and access to a wider range of activities, such as youth clubs and a gym. Staff demonstrate sensitivity and an individualised personal approach which enables young people to feel valued.</p> <p>Staff demonstrate a good understanding of the wide range of needs presented by young people. They communicate effectively with young people using a range of communication methods, including picture exchange cards and Makaton. There is ongoing training for staff in Makaton to teach young people who are non-verbal to communicate with their peers and staff. Staff devise social stories for young people, tailored to their level of communication and understanding, to reduce their anxieties about new situations.</p> <p>The recently refurbished home looks homely and is of an excellent standard. Staff and young people make good use of the available space. Young people have their own bedrooms and are able to personalise them. Each bedroom has had a sensory room built into the space, to offer young people a place of security and calm when they may feel anxious or upset or simply a place to relax. The residential aspect of the home now has a good atmosphere and family feel.</p> <p>Young people enjoy a range of activities in the home, on-site school, the local community and further afield. Staff have devised a detailed activity plan to ensure that young people can access the community safely. Staff implement revised risk assessments and take personal responsibility for young people's safety. Their safety is paramount. Staff deliver good-quality care, in line with placement plans that specifically identify young people's individual needs. These plans are regularly reviewed and updated to ensure that young people's changing and emerging needs are met. Some recording issues identified during the inspection were rectified immediately by the manager.</p> <p>Young people's health needs are valued. The recently recruited qualified nurse is able to give guidance about important health issues, such as sexual health and medication. She works effectively with external health services, including paediatricians and the child and adolescent mental health team. The nurse provides teaching and consultations with young people and training for staff. She works</p>	

proactively with parents and staff to ensure that they are aware of, and involved with, the healthcare of the young people while they are at the home.

All the young people benefit from being in full-time education. They enjoy the routine of education. The manager and staff team develop working relationships with educational professionals, effectively using the start and end of the day to hand over positively any issues that have occurred during the day.

High staffing levels mean that each young person receives personalised care from adults with whom they are familiar. There is, overall, a good continuity of care, and the team has a balance of age, gender and cultural background.

The manager has challenged placing authorities about their lack of communication around transition into adult services, but has not developed with young people individual transition plans for them to follow into adulthood. This does not enable young people's choices about their plans for their future to be considered and approved, given their complex learning needs.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
<p>Staff work in a positive and inclusive way. They have a good understanding of the risks faced by each young person. Through key-worker sessions and systematic repetition, staff help young people to understand the reasons why positive behaviour is necessary. As part of this philosophy, they seldom use sanctions but frequently reward young people for their effort and achievements. Bullying is not reported to be an issue at the home. This approach contributes to young people's positive progress, whether that be in their personal care, understanding of their medication, or their attempts to try new activities.</p> <p>Given the complex needs of the young people, it is inevitable that their behaviour varies from time to time. Negative incidents have occurred. Staff have shown resilience in their response to assaults against them. Staff have kept young people safe, albeit with the use of physical intervention. In close liaison with other professionals and the young people, the causes of such behaviours were diagnosed and appropriate remedial action was taken. Overall, young people's behaviour improves, which increases their social and recreational opportunities.</p> <p>The manager responds swiftly to any complaints or grumbles raised about the home. The manager has investigated and responded appropriately to a number of</p>	

complaints that have been raised. She is transparent with parents and supporting agencies about the care provided in the home. One safeguarding concern is currently being investigated. All agencies have been notified, with the appropriate action taken to ensure that young people are safe in the home. Individual team members are confident in their understanding of the whistle-blowing procedure.

While there are clear recruitment procedures in place for permanent staff, the robustness of the vetting procedures for agency staff is not at the same standard. For one agency staff member, there was no profile of his checks or experience. For another, their criminal history had not been fully risk assessed. The manager acted swiftly to rectify the situation, contacting the agency recruitment office to request that the staff members were no longer sent to work at the home. However, these were minor issues with no direct effect on young people.

A range of health and safety checks are routinely carried out to ensure that young people and staff live in a physically safe environment.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Requires improvement
<p>The children’s home is well managed by an experienced manager who is suitably qualified. An application for her to be registered with Ofsted has been submitted. She is supported by a strong senior management and staff team that focuses on developing the service to the highest level. The senior leadership team is constructively challenged by a committed independent visitor and a compliance manager who bring a wealth of experience and knowledge to drive improvements further. The manager has sought consultations with professionals in the field regarding improvements to recording systems, care plans and the decor of the home. There is a strong ethos of continuous improvement. This secures a fundamental understanding of areas of strength within the home and areas where improvements would be beneficial.</p> <p>Overall, the staff group is a stable, secure team that is focused on meeting young people’s individual needs to the highest standard. Reflection and learning from previous negative experiences are the culture in this children’s home. Communication between staff is good. There is cohesive working in a supportive culture. Regular debriefing meetings ensure that staff remain up to date with children’s care plans and any staffing issues.</p> <p>Appropriate systems are in place to notify Ofsted and other relevant persons of significant events that occur. This ensures that people are kept informed, and this</p>	

means that young people's welfare is promoted.

Staff report that they feel well supported and receive supervision regularly. Staff describe supervision as 'very helpful', with one person saying, 'It provides an opportunity to step back and reflect on my own practice.' This process aids staff development. Supervision for new employees in the home is not as regular as the policy states it will be. While the new employees are experienced members of staff, they have not been afforded the same level of support during this transition period in the home. Appraisals for staff are an area that the manager is aware is not at the standard she requires. Some staff who have been employed for two years have not yet had an appraisal. This could have an impact on staff development and morale.

All team members receive a range of training that assists them to support the young people whom they look after. The manager ensures that any specific training required to meet the individual needs of young people is facilitated, in order for the staff team to be equipped to care for the young people. For example, the staff team has recently received specific training about autism. Some training is still required. For example, staff have had no training on radicalisation. Only a small number of staff have achieved their level 3 qualification; others are undertaking the course, while others are waiting to enrol.

An independent person and the senior staff team undertake effective monitoring of the home. This means that they identify any shortfalls at an early stage. In two cases, the manager had not picked up on minor deficits in the children's records. The manager acknowledged this shortfall. Generally, however, records clearly reflect the good progress made by young people and the monitoring processes that track it.

A restriction of accommodation, three compliance notices and eight requirements were made at the last full inspection relating to outcomes, protection of young people and leadership and management. A subsequent monitoring visit on 14 December 2016 identified that the compliance notices had been met. During this inspection, young people were found to be safe and their outcomes had significantly improved. However, leadership and management still require improvements to be good. As a result, further requirements have been made to secure improvement moving forward.

The management team promotes and embraces feedback, including issues arising from independent and internal monitoring processes. The home's development plan sets objectives for development and fully acknowledges the need for a more child-focused care planning infrastructure in the service. However, new ideas and emerging plans are yet to embed throughout the staffing culture.

What the inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against 'Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection'.

An **outstanding** children's home provides highly effective services that contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help and protection and care. Their progress exceeds expectations and is sustained over time.

A **good** children's home provides effective services that help, protect and care for children and young people and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

In a children's home that **requires improvement**, there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. The welfare of children looked after is safeguarded and promoted. Minimum requirements are in place. However, the children's home is not yet delivering good protection, help and care for children and young people.

A children's home that is **inadequate** is providing services where there are widespread or serious failures that create or leave children and young people being harmed or at risk of harm or that result in children looked after not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people living in the children's home. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference that adults make to the lives of children and young people. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with children, young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care given to children and young people. Whenever possible, they talked to children, young people and their families. In addition the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service 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'.

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